



Georgetown University  
Health Policy Institute  
CENTER FOR CHILDREN  
AND FAMILIES

## 2021 Annual Child Health Policy Conference Speaker and Moderator Bios

### [Joan Alker](#)

*Executive Director, Georgetown University Center for Children and Families*

Joan Alker is the Executive Director and a Co-Founder of the Center for Children and Families (CCF), and a Research Professor at the Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy. Her work focuses on health coverage for low-income children and families, with an emphasis on Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Two of her most recent reports examine the role of Medicaid in rural areas and the nation's progress on covering children. She has authored numerous reports and studies on a range of issues including Medicaid waivers, premium assistance, and was the principal investigator of a multi-year study on Florida's Medicaid program. A frequent speaker and commentator, Alker has twenty-five years of experience working on issues affecting low-income families. She holds a Master of Philosophy in politics from St. Antony's College, Oxford University and a Bachelor of Arts with honors in political science from Bryn Mawr College.

### [Ciriac Alvarez Valle](#)

*Senior Policy Analyst, Voices for Utah Children*

Ciriac joined Voices for Utah Children in 2018. Ciriac is a proud immigrant who is passionate about immigrant rights, education, and public health. She is a community organizer, poet, and writer. Ciriac graduated with a B.S. in Political Science and Sociology from the University of Utah. She was born in Cuernavaca Morelos, Mexico and grew up in Salt Lake City. She has plans to continue her education by obtaining a J.D. in the near future.

### [Julie Bataille](#)

*Senior Vice President, GMMB*

Julie is a seasoned communications professional whose 25 years of experience spans political campaigns, Capitol Hill, the White House and federal agencies. With expertise in crisis communications, brand and reputation management, marketing and digital outreach, she crafts communications strategies that deliver impact and results. She has a particular passion for addressing social policy issues that improve the lives of children and families, especially health care and education. At GMMB, she advises clients on implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the evolving health care system. She leads consumer campaigns and projects related to patient access and affordability, delivery system reform and drug pricing. Prior to joining GMMB, Julie served in

the Obama administration as the Communications Director for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, where she oversaw communications, outreach and education for the launch of HealthCare.gov and its historic first open enrollment period. Julie drives change by distilling complex policy into efforts that help clients navigate implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the evolving health care system.

### **Amber Bellazaire**

*Policy Analyst, Michigan League for Public Policy*

Amber Bellazaire joined the Michigan League for Public Policy as a policy analyst in June of 2019. Her work primarily focuses on state policy and budgets affecting Michigan's Medicaid programs. Previously, Amber worked at the National Conference of State Legislatures tracking legislation and research related to injury and violence prevention, adolescent health, and maternal and child health. She also brings with her two years of Americorps service. As a full time volunteer, Amber had the opportunity to tutor high school students in Chelsea, Massachusetts and address issues of healthcare access and food insecurity through in-person outreach in Seattle, Washington. Amber holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and psychology and a Master of Public Health from the University of Michigan.

### **Tricia Brooks**

*Research Professor, Georgetown University Center for Children and Families*

Tricia Brooks, MBA, is a Research Professor at the Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy's Center for Children and Families (CCF), an independent, nonpartisan policy and research center whose mission is to expand and improve health coverage for children and families. At CCF, Ms. Brooks focuses on policy, program administration, and the quality of health care relating to Medicaid and CHIP coverage for children and families. Prior to joining CCF, she served as the founding chief executive officer of New Hampshire Healthy Kids, a legislatively-created, non-profit corporation that administered the state's CHIP program and managed the Medicaid and CHIP consumer assistance hub. Ms. Brooks was recently appointed by the Comptroller General to the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC), an independent commission that advises Congress on issues affecting Medicaid and CHIP. She has also served as faculty or as a technical advisory group member on a variety of initiatives associated with advancing Medicaid and CHIP coverage for children and low-income families at the national level. Ms. Brooks holds a Master of Business Administration from Suffolk University and is an 11-year veteran at CCF.

### **Chiquita Brooks-LaSure**

*Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services*

Chiquita Brooks-LaSure is the Administrator for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), where she will oversee programs including Medicare, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and the HealthCare.gov health insurance marketplace. A former policy official who played a key role in guiding the Affordable Care Act (ACA) through passage and implementation, Brooks-LaSure has decades of experience in the federal government, on Capitol Hill, and in the private sector. As deputy director for policy at the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight within the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and earlier at the Department of Health & Human Services as director of coverage policy, Brooks-LaSure led the agency's implementation of ACA coverage and insurance reform policy provisions.

