



Health Leadership Fellows

Cheri Alvarez

Coordinator, Closing the Gap, Catholic Charities, Buffalo, WNY



Since 2010, Cheri Alvarez has been the coordinator of Closing the Gap (CTG) at Catholic Charities, where she is responsible for the oversight, development and implementation of site facilitators in the Buffalo Public Schools. She is responsible for maintaining relationships with 50 CTG partnering agencies and organizations.

Previously, Cheri served as the director of foster care and permanency services at Gateway-Longview. This included oversight of the Home Finding program, Parenting program, Preventive Respite, Foster Care and Adoption programs. Also during her tenure at Gateway-Longview, she served as the clinical supervisor of community services and supervisor of visitation aides/senior adoption and foster care specialist.

Cheri holds a master's degree in counseling education from Canisius College where she is an adjunct instructor.

She resides in Pendleton, NY with her husband, Carlos and her two kids, Caleigh and Devin.

Jessica Bauer Walker

Executive Director, Community Health Worker Network of Buffalo, WNY



Jessica Bauer Walker is currently the executive director of the Community Health Worker Network of Buffalo, where she works as a Community Health Worker, trainer and facilitator of collaborative projects. Jessica has worked in community-building and civic engagement in local, national and international contexts.

She has served in AmeriCorps and the U.S. Peace Corps; as an organizer in two presidential campaigns and director of operations for Rock the Vote; and as a project manager for community-based organizations and initiatives targeting issues such as youth development, environmental health and HIV/AIDS.

Jessica is involved in many health and education initiatives in Buffalo, serving as the 2nd vice president and Health Committee chairperson of the Buffalo Public Schools District Parent Coordinating Council and leads many other community projects. Jessica works to foster a more just, healthy and sustainable world for our children and all future generations.

Paula Cerio

Director of Quality and Program Development, Salvation Army, CNY



As director of quality and program development, Paula Cerio is responsible for oversight of all quality assurance functions such as program accountability, quality service delivery, program effectiveness and compliance with licensing, certification and contract requirements for the organization. She facilitates the agency-wide accreditation process through the Council on Accreditation. She is responsible for research and grant writing for the development of new programs.

Paula obtained her bachelor's degree in psychology from Nazareth College and her master's degree in counseling from SUNY Oswego. She has worked in human service agencies in the areas of mental health, substance abuse, child welfare, juvenile justice, and social services for more than 20 years. For 15 years, her primary administrative focus has been continuous quality improvement and program development.

John Craik

Vice President, Administrator Services, Baker Victory Services, WNY



John Craik is vice president of administrative services at Baker Victory Services, a health and human services provider serving children and families with 1,100 employees, three unions and multiple programs. He is also an adjunct professor at D'Youville College, teaching a graduate level seminar on leadership in the health care industry. His past professional experience includes executive director roles in non-profits serving children and youth, as well as one providing legislative support for a New York State assemblyman.

John graduated from Cornell University with a degree in organizational development and is a magna cum laude graduate of the SUNY at Buffalo School of Law, where he served as the Editor-in-Chief of the Buffalo Law Review. A graduate of Leadership Buffalo, the Oishei Young Leaders Group and the Harvard Business School Club of Buffalo Not-for-Profit Management and Development Program, he is a Six Sigma Yellow Belt.

He lives in North Buffalo with his wife and two teen-aged children.

Elizabeth Crockett

Executive Director, REACH CNY, CNY



Elizabeth Crockett has been executive director of REACH CNY, Inc. since 2000. REACH CNY works to improve health and eliminate health disparities in central New York. Its current programs focus on improving maternal child health, reducing adolescent pregnancy and training health and human service providers. Previously she was nutrition resource coordinator at the Food Bank of CNY and nutrition coordinator at PEACE, Inc. Head Start

Liz earned a bachelor's degree from Vassar College, a master's degree and a doctorate in nutrition from Syracuse University, and is also a Registered Dietitian. She has served on the Boards of Directors of several organizations, including the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior, Syracuse Cooperative Federal Credit Union, the Association of Perinatal Networks of NY and MAMI Interpreters.

