



INTERFAITH COMMUNITIES FOR DIALOGUE (ICD)

RACISM AND SYSTEMIC BIAS: PANELIST BIOS

GEORGES C. BENJAMIN, MD

Executive Director, American Public Health Association (APHA)



Georges Benjamin is known as one of the nation's most influential physician leaders because he speaks passionately and eloquently about the health issues having the most impact on our nation today. From his firsthand experience as a physician, he knows what happens when preventive care is not available and when the healthy choice is not the easy choice. As executive director of APHA since 2002, he is leading the Association's push to make America the healthiest nation in one generation.

He came to APHA from his position as secretary of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Benjamin became secretary of health in Maryland in April 1999, following four years as its deputy secretary for public health services. As secretary, Benjamin oversaw the expansion and improvement of the state's Medicaid program.

Benjamin, of Gaithersburg, Maryland, is a graduate of the Illinois Institute of Technology and the University of Illinois College of Medicine. He is board-certified in internal medicine and a fellow of the American College of Physicians, a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration, a fellow emeritus of the American College of Emergency Physicians and an honorary fellow of the Royal Society of Public Health.

An established administrator, author and orator, Benjamin started his medical career in 1981 in Tacoma, Wash., where he managed a 72,000-patient visit ambulatory care service as chief of the Acute Illness Clinic at the Madigan Army Medical Center and was an attending physician within the Department of Emergency Medicine. A few years later, he moved to Washington, D.C., where he served as chief of emergency medicine at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. After leaving the Army, he chaired the Department of Community Health and Ambulatory Care at the District of Columbia General Hospital. He was promoted to acting commissioner for public health for the District of Columbia and later directed one of the busiest ambulance services in the nation as interim director of the Emergency Ambulance Bureau of the District of Columbia Fire Department.

At APHA, Benjamin also serves as publisher of the nonprofit's monthly publication, *The Nation's Health*, the association's official newspaper, and the *American Journal of Public Health*, the profession's premier scientific publication. He is the author of more than 100 scientific articles and book chapters. His recent book *The Quest for Health Reform: A Satirical History* is an exposé of the nearly 100-year quest to ensure quality affordable health coverage for all through the use of political cartoons.

Benjamin is a member of the National Academy of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine) of the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine and also serves on the boards for many organizations including Research!America and the Reagan-Udall Foundation. In 2008, 2014 and 2016 he was named one of the top 25 minority executives in health care by Modern Healthcare Magazine, in addition to being voted among the 100 most influential people in health care from 2007-2017. In April

2016, President Obama appointed Benjamin to the National Infrastructure Advisory Council, a council that advises the president on how best to assure the security of the nation's critical infrastructure.

KARLA BRUCE
Fairfax County Chief Equity Officer



Karla Bruce is a dedicated public servant with more than 20 years of experience leading efforts to address the most challenging social issues facing communities. She currently serves as the Chief Equity Officer for Fairfax County, Virginia. In that role, she provides overall management of the One Fairfax strategic framework by serving as the county's racial and social equity liaison, engaging stakeholders and partners, and advising and supporting the Board of Supervisors, executive leadership and department Leadership in shaping and directing policy and practice to create equitable opportunity for all Fairfax County residents.

Bruce was also charged with leading a Task Force on Equity and Opportunity created by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors after a police use of force incident in the Mount Vernon area. The purpose of the Task Force was to “explore the range of situations and conditions that contribute to disproportionate trends, facilitate shared responsibility and collective action, build on the strengths of our community and lift up solutions to make all residents and neighborhoods more resilient”. Ms. Bruce holds a Master of Public Administration and certification in Process Management from George Mason University and is also a Certified Public Manager and a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist.

CAMARA PHYLLIS JONES, MD, MPH, PHD
Family Physician, Epidemiologist, Past President of APHA



Camara Phyllis Jones is a family physician and epidemiologist whose work focuses on naming, measuring, and addressing the impacts of racism on the health and well-being of the nation.

She is a Past President of the American Public Health Association and was the 2019-2020 Evelyn Green Davis Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University. She has taught at the Harvard School of Public Health, Morehouse School of Medicine, and Rollins School of Public Health and served as a medical officer at the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Her allegories on "race" and racism illuminate topics that are otherwise difficult for many Americans to understand or discuss. Recognizing that racism saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources, she aims to mobilize and engage all Americans in a National Campaign Against Racism.

MICHELLE KROCKER, MUEP

Executive Director, Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance



Michelle Krocker is a public policy and community development consultant, assisting private sector organizations and local governments in creating diverse, affordable communities through effective housing and land use policies. She is a founding member and Executive Director of the Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance, a regional advocacy coalition engaged in expanding the base of political will for adequate public resources to address the unmet housing needs of Northern Virginia's low and moderate income households.