Earlier in her career, Brooks-LaSure assisted House leaders in passing several health care laws, including the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 and the ACA, as part of the Democratic staff for the U.S. House of Representatives' Ways and Means Committee. Brooks-LaSure began her career as a program examiner and lead Medicaid analyst for the Office of Management and Budget, coordinating Medicaid policy development for the health financing branch. Her role included evaluating policy options and briefing White House and federal agency officials on policy recommendations with regard to the uninsured, Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program.

### **Patricia Canning**

*Project Manager, Outreach and Partner Engagement for Early Learning Initiatives, Advocates for Children of New Jersey*

Patricia Canning is a former management consultant who has built a career in project management in the civic, non-profit and corporate areas. Through civic engagement, Patricia has spent the last 10 years advocating for equity in education for all children and addressing the achievement/opportunity gap for children. She brings her advocacy experience and her project management skills to ACNJ to focus on children ages 0 -3 years in the Right from the Start Campaign. Patricia is committed to health and wellness for women and children and as a result, founded a women's triathlon group specifically to inspire women to live their best lives through group fitness. Patricia received an MBA from the Simon School at the University of Rochester and a B.S., Industrial Engineering from Lehigh University.

### **Maggie Clark**

*Senior State Health Policy Analyst, Georgetown University Center for Children and Families*

Maggie Clark is a Senior State Health Policy Analyst at the Center for Children and Families (CCF). Before joining Georgetown University, she was an award-winning health journalist in Florida covering all aspects of Florida's health delivery system, with special attention to Medicaid for children. She also held various research positions at the Pew Charitable Trusts in Washington, D.C. Maggie earned a BA in International Affairs from Florida State University and a Master of Journalism from the University of Maryland.

### **Linda Dixon**

*Director of Health Law and Public Benefits, Mississippi Center for Justice*

Linda Dixon serves as the health law director at the Mississippi Center for Justice, a position she has held since November 2008. Prior to joining the Center, she was the assistant secretary of state for elections for the Mississippi Secretary of State's Office, where she previously held the position of senior attorney and director of elections training and education. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Southern University at New Orleans and her law degree from Mississippi College School of Law. Linda's work focuses on access to health care and HIV discrimination and stigma. Linda is a member of the Mississippi Bar and the Magnolia Bar Associations. Linda currently serves on the Southern Black HIV/AIDS Advisory Council, Mississippi HIV Planning Council, and the Access Care & Engagement TA Center Advisory Council. She serves on the Mississippi College School of Law Alumni Association Board. Linda previously served on the Southern AIDS Coalition Board of Directors, the Mississippi Sickle Cell Foundation, and the steering committee of the Southern HIV/AIDS Strategy Initiative.

### **Anne Dwyer**

*Associate Research Professor of the Practice, Georgetown University Center for Children and Families*

Anne joins CCF and the McCourt School of Public Policy as an Associate Research Professor of the Practice. Previously the Senior Health Counsel for the U.S. Senate Finance Committee, Anne has been involved in every recent piece of major health legislation, including the reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and most recently, the passage of the American Rescue Plan. She is extraordinarily knowledgeable about Medicaid and CHIP and shares our passion for ensuring that children and families have access to high-quality, affordable health care.

Anne has received numerous awards for her work including (twice) receiving the "Exceptional Congressional Staffer Award" from the National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors, being presented with the "Hill Health Care Hero Staff Award" by the National Association of Community Health Centers, and being named an "Emerging Health Care Leader" by Politico in 2016. She is originally from the Midwest and holds a J.D. from the University of Minnesota as well as an M.P.H. Anne is also a former Winston Health Policy Fellow.