Mary Beth Debus

Senior Vice President of Programs and Capacity Building, EPIC, (Every Person Influences Children), adjunct faculty, Department of Communication, State University of New York at Buffalo, consultant, WNY



Mary Beth Debus has worked in not-for profit, for profit, and collaborative programs in training, program development, capacity building, organizational development, facilitation, coaching, grant management, project and program management and process redesign.

Mary Beth has a bachelor's degree and master's degree from the University at Buffalo in communication, with a focus on organizational communication.

Mary Beth is a graduate of Leadership Buffalo, has served on several boards, and is a featured contributor to TheNorthBuffaloProject.com.

A resident of North Buffalo, Mary Beth is proud of her two daughters, Monica and Eliza.

Courtney Fasolino

Executive Director, First Choice Health Managed Care Long Term Care Plan, WNY



Courtney Fasolino is executive director for First Choice Health Managed Long Term Care Plan, a managed long term care plan for low income individuals who require long term care services and wish to remain in the community. Before joining First Choice Health she was chief executive officer for Complete Senior Care, the P.A.C.E. (Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly) in Niagara County.

As a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator, she worked as an administrator for nursing homes and adult care facilities for 10 years.

Courtney earned her master's degree in health services administration from D'Youville College. She lives in Orchard Park, NY and is also a fitness instructor.

Stephanie Fretz

Pediatric Practice, Lifetime Medical Groups William E. Mosher Health Center, WNY



Stephanie Fretz, M.D., joined the pediatric practice at Lifetime Health Medical Group's William E. Mosher Health Center in early 2009, after 15 years of practice at a community health center. She currently serves as chief of pediatrics for Lifetime's Buffalo region, and is also a member of the group's Medical Executive and Quality committees.

She is board-certified in pediatrics and is a member of American Academy of Pediatrics and the Buffalo Pediatric Society. She earned her medical degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo School of Medicine, and completed her residency in pediatrics at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Stephanie was also instrumental in bringing the early literacy program Reach Out and Read to Buffalo, and continues this work today.

Raymond Ganoe

Executive Vice President, Evergreen Association, WNY



Ray Ganoe currently serves as the executive vice president of the Evergreen Association in Buffalo, NY providing administrative oversight to: The Pride Center of WNY, Community Access Services and Evergreen Health Services. Currently the organizations collectively have 150 employees, \$22 million annual budgets and serve the eight counties of western New York.

Ray has a master's degree in healthcare administration, a Bachelor of Social Work degree, is a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives and is a Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC). He is a graduate of the NFP Harvard Business School of Buffalo, a recipient of the Buffalo Ambassador Award, the WebMD Excellence in Service award and the Distinguished Service Award from the New York State Commissioner of Health. He is a member of the Advisory Board for the Social Work Department of Buffalo State College, the University at Buffalo Dean's Advisory Council, the Human Rights Campaign and Buffalo United Artists.

Diane Hage

Manager of Clinical Services, MediSource Products at Independent Health, WNY



As manager of clinical services, MediSource products at Independent Health, Diane Hage provides supervision for the development and implementation of key Medicaid reform initiatives through clinical case management and Community Health Worker efforts. Diane is a Certified Nurse Midwife with experience in maternal child health both in community health and private practice and is a Certified Case Manager in managed care. She serves as staff development specialist and is active in Association of Nurses in AIDS care.

Diane graduated with a bachelor's degree in nursing from the State University of New York and a degree in nurse-midwifery from SUNY Downstate, Brooklyn, and took graduate education courses in public health at Columbia University.

Diane resides in Boston, NY with her wife Fran. She is the proud mother of two children and three step-children.

