

# 2022-2023 AWHONN Emerging Leaders

## **Jamie Agunsday, MA, MSN, RNC-OB**

"I strongly believe that nurses are key to reducing maternal morbidity and mortality. As a nurse who is passionate about making childbearing safer, my goal is to gain experience and expertise so I can lead and mentor others in addressing this issue. I hope to expand my abilities to focus on equity, to ensure the voices of those most marginalized are represented and uplifted, and to lead nurses to have difficult conversations. I believe the Emerging Leader Program can help me further these goals."

## **Jacquiline Blanco, BSN, RNC**

My favorite author wrote "it's nearly impossible to blaze one's own path while following in someone else's footsteps." Healthcare in general, and reproductive health in particular, are at a pivotal moment. As nurse leaders we must lead the effort to forge new footsteps, demand equity, and insist on creating more space for one another- both in provision of care and as a professional community. AWHONN's Emerging Leader Program is a critical component in growing myself to do this work.

## **Luis Figueroa, MSN, RNC-OB**

My motivation to participate in the AWHONN's Emerging Leaders program is to build on the leadership skills I have learned through my time in the military and academic career. I look forward to collaborating with other nurse leaders and be part of the solution for Diversity, Equality and Inclusion in the women's health world. As well as do my part to reduce the mortality and morbidity rate of minority women, advocating for all women as if they were a member of my family.

## **Katie Halvorsen, BSN**

I am passionate about making a change in maternal morbidity and mortality. I use to be focused on only my patients and my hospital and I want to change that and focus more on the bigger picture. I want to help represent the underserved population of OB in the rural settings and the unique challenges that we face. I am excited to learn and grow with this opportunity and the other amazing leaders along the way.

## **Elena Jenkins, RN, BSN**

I am excited to participate in the Emerging Leaders program to improve my own leadership abilities while working with other nursing leaders to influence nursing culture change and advocacy for birthing people of color. As a black woman who was a young mother, I understand, identify with, and empathize with many challenges black birthing people encounter in their interactions with healthcare. Because of this lived experience, I have a burning passion to help change and improve the negative experiences and outcomes experienced by birthing people of color.

## **Tracie Kincel, MSN-RN**

One of the main reasons that I became interested in the AWHONN Emerging Leaders Program is due to Louisiana having the highest maternal mortality rate in the country. I want to be able to expand my leadership skillset to enable me to impact maternal mortality and disparities in healthcare.

**Elizabeth Laughlin, BSN, RNC-OB**

The Great Plains region of the United States not only cares for women from rural communities within a radius of hundreds of miles, but also serves a large indigenous population as well. It is important to me that we give these women the very best, inclusive care possible. I am looking forward to being mentored by other women's health leaders from across the U.S. and bringing back tools and resources to better facilitate, educate, and implement more equity, inclusion, best practices to women in these parts of the country.

**Kris Lindeman, MSN, RN, PNP-AC**

"As an Emerging Leader, I am looking forward to enhancing my leadership skills and learn how I can best advocate for healthcare equity for ALL people. Perinatal care has historically focused on white, straight, cisgendered women and their babies despite the ever increasing diversity that exists among child-bearing individuals. I hope to provide meaningful input as we turn away from the status quo and embrace change."

**MioNeshia McDonald, MSN, RNC-OB, CLC**

I'm interested in participating in the AWHONN Emerging Leaders Program because I am passionate about diversity, inclusion, and equality. I hope to further develop skills as a nurse leader to enhance outcomes for my current patient population and help to bring diversity, inclusion, and equality to my current work environment.

**Cheniqua Morales, BSN, RNC-MNN, C-EFM, C-ONQS**

While her passion for nursing and equitable outcomes drives her career path, work-life balance is an essential core value for Cheniqua. Protecting time to create beautiful memories with her daughter, friends and family is one of her biggest inspirations. Whether it is traveling the world, exploring the beauty of New York City or planning family game nights, she is intentional about creating time for those people most important in her life.

**Tenesia Richards, EMPA, RNC-OB, C-ONQS, CCE, C-EFM**

Tenesia Richards is clinical nurse manager of the Women's Health and Pediatric practices at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell's Ambulatory Care Network (ACN). She is also clinical coordinator for community outreach in the ACN. Tenesia's goal is to improve the quality of healthcare by linking community and population health to the outpatient and inpatient worlds.

**Joshua Womack, MSN, CNS, RN, RNC-OB**

When I began my nursing career in the Navy, I was taken aback by my assignment to Labor & Delivery; this was never a field of nursing where I had worked alongside male nurses nor seen it portrayed in popular culture. . . but I loved it! I have spent the last few years reflecting on the assumptions this nursing ideology and historical roles in childbirth has on not only perinatal nursing, but nursing in general. I am honored by the opportunity to work alongside nurse leaders in the program, and I am eager to explore how generalizations and their implications contribute to a lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion in perinatal & women's health settings and the profession at large.