### **Tekisha Everette**

*Executive Director, Health Equity Solutions*

Dr. Tekisha Dwan Everette's passion for social justice was fueled by her personal experiences and influences as a child. As a youth, she experienced delays in diagnosing asthma, and faced challenges accessing and navigating the health care system. These experiences gave Everette first-hand knowledge of the importance of health and health care access. This, combined with her admiration for social justice trailblazers such as Thurgood Marshall, Barbara Jordan, and Sandra Day O'Connor, inspired Everette to dedicate her life's work toward eradicating health care inequities through advocacy and policy. Everette has built a successful career in public policy, particularly health care policy, and advocacy in the non-profit, state, and private sectors. Before taking the helm of Health Equity Solutions (HES), she provided strategic government relations on health-related issues to various nonprofits. Everette earned her doctorate in Sociology from American University with a concentration in race, gender, and social justice as it relates to social policy. She holds her Master's of Public Administration (MPA) degree and undergraduate degrees in Political Science and Interdisciplinary Studies.

### **Kristen Golden Testa**

*Director, California Health Program, The Children's Partnership*

Kristen has worked with TCP since 2001 to expand and improve health coverage and enrollment for children, focusing on Medi-Cal, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and Covered California. She also leads on federal health coverage issues affecting children to secure the sustainability of children's health insurance programs and continue to improve upon children's ability to easily enroll in coverage and access care. Before joining TCP, Kristen served as the Assistant Secretary for Program and Fiscal Affairs for the California Health and Human Services Agency, where she oversaw the policy and budget issues for the Healthy Families and Medi-Cal programs, among others. In addition, Kristen served as an ex-officio member representing the Secretary on the Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board (MRMIB). Prior to her state political appointment, she served as the lead for legislation on Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program for the US Senate Committee on Finance (for the Ranking Member, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan). Starting with her Presidential Management Fellowship, she worked in the Office of the Secretary for Budget at the US Department of Health and Human Services, where she advised the Assistant Secretary on Medicaid issues.

### **Hillarie Hagen**

*Health Policy Associate, Idaho Voices for Children*

Hillarie Hagen is a health policy expert at Idaho Voices for Children, an organization that champions policies that help kids and families thrive. She specializes in data, research and engaging impacted Idahoans on health coverage issues to advance smart public policy solutions. A native Idahoan, she graduated with honors from Boise State University.

### **Jennifer Haley**

*Research Associate, Urban Institute*

Jennifer M. Haley is a research associate in the Urban Institute's Health Policy Center. Jennifer's current work includes assessing ways states and communities can improve health equity in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, barriers to enrollment in publicly subsidized health insurance coverage, coverage gaps for postpartum women, and challenges to accessing the safety net for children in immigrant families. She also conducts research on other issues related to Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and coverage and care for children and families. Jennifer holds an MA in sociology from Temple University.

### **Cindy Ji**

*Health Policy Associate, Children's Defense Fund – Texas*

Cindy joined CDF-Texas in 2020 to advocate for affordable healthcare access for Texans and their children. She is an organizer and story collector for the #SickofitTX campaign, a statewide effort to raise the profile of healthcare challenges across Texas. Cindy comes to this role from direct service, and previously served as a case manager in the South Bronx, where she helped residents avoid eviction and find affordable housing. She also has a background in spoken word. With deep love for both policy advocacy and storytelling, Cindy is grateful to be able to do both for CDF.

Cindy graduated from the University of Chicago, and is completing her Master's of Public Affairs at the LBJ School. She is on the board of the local Asian American Pacific Islander Public Affairs Association (APAPA) chapter.

### **Margaux Johnson-Green**

*State Health Policy Analyst, Georgetown Center for Children and Families*

Margaux Johnson-Green is a State Health Policy Analyst with the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families. Prior to this role, Margaux served as a Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow where she worked on anti-hunger and anti-poverty programs at the Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee and the National Women's Law Center. She has also held several health-focused internships in North Carolina and at national organizations in Washington, D.C. Margaux is a graduate of the Gillings School of Global Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a BSPH in Health Policy and Management.

### **Adriana Kohler**

*Policy Director, Texans Care for Children*

As Policy Director for Texans Care for Children, Adriana collaborates with the rest of the organization's policy team to support their efforts, coordinates the team's work across multiple policy areas, and leads organization-wide efforts to shape policy. She also leads the organization's work on maternal health policy. Adriana previously served as Texans Care for Children's Senior



Health Policy Associate, leading the organization's work to improve infant and maternal health, promote healthy development during early childhood, and strengthen access to health coverage so that Texas kids and families can be healthy and succeed. Before joining Texans Care for Children, Adriana worked at a national nonprofit in Washington D.C. where she developed and advanced policy solutions at the state and federal level to address a variety of health finance, public health, and health insurance issues and improve access to preventive care. Adriana also spent several years at a law firm counseling a range of clients on legislative and regulatory issues involving Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) as well as Affordable Care Act implementation. Adriana received her B.A. in History and Political Science from the University of Pennsylvania, and her J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania School of Law.