Nestor Hernandez

Associate Vice President, People Inc., WNY



Nestor Hernandez is associate vice president at People Inc., a non-profit service agency helping seniors, families and people with disabilities. He was previously the executive director of The Belle Center, an organization providing services to families and children in need in the Lower West Side of Buffalo, NY. Nestor is a former U.S. Army Reserve-Civil Affairs Staff Sergeant and is a veteran of Operation Iraqi/Enduring Freedom.

In 2013, Nestor received the FBI Director's Community Leadership Award. Other honors include: Army PLDC-Commandant Honor, Minority Graduate Fellowship-SUNY College at Buffalo, 40 Under 40 Rising Latino Stars in New York State, Business First-40 under 40, and the Bronze Star Medal. Nestor currently serves on the Board of Directors for Buffalo State Community Academic Center and The First Tee of WNY.

Nestor holds a master's degree in student personnel administration from SUNY College at Buffalo.

Howard Hitzel

President, Lake Shore Behavioral Health, Inc., WNY



Dr. Howard Hitzel is a licensed psychologist and president of Lake Shore Behavioral Health, Inc. in Buffalo, New York. Lake Shore Behavioral Health is a nonprofit organization which provides comprehensive treatment and rehabilitation services to individuals with mental illnesses and/or chemical dependency disorders.

Howard earned his Doctor of Psychology degree from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and his bachelor's degree from Grove City College in Grove City, Pennsylvania. In addition to his clinical training, he holds a Master of Public Administration degree from Canisius College.

Howard has worked as a clinician and manager in public mental health settings for more than 30 years, having worked in diverse settings including Six County Community Mental Health Center in Zanesville, OH; the Gowanda Psychiatric Center in Gowanda, NY; the University of Rochester Medical Center; and Attica Correctional Facility. He has served as the president of the Board of the New York State Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare.

Hitzel resides in Hamburg, NY with his wife and two sons where he also maintains a small private psychotherapy practice.

Judith Huober

Executive Director, IMPARA, CNY



A native of Boston, Judith Huober has been active for more than 30 years in several areas critical to the two agencies she directs: for-profit and not-for-profit management, strategic development; communications; community organizing; education; and technology/health care. She has experience in public outreach, technical editing of medical, nursing and allied healthcare texts, not-for-profit consultancy and strategic organizational restructuring.

At the helm of IMPARA (Institute at Menorah Park for Applied Research on Aging) and Syracuse Jewish Family Service, Judith creates strategic alliances and relationships in the central New York region that promote and sustain research on issues of aging, services to elders, their families and support networks, and development of the aging services workforce, with an emphasis on the role of geriatric mental health.

Kimberly Jackson

Pediatrician, Neighborhood Health Center, WNY



Kimberly Jackson, M.D., currently works at Neighborhood Health Center in Buffalo, NY providing general pediatric care to children in the lower west side and Blackrock areas of Buffalo. In her time as a physician in the group she has led collaborations with community partners; designed and rolled out quality improvement projects in asthma and immunizations; and worked to improve the early intervention evaluation rates for the children served by Neighborhood Health Center. Kim serves as the Physician Quality Chair at the Neighborhood Health Center, , overseeing QA/QI projects throughout all three of the Neighborhood Health Center's sites, including pediatric, internal medicine, family medicine, behavioral health, dental, podiatry and nutrition departments.

A graduate of the University of Notre Dame, Kimberly continued her education and earned her medical degree at SUNY Stonybrook Health Sciences Center Medical School. She returned to Buffalo for her residency in pediatrics at Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo.

Brandon Jones

Chief Operating Officer, Syracuse Community Health Center System of Care, CNY



Brandon Jones serves as the chief operating officer for the Syracuse Community Health Center System of Care. He most recently served as Chief Operating Officer for Little River Medical Center, Inc. in Little River, SC and was also an administrative Fellow and project manager at Boston Medical Center as part of the Emerging Leaders in Health Care Administration Fellowship Program in Boston, MA. He has great interest in and commitment to the provision of health care to needy populations through the Federally Qualified Health Center model.

