

Understanding Training and Workforce Pathways to Develop and Retain Black Maternal Health Clinicians in California

Speaker Biographies

Patricia LaBrie Calloway is a labor Public Health Nurse in Alameda County and has been for over 20 years. She also enjoys working in Labor and Delivery and Neonatal Intensive Care at an inner-city hospital. She is a firm believer in advocating and providing quality, client-centered care for birthing families. She balances work with sports, reading, travel, and precious time with family.

Joy A. Cooper, MD MSc is a Philadelphia native and an Obstetrician-Gynecologist in Oakland, California. She completed residency at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. She earned her MD from Howard University, completed a Master's in Sexually Transmitted Infections & HIV at University College of London/London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. She earned an A.B. in African and African-American Studies at Harvard College. Through her telemedicine startup Culture Care, she is fulfilling her mission to impact women of the African Diaspora by linking Black women to Black doctors with the click of a button.

Eona Harrison is a senior research associate in the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center at the Urban Institute. She is the project manager for the Promoting Adolescent Sexual Health and Safety project, a cluster randomized controlled trial of a community-based curriculum for teens living in DC public housing developments. Harrison is a trained family demographer whose work examines women's strategies to achieving their reproductive goals. She focuses on pathways that lead to racial disparities in unintended pregnancy rates, infant and child outcomes, and general health. Before joining Urban, Harrison worked with the Maryland Population Research Center, where she assisted with quantitative and qualitative research in evaluating a statewide intervention to address unintended pregnancy. Harrison earned her PhD in sociology from the University of Maryland.

Sumayya Sulaiman is currently the Scholarship Coordinator and faculty member at Mercy In Action College of Midwifery. This is also where she graduated and became a certified professional midwife in 2019. Sulaiman attended George Mason University for her BSN. And currently works as a labor and delivery nurse at Reston Hospital Center and a nurse birth attendant at Premier Birth Center. To broaden her scope of practice, Sulaiman is currently enrolled at Frontier Nursing University to complete a masters in Nurse Midwifery.

Kasandra White, MD, is a licensed physician and surgeon specializing in Obstetrics and Gynecology. Dr. White is the former Chief of Obstetrics and Medical Director of the Family Birthing Center at Highland Hospital in Oakland, California, in the town where she was born and raised. Dr. White's current work includes direct clinical patient care with focuses on general and preventative health of women, gynecologic surgery and preconception and perinatal care as well as being an active member for the hospital's Quality Review Committee. Her skill in gynecologic minimally invasive surgery has earned her award recognition from professional medical societies and networks. Dr. White was inducted into Gold Humanism Honor Society, where dignity and value are placed at the core of patient care and medical teaching. She currently serves on a national medical advisory board engaged in developing patient centered care in efforts to eliminate health disparities. Her role has extended to serving as advisory council for health and wellness equity while also serving as a mentor and physician advisor to students from underinvested communities and thus, fostering and supporting the pipeline to medicine where she has earned awards and recognition for teaching. Dr. White's educational contributions and partnerships with community organizations are important focuses in her practice all in the setting of community advocacy. Dr. White extends her work to advisory and consulting in medical technology and future innovations.