### **Emily B. Zylla**

*Senior Research Fellow, State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC)*

Emily B. Zylla is a Senior Research Fellow at the State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC) where her work focuses on conducting qualitative health policy research and evaluation, and providing technical assistance to states. Her recent work includes serving as Principal Investigator on a study supported by the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC) to identify remaining risk points and examples of mitigation strategies to overcome risks to Medicaid enrollment and renewal for eligible individuals. Additionally, Ms. Zylla participated in assessments of health information exchange (HIE) policies in two states, and is currently leading SHADAC's work examining how states are using data to track impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on issues of health equity. Prior to joining SHADAC, Ms. Zylla worked for nine years as a consultant specializing in state health policy analysis, legislative relations, and developing health reform strategies to increase access to health care for underserved populations. During that time, she also served as Staff Director for the Minnesota Health Care Safety Net Coalition. Ms. Zylla holds a master's degree in Public Health with a concentration in Public Health Administration and Policy and a bachelor's degree in History and Sociology of Science.

### **Tamar Magarik Haro**

*Senior Director, Federal and State Advocacy, The American Academy of Pediatrics*

Tamar Magarik Haro has spent more than 17 years working in health care policy and public health where she has shaped many of the most consequential laws affecting the lives of millions of Americans, especially children. In Tamar's role on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, she played a key role in writing and negotiating the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act with a particular focus on consumer protections, insurance market reforms, and public health. While on the HELP Committee, she also played a critical role in the development and passage of the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act, the PREEMIE Act, the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Act, the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Extension Act, among others. Both on and off Capitol Hill, Tamar is looked to for her knowledge of and strategic insights on Food and Drug Administration-related laws, regulations, and policies affecting children. Currently at the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), where she oversees teams in DC and in Itasca, IL that includes federal and state advocacy staff, Tamar is a proven leader and seasoned advocate for pediatricians and children. She serves as principal advisor to AAP leadership and its 67,000 members on policy and advocacy related to immigrant child health, nutrition, mental health, and disaster preparedness and provides leadership on federal and state advocacy initiatives related to insurance coverage, Medicaid and CHIP, and Food and Drug Administration policy. Her tenacity and expertise on policy and legislative strategy resulted in the enactment and first-ever funding of pediatric tele-mental health grants totaling \$50 million over 5

years. Tamar is a frequent public speaker to physician and non-physician audiences on advocacy and policy.

### **Jessie Mandle**

*Senior Health Policy Analyst, Voices for Utah Children*

Jessie joined the organization in 2015. Prior to joining Voices for Utah Children, Jessie was a Senior Program Planner with the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families. Jessie has also worked as a policy researcher in Johannesburg, South Africa, and managed a CDC healthy communities grant for Multnomah County Aging and Disability Services in Portland, Oregon. Jessie has a Master's degree in Public Health from the joint Oregon MPH Program (Portland State University and Oregon Health and Science University) and a B.A. in Government from Wesleyan University in Connecticut.

### **Mike Odeh**

*Director, Health, Children Now*

Mike brings extensive health policy and advocacy expertise to Children Now, where his work focuses on health coverage, access, quality, financing, and care delivery. Prior to joining Children Now, Mike worked at Health Access, a California health care consumer advocacy organization, and previously at the Center for Children and Families at the Georgetown University Health Policy Institute. Mike has also taught a health policy course at San Francisco State University. Mike holds a Master of Public Policy degree from Georgetown University and an undergraduate degree from Creighton University.

### **Edwin Park**

*Research Professor, Georgetown University Center for Children and Families*

Edwin's work primarily focuses on Medicaid, CHIP, and the ACA and he is considered one of the nation's leading health policy experts on issues related to Medicaid and CHIP financing and the ACA's coverage expansions. He also analyzes tax policies related to health care, private health insurance markets, and policies related to prescription drugs. Previously, he worked at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities where he was Vice President for Health Policy. He also served as the health policy advisor for the National Economic Council at the White House during the Clinton Administration and as a Medicaid professional staff member for the U.S. Senate Finance Committee, as part of the minority staff of then-Ranking Member Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. He also was an attorney at Hogan & Hartson (now Hogan Lovells). He is a member of the National Academy of Social Insurance.