Brandon is a graduate of the University of South Carolina, earning a bachelor's degree in biology in 2004 and a Master of Health Administration degree in 2006.

He is from Conway, South Carolina and enjoys spending time with family, particularly his nephew, and participating in community service events with his fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Christine Kearney

Vice President of Rehabilitation and Community Based Services, St. Camillus Health, CNY



Christine Kearney is the vice president of rehabilitation and community based services at St. Camillus Health and Rehabilitation. She oversees physical, occupational and speech therapies, cognitive health services, a medical and a social day program, community wellness programs, transportation services and community services provided under the New York State Department of Health Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver Program.

A lifelong resident of the Syracuse area, Chris obtained her bachelor's degree in managerial economics from Eisenhower College of the Rochester Institute of Technology and her master's degree in rehabilitation counseling from Syracuse University. She has worked across the non-profit, for-profit and governmental sectors and been in management since 1998. Her experience includes a history of creating programs to support persons to return to, or remain living and being involved in their community.

Brett Lawton

Director of Clinical Operations, Jericho Road Family Practice, WNY



Brett Lawton serves as the director of clinical operations for the Jericho Road Family Practice. This is a private, faith-based safety-net practice that began in 1997. More than half of the patients served are refugees and non-English speakers. Brett played a major role in the merger of Jericho Road Family Practice with Jericho Road Ministries to create the Jericho Road Community Health Center, a New York State Diagnostic and Treatment Facility.

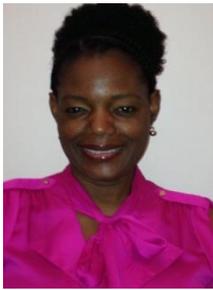
Additionally, Brett oversaw the process by which Jericho Road Family Practice attained the designation of a level three Patient-Centered Medical Home in 2010.

Brett's past professional experience has been with Washington state and the federal governments' Medicaid programs as well as providing services to the poor in Mexico where he met his wife, whose hometown is Buffalo.

Brett received his bachelor's degree from Washington State University in sociology and social welfare and his Master in Public Administration degree from Evergreen State College.

Heather Levy

Director of Nursing, Syracuse Community Health Center, CNY



Heather Levy, RN, BSN, has been employed with Syracuse Community Health Center since November 2010 as director of nursing. Previously, in her role as nurse manager, she was responsible for two sites with SCHC with a total of 24 direct reports: these include ancillary, dental and medical staff departments. Heather identified trends, prioritized and recommended improvements, decreased duplication of service and ensured Joint Commission and New York State Department of Health compliance.

Heather's successes include an increased patient base of more than 500 patients within 11 months through collaboration with the Refugee Center. She worked to increase provider productivity by reducing the high patient "no-show" rate from 35 percent to 28 percent by identifying no show issues and implementing creative scheduling options including same day reminder calls, lowering the high patient transfer rate, and by uncovering and addressing patients' issues. Heather received her bachelor's degree in nursing at Molloy College, Rockville Center, Long Island. She is Six Sigma trained.

She and her husband of 19 years are the proud parents of two boys.

Don Matteson

Chief Program Officer, The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation, WNY



Don Matteson is Chief Program Officer at The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation. Trained as an academic sociologist specializing in demography, research methods, and statistics, he has spent his entire professional career working with not-for-profit organizations in roles ranging from information technology specialist to operations director or as a consultant.

Don did his undergraduate studies at Oberlin College in Ohio, and earned his master's degree in sociology at the University at Buffalo.

In his spare time, he plays with technology and trains to run half-, full-, and ultra-marathons, mostly half-marathons these days.

Elizabeth Mauro

Executive Director, Mid-Erie Counseling and Treatment Services, WNY



Elizabeth Mauro was appointed to her current position as executive director of Mid-Erie Counseling and Treatment Services in 2007. In this role, she is responsible for managing the full range of behavioral health and support services which Mid-Erie provides to the community. Since her appointment, she has led the growth and expansion of the organization from Erie County into Niagara, Orleans and Monroe counties.