Prior to joining the Alliance, Michelle was Director of Housing and Community Development for Cornerstones (formerly Reston Interfaith), a human services agency serving low income families in northwestern Fairfax County. In that capacity she led the department in the acquisition, financing and rehabilitation of scattered-site rental housing for households served by the agency.

Michelle has served on multiple citizen advisory boards. She was a member of the Tysons Land Use Task Force (2005 – 2010), charged with planning the redevelopment of 1700 acres of Tysons Corner, and Chair of its Affordable Housing Subcommittee. She also served on the Housing Advisory Board to the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, acting as Chairman for two years. Current advisory boards include BB&T's Community Development Advisory Committee, The Housing Leaders Group of Greater Washington, the Fairfax County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, the Alexandria Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (Chair), and the Board of Directors for Housing Virginia, a statewide housing education, advocacy and policy organization.

Michelle holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from George Mason University, and a Master of Arts in Environmental and Urban Planning from the University of Virginia.

CAPTAIN DARRELL NICHOLS
FCPD Equity Lead



Captain Nichols started his career with the Fairfax County Police Department in November 1992. He is currently one of four Staff Duty Officers assigned to the Patrol Division, in which he commands field operations for the Fairfax County Police Department. Since May 2019, Captain Nichols has been involved with One Fairfax and currently serves as the FCPD Lead representative in One Fairfax.

Captain Nichols is a Co-Chair for the Human Relations Policy Committee, which focuses on procedural justice. He has led numerous Town Hall meetings focused on equity in policing and race, led Community Inclusion Groups, focused on reviewing FCPD policies and procedures to ensure equity and racial equity, and collaborated with external partners. He maintains liaison relationships with Center for Policing Equity and advises the Chief of Police on equity matters. Captain Nichols is currently drafting a guidance document for FCPD leadership on the topic of disproportionality and disparity as it relates to use of force and race relations, and trust building.

His recent assignments were Deputy Incident Commander for the Emergency Service Bureau, Assistant Commander of the Mount Vernon District Station, Assistant Commander of the Personnel and Resources Division, Second Lieutenant with the Internal Affairs Bureau, and a Second Lieutenant in the Patrol Bureau. Captain Nichols is a passionate mentor coach, expert communicator with a high EQ; has authored policies, and procedures; and has a graduate degree in Homeland Security from American Military University in West Virginia. Captain Nichols is an innovative police leader who is focused on building and sustaining community relationships.

SEAN PERRYMAN
President, Fairfax County NAACP



Sean Perryman is the president of the Fairfax County NAACP. He's the youngest president in the branch's 102 year history. In this organization, he has been a leader on addressing the school to prison pipeline, police reform, affordable housing, and worker protections during the coronavirus pandemic. He recently announced he's running for Lieutenant Governor of Virginia. A frequent speaker and author on race, equity, and police & criminal justice reform, Sean is also an acknowledged leader and speaker for equity in technology and artificial intelligence policy.

Sean graduated from Baruch College and then went on to earn a law degree from Vanderbilt University. Sean works as Director of Social Impact Policy at Internet Association (IA).

Sean and his family reside in northern Virginia. He's proud to call this his community and he strives to give back to it every day.

MARTY SWAIM, MA
Co-founder, Challenging Racism



Marty Swaim, the co-founder of Challenging Racism (CR), an Arlington based educational NGO, is a retired Arlington Public School (APS) social studies teacher. She returned to teaching after her children were all in school. She is a lifetime National Education Association member and two time local president of the Arlington Education Association. She holds a BA in Government from Oberlin College, an MA in American History from Howard University, is a Teacher consultant from the George Mason University Writing Project, a certified facilitator in Results Based Facilitation, and she held certification in Secondary teaching and Administration in Virginia.

Her journey to understanding racism grew out of her teaching experience in Arlington Public Schools when she began to question how it was possible that the best funded school system in Virginia produced large numbers of Black and Latinx students who could not write in 9th grade. In 2004-2005, she began a series of conversations on challenging racism with the goal of creating a community of people in Arlington who would support and demand the end of achievement gaps and other forms of racism. These conversations developed into a process that provides knowledge about racism, develops self-knowledge around race and racism, builds relationships among people who are on the journey of anti-racism, and incorporates practice in applying listening skills and engaging in difficult conversations in order to challenge racism.

B. MICHAEL WOLTZ, 3RD
Chair, Fairfax Title I Parent Advisory Committee



Mike Woltz is a father of two students in Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia. His educational advocacy began when he served as PTA President of Weyanoke Elementary. Since that time, he has spearheaded fatherhood engagement initiatives, chairs the Fairfax Title I Parent Advisory Committee, which seeks to ensure equity for students and families in Title I schools, and chairs the Northern Virginia District PTA's Diversity, Inclusion, and Outreach Committee. He also Chair of the Fairfax NAACP's Legal Redress Committee. Mike is an attorney for the federal government.