### **La-Mine Perkins**

*Assistant Director of Community Engagement, NC Child*

When La-Mine was eight, she wanted to be a chef. Today she still loves to cook, and she coordinates NC Child's outreach and story collection work, leading both our Youth Advocacy Council and Parent Advisory Council. La-Mine received her BSW at NC State University, She recently received her MSW from NC State while also working full-time and raising a family. Believe it or not, she also finds time to read. La-Mine's favorite thing about working at NC Child is, "being a part of a team that's striving to use both data and the lived experiences of people to inform our work."

### **Christopher Perlera**

*Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships & Messaging, Georgia Division of Family and Children Services*

Christopher is the Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships & Messaging for the Georgia Division of Family & Children Services. He joined the Division in late 2020 after consulting for 5 years in the areas of government, international and community affairs. Prior to starting his own consulting firm, he served as a special projects coordinator, business analyst and press secretary for the Georgia Secretary of State. He is a graduate of the University of Georgia, a LEAD Atlanta 2015 alumni and was recognized as one of the 50 most influential Latinos of 2020 by the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Christopher is the son of Salvadoran refugees and cares deeply about Georgia's Latin American and immigrant community. He is fully bilingual, bicultural, and professionally literate in Spanish with a degree in Romance languages in addition to being a lifelong bilingual learner. Last, but most importantly, Christopher is proud to serve Georgia's families and children because they are the fundamental building blocks of a healthy society.

### **Kyrstin Racine**

*State Health Policy Analyst, Georgetown University Center for Children and Families*

Kyrstin Racine is a State Health Policy Analyst with the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families. Prior to this role, Kyrstin was the Executive Policy Assistant at the Center for Children and Families for three years, and interned at health policy-focused nonprofits beforehand. Kyrstin graduated with a B.A. in Political Science from The George Washington University in 2015 and completed her Master of Public Policy degree at the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University in 2020.

### **Andy Schneider**

*Research Professor of the Practice, Georgetown University Center for Children and Families*

Andy Schneider is a Research Professor of the Practice at the Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy. Schneider has over 40 years of experience with the Medicaid program as a Congressional staffer, Executive Branch employee, private consultant, and public interest attorney. Most recently, he served under the Obama Administration as a Senior Advisor at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), where he focused on program integrity issues in Medicaid. He joined the Center for Children and Families in March of 2017. Andy has written extensively on Medicaid issues and led the development of the *Medicaid Resource Book* (2002) for the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. He is a graduate of Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

### **Dr. Jamila Taylor**

*Director of Health Care Reform and Senior Fellow, The Century Foundation*

Dr. Jamila K. Taylor is director of health care reform and senior fellow at The Century Foundation, where she leads TCF's work to build on the Affordable Care Act and develop the next generation of health reform to achieve high-quality, affordable, and universal coverage in America. A renowned health policy expert, Taylor also works on issues related to reproductive rights and justice, focusing on the structural barriers to access to health care, racial and gender disparities in health outcomes, and the intersections between health care and economic justice. Taylor graduated with honors from Hampton University with a Bachelor of Arts in political science. She also holds a master's degree in public administration from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Ph.D. in political science from



Howard University. Taylor serves on the board of directors for Black Mamas Matter Alliance, March For Moms and Mamatoto Village (where she serves as chairwoman of the board). She also serves on the Reproductive Freedom Leadership Council Advocates Advisory Board of State Innovation Exchange (SiX).

### **Mary Nelle Trefz**

*Policy Coordinator, Common Good Iowa*

As a health policy advocate Mary Nelle performs research on various health policy issues to help inform legislation and develop evidence-based policies that protect and promote the health and well-being of children. Mary Nelle received her B.S. in Health Policy and Management from Providence College in Providence, Rhode Island, and completed her Master's of Public Health in Community and Behavioral Health at the University of Iowa. Mary Nelle lives in Des Moines with her husband, daughter and standard poodle. She enjoys baking and spending time outdoors.