Mid-Erie currently operates 26 different programs and is licensed in the areas of adult mental health, child mental health and alcohol and substance abuse services.

Elizabeth is from the Buffalo area and a graduate of the State University of New York at Buffalo's graduate program in social work. She is a scholarship recipient to the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government Executive Education program; an adjunct professor at Saint Bonaventure University Graduate School of Education; a teacher/moderator for The Harvard Business School Club of Buffalo; and serves as the Western Region Representative Board Member for the New York Council on Community Behavioral Healthcare.

Robert T. Mayer

Vice President of Finance and CFO, Weinberg Campus, WNY



Robert T. Mayer has been the vice president of finance and chief financial officer of The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Campus and each of its subsidiaries since 1995. He is a graduate of Canisius College with a bachelor's degree in finance and graduated from the Simon School of Business at the University of Rochester with a Master of Business Administration degree in finance, applied economics and corporate accounting. Robert is a Certified Management Accountant, a Certified Financial Manager as well as a Certified

Aging Services Professional.

Robert is a member of the Institute of Management Accountants, the Healthcare Financial Management Association and a member of the Leadership Buffalo Class of 2005. He is also a member of the LeadingAge Leadership Academy Class of 2010. He is currently a member of the Board of Directors of LeadingAge New York, serves on the Finance Committee and is a member of the Home and Community Based Services Cabinet. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of People, Inc. and is chairman of the Audit Committee.

He is also a board member and treasurer of the LeadingAge Leadership Academy Alumni Association as well as a board member of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Colleen Muncy- Lofft

Assistant Administrator, Odd Fellow and Rebekah Health Care Facility, WNY



Colleen Muncy-Lofft is currently employed Odd Fellow and Rebekah Health Care Facility, a short-term rehab and skilled nursing facility, as the assistant administrator. Colleen's role as assistant administrator is to lead, support and guide the directors toward standards that uphold the highest quality of care.

Colleen previously served as finance director for 10 years at the organization, giving her a thorough understanding of the financial complexities of state and federal health care funding and securing resources needed to deliver quality care. She has also worked in various health care settings in western New York including hospitals, physician offices, home care and skilled nursing.

Colleen has a bachelor's degree in public relations and advertising from Buffalo State College and a master's degree in business administration from Niagara University.

Diane Oyler

Coordinator of Neighborhood Services, Erie County Department of Senior Services, WNY



Diane Oyler is the coordinator of neighborhood services for the Erie County Department of Senior Services, the lead agency in Erie County for the delivery of Older American Act services. Key responsibilities include collaborating with other Erie County departments and members of the non-profit community to coordinate, evaluate, and improve services for older adults; identifying new resources to improve and expand the community network of senior services; and overseeing departmental planning activities.

Diane is also a member of the Buffalo State public administration faculty. She teaches graduate research methods, data analysis, and a seminar on the Aging Network. In addition, she sits on the Graduate Public Administration Committee, which works to strengthen the Buffalo State Master of Public Administration program and its role in training present and future western New York leaders in the public sector and non-profit community.

Diane holds a Ph.D. in political science from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Laura Paolucci

Public Health Administrator, Wyoming County Health Department, WNY



Laura Paolucci is the public health administrator of the Wyoming County Health Department. She provides for the operational, administrative and strategic needs of the department, across all divisions, including nursing, environmental health, public health preparedness and family planning.

Laura is actively involved at local, regional and state levels to address rural public health issues in the changing health care and service delivery landscape, working with hospitals, health departments and community-based organizations in Genesee, Orleans and Wyoming counties on the Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan.

She earned her degree in business administration from the State University of New York at Buffalo. Following graduation, she worked in commercial and retail banking before undergoing a career transplant in 2000, when she began working for Wyoming County, joining the Health Department in 2003. Laura is involved with many local organizations dedicated to serving the needs of communities, residents and youth.

She lives with her husband and two children in Alexander, NY.

Michael C. Pease

Chief Executive Officer, The Chautauqua Center, WNY



Michael C. Pease is the chief executive officer at The Chautauqua Center, located in Dunkirk, NY. Michael began his career as a nurse working in both the Emergency Room and Operating Room at Tri County Hospital and Lake Shore Hospital respectively. After three years working as a nurse he accepted a job at The Resource Center (TRC) and worked there for six years, implementing a Quality Assurance Department for clinical services.

Prior to accepting his current position he worked with the Chautauqua County Health Network as program manager, serving as the point person for clinical relations with 140 physicians and four hospitals.

He received a nursing degree from Jamestown Community College and his master's degree in social policy with a concentration in healthcare administration.

Michael resides in Cherry Creek with his wife Amy. He has been a member of the Pine Valley school board for seven years chairing its School Based Health Center Advisory Committee and also serves on several other community boards.

Frederick F. Pordum II

Director Physical Therapy Faculty Practice for Wound Care, Daemen College, WNY



Dr. Frederick Pordum has more than 10 years of diverse leadership experience in health care management. Frederick is currently the director of the Daemen College Physical Therapy Faculty Practice for Wound Care. He consults nationally on topics of health care management, administration and clinical practice. He has held senior management positions in rehabilitation, telehealth, wound care and operations in both hospital and privately held companies.

He has a passion for geriatric care and improving the quality of life for seniors. He has been a leader and innovator in the area of reducing avoidable hospitalizations, utilization of telehealth, fall prevention programs, wound care and the creation of efficient management systems to better facilitate and coordinate care.

He received a bachelor's degree in physical therapy and Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from Daemen College in Buffalo, NY. He earned his Master of Business Administration degree with concentrations in operations and marketing from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

He lives in Orchard Park, NY with his wife and three sons.

Lisa Rafalson

Chair, Health Services Administration, D'Youville College, WNY



Lisa Rafalson is the chair of the Health Services Administration department at D'Youville College where she joined the faculty in 2010. She previously worked for the Social Security Administration in Chicago and a law firm in North Carolina representing disabled individuals.

She earned her master's degree and doctoral degree in epidemiology and community health at the State University of New York at Buffalo and a bachelor's degree in Spanish language and literature from Loyola University of Chicago. Her research interest is in type 2 diabetes and she was a National Research Service Award Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Department of Family Medicine at the University at Buffalo.

Lisa is married and has two daughters.

Christian L. Reitler

Program Officer, Health Foundation for Western and Central New York, WNY



Christian Reitler joined the Health Foundation for Western and Central New York as a program officer in September 2013.

Prior to coming to the Foundation, he worked for the American Red Cross, beginning as the program coordinator for the New York State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program in 2001 and becoming director of senior services at the Red Cross in 2007.

A graduate of Houghton College, Christian holds a bachelor's degree in business management, as well as an associate degree from Niagara County Community College in physical therapy. Christian has been a strong advocate for nursing home residents and currently serves on the advisory board for the State University of New York at Buffalo Institute for Person-Centered Care.

Although born in Buffalo, NY, Christian spent his childhood growing up off the grid in rural northern California. After returning to attend college, Christian stayed in Buffalo to pursue a career in health care.

An avid mountain biker, Christian currently lives in the City of Buffalo with his husband and their chocolate lab Henry.

Marget Rhode

Divisional Director, Liberty Resources, Inc., CNY



Marget Rhode is a divisional director in disabilities services for Liberty Resources, Inc., an agency serving a multitude of vulnerable populations. Beginning in human services, Marget worked directly with individuals with disabilities to teach them independent living skills within their western New York community. Relocating to Syracuse, NY, Marget then joined Liberty Resources Inc. and supervised an Individualized residential alternative program for persons with developmental disabilities.

Marget now provides support and instruction to supervisors of certified and non-certified programs and ensures compliance with regulations. The programs include day habilitation, community habilitation, an individualized residential alternative, and Medicaid service coordination. She serves as chair of the Human Rights Committee for Liberty Resources, and is an instructor trainer for the organization's crisis prevention program.