### **Monica Trevino**

*Director of Center for Social Enterprise, Michigan Public Health Institute*

Ms. Trevino has over 20 years of experience advocating for better health care for the poor, including firsthand experience as a Medicaid beneficiary, Community Health Worker, and Medicaid administrator. She has expertise in healthcare quality measurement from project planning and design to data collection, analysis, and reporting. Ms. Trevino has experience working in the Medicaid quality improvement space, including development, implementation, and tracking of performance measures for traditional Medicaid and the Healthy Michigan Plan (Medicaid expansion). She also conceptualized and coordinated the Medicaid Health Equity Project, a project that identified racial/ethnic disparities in care received by Medicaid beneficiaries in Michigan. Her team's current work focuses on; helping clients develop effective, sustainable ways to address social determinants of health; teaching caregivers/advocates to use technology to connect Medicaid beneficiaries with eligibility, enrollment, and claims information; validating the completeness and accuracy of health information used provider offices and ensuring the data transmitted contributes to providers' ability to deliver high quality care. She earned her master's degree in anthropology from Western Michigan University and a bachelor's degree in anthropology from the University of Michigan. She expects to complete her doctorate in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences from Western Michigan University in 2020.

### **Congresswoman Lauren Underwood**

*U.S. Representative, Illinois's 14<sup>th</sup> Congressional District*

Congresswoman Lauren Underwood serves Illinois' 14th Congressional District and was sworn into the 116th U.S. Congress on January 3, 2019. Congresswoman Underwood is the first woman, the first person of color, and the first millennial to represent her community in Congress. She is also the youngest African American woman to serve in the United States House of Representatives. Congresswoman Underwood serves on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and the House Committee on Appropriations. Congresswoman Underwood co-founded and co-chairs the Black Maternal Health Caucus, which elevates the Black maternal health crisis within Congress and advances policy solutions to improve maternal health outcomes and end disparities. She also serves on the House Democratic Steering and Policy Committee. Rep. Underwood is a member of the Future Forum, a group of young Democratic Members of Congress committed to listening to and standing up for the next generation of Americans, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), and the

LGBT Equality Caucus. As a strong supporter of addressing the gun violence epidemic, Congresswoman Underwood is a member of the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force. Prior to her election to Congress, Congresswoman Underwood worked with a Medicaid plan in Chicago to ensure that it provided high-quality, cost-efficient care. She served as a Senior Advisor at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), helping communities across the country prevent, prepare for, and respond to disasters, bioterror threats, and public health emergencies. As a career public servant at HHS, she helped implement the Affordable Care Act — broadening access for those on Medicare, improving health care quality, and reforming private insurance. Congresswoman Underwood also taught future nurse practitioners through Georgetown University's online master's program. Congresswoman Underwood is a graduate of the University of Michigan and Johns Hopkins University. She graduated from Neuqua Valley High School and is a lifelong Girl Scout. She resides in Naperville, Illinois.

### **Kelly Whitener**

*Associate Research Professor of the Practice, Georgetown University Center for Children and Families*

Kelly Whitener is an Associate Professor of the Practice at the Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy's Center for Children and Families (CCF) where she focuses on pediatric health benefits and managed care delivery systems as well as promoting state level advocacy to improve care for children and families. Prior to joining CCF, Kelly served as the Director of State Coverage Programs at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, overseeing the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Basic Health Program. Kelly also worked for the Senate Committee on Finance, managing the Medicaid, CHIP, and prevention and wellness portfolio from October 2008 to April 2014. During her time with the committee, Kelly worked on the CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2009, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, and several year-end bills extending expiring safety net programs. Kelly studied psychology and Spanish at the University of Michigan and earned a Masters of Public Health from UCLA and a Juris Doctorate from Georgetown University.

### **Sandy Won**

*Senior Vice President, GMMB*

Sandy brings more than 15 years of experience working with nonprofit organizations in strategic communications planning, message development, advocacy, web and social media strategy, marketing and branding. At GMMB, Sandy specializes in health coverage, working with organizations, foundations and government agencies. She leads work for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' Connecting Kids to Coverage Campaign, a national effort to enroll eligible families into Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program. She also provides strategic counsel and manages health coverage initiatives for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Prior to GMMB, Sandy directed strategic communications for the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), a global development institute focused on ending global poverty among women and girls. Previously, she worked for the Alliance for Retired Americans, an affiliate of the AFL-CIO, where she helped position the organization's communications and advocacy efforts around Medicare and Social Security. She also worked for the Children's Defense Fund, managing communications activities to support the group's policy advocacy and outreach to grassroots organizations.