Marget received her Bachelor of Social Work degree from Niagara University, and her Master of Social Work degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Marget and her husband serve with their local volunteer fire department and are raising two children.

Susan Ann T. Roberts

Clinical Associate Professor, Doctor of Audiology program, State University of New York at Buffalo, WNY



Susan Ann T. Roberts, Au.D. is a clinical associate professor for the Doctor of Audiology Program in the Communicative Disorders and Sciences Department at State University of New York at Buffalo.

Susan started her career as an audiologist at the Buffalo Hearing and Speech Center. During her 13-year career at the Buffalo Hearing and Speech Center, she held the position of director of audiology and coordinator of audiology services at the Erie County Medical Center.

In 1998, she began her career in academia as clinic director for the University at Buffalo Speech Language and Hearing Clinic. She oversees and manages clinic operations and the clinical training program for MA and Au.D. students enrolled in the speech language pathology and Doctor of Audiology program. In 2002, she received her Au.D. degree from the University at Florida.

Susan is a lifelong resident of Buffalo, NY and lives in Williamsville with her husband Mike and their daughter Maria.

Rebecca L. Schaeffer

Psychiatrist, WNY



Rebecca L. Schaeffer, M.D. is a board certified psychiatrist who recently completed additional training to work with children and adolescents in the State University of New York at Buffalo Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Fellowship program.

During this fellowship, Rebecca served as chief resident and spearheaded a major clinic restructuring that resulted in improved training, more continuity of service to clients, and better collaboration among providers.

Prior to medical school she worked with children who struggled with emotional and behavioral difficulties through Wediko Children's Services. Among its services, Wediko serves children in the Boston Public Schools and in a summer therapeutic treatment program in New Hampshire. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of Planned Parenthood of Western New York.

Rebecca graduated from Barnard College of Columbia University where she majored in anthropology and completed pre-medical studies. She is a 2008 graduate of University at Buffalo Medical School.

Rebecca is runner and cook who lives in Amherst, NY with her husband, two step-daughters and is expecting birth of her first child in August.

Alis Sefick

Director of the Central Region Prevention Resource Center, CNY



Alis Sefick is the director of the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services Central Region Prevention Resource Center (CR PRC).

Alis began her health and disease prevention work with “Parents First”, a parenting education service. She also worked as assistant coordinator for the Prevention Partners for Youth Development coalition in Onondaga County and as a parenting education specialist with Contact Community Services. In addition, she served as a training specialist for the New York State Office of Child and Family Services’ Adolescent Services Resource Network.

As director of the CR PRC, Alis leads a team of three community development specialists serving 13 counties in upstate New York who provide consultation, technical assistance and training to communities on the implementation of population-level public health and prevention strategies focusing on policy, enforcement and media campaigns.

Alis has served on the National Parenting Education Network Governing Council and the New York State Parenting Education Partnership. She also began the “Onondaga County as a Parenting Rich Community” initiative.

She received her bachelor’s degree in business administration from SUNY Brockport and her master’s degree in health education from SUNY Cortland.

Gail Speedy

Executive Director, Southern Tier Community Health Center Network, WNY



Gail Speedy has served for the past seven years as executive director of Southern Tier Community Health Center Network, a newly designated Federally Qualified Health Center which serves Allegany and Cattaraugus counties in rural western New York. Gail engineered the turnaround of a struggling Article 28 Diagnostic and Treatment Center to a funded Section 330 health center. STCHCN recently completed a 3,000-foot expansion of its Olean clinic and serves more than 8,000 patients annually.

A graduate of The Ohio State University, she has extensive health care and banking marketing experience. Gail is active in several rural health care initiatives, serving on the Community Health Care Association of New York State (CHCANYS) Expert Panel for the Sustainability and Growth Project and as a member of the Advisory Panel for the Western New York Safety Net Assessment project. She is an Advisory Board member for the New York State Health Foundation and a Board member of the Cattaraugus County Empire Development Zone and a past board member of the Chautauqua, Cattaraugus and Allegany County Red Cross and the Cattaraugus Region Community Health Foundation.

Debra M. Stehle

Associate Administrator, Ambulatory Services and the Women's Health Network
Upstate University Hospital, CNY



Debra M. Stehle is the associate administrator for ambulatory services and the Women's Health Network at Upstate Medical University, University Hospital. Debra has worked at Upstate for the past 26 years serving in progressively responsible positions in hospital and campus administration throughout her tenure. Her last position was in the Office of the President as assistant vice president for strategic planning and management, developing the president's strategic plan and serving as the campus liaison to the SUNY Chancellor's strategic planning process.

Debra has served in her current role for the past year, building the ambulatory services division on the Community Campus of University Hospital, and launching the Women's Health Network for University Hospital. She holds a bachelor's degree from SUNY Empire State College; is a graduate of Leadership Greater Syracuse; and has been a board member of the United Way of CNY since 2008, having served as the chair of the Community Impact Cabinet and member of the UW Executive Team.

She is actively involved in volunteer work in her church and school communities.

Sue Ellen Stuart

Executive Director, Leadership Capacity, Visiting Nurse Service of Ithaca and Tompkins County, CNY



Sue Ellen Stuart graduated from the University of Rochester with a bachelor's degree in nursing and has a master's degree in health care administration from the New School for Social Research. She has dedicated her career to the field of home care after making that decision in nursing school during the community rotation at the University of Rochester.

Sue Ellen has more than 30 years of experience in home care nursing and has worked in several capacities in the industry including clinical and financial positions. She currently is working with Visiting Nurse Service of Ithaca and Tompkins County providing leadership and vision for the agency. Visiting Nurse Service is partnering with the community to provide innovative services to prevent illness and support initiatives of the health care reform.

Erika Swenton

Director of Operations and Continuous Improvement, St. Camillus Home Care Agency, CNY



Erika Swenton serves as a liaison between admissions, quality assurance, clinical managers and administrative functions to maximize revenue and operating margins, facilitate initiatives, ensure regulatory compliance, and maximize the quality of patient care. Presently, Erika is a member of the project team for the 'Ready or Not' grant awarded to the St. Camillus Home Care Agency by the Health Foundation for Western & Central New York in December 2012.

Erika earned her bachelor's degree in health studies and a master's degree in physical therapy from Boston University and began her practice as a clinical manager in the areas of sports medicine and industrial medicine before moving to home care in 2007.

Erika is a former Division I collegiate rower and is a long-distance runner.

Rosie Taravella

Regional Chief Executive Officer, American Red Cross of Central New York, CNY



Rosie Taravella became the regional chief executive officer of the American Red Cross of Central New York in April 2012, overseeing the organization's service delivery, fundraising efforts and brand visibility throughout 16 central New York counties located between Canada to Pennsylvania.

An upstate New York native, Rosie graduated from San Diego State University with a bachelor's degree in drama and worked for 20 years as an actor and writer in Los Angeles, Calif.

She moved into non-profit management in 2003, raising funds for Los Angeles Opera and working with Artistic Director Plácido Domingo to obtain the company's first main stage grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. In 2005 she earned a master's degree in humanities/literature from the California State University.

Rosie returned home to New York State in 2007, serving as executive director of the High Falls Film Festival in Rochester, and as vice president of advancement at WCNY Public Broadcasting in Syracuse prior to joining the Red Cross.

William F. Wieczorek

Director of the Center for Health and Social Research, Buffalo State College, WNY



William F. Wieczorek, Ph.D. is the director of the Center for Health and Social Research at SUNY Buffalo State. He is also a research professor in the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine and adjunct professor in the Department of Community Health and Health Behavior at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

He is a lifelong resident of western New York who received his bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Social Sciences and his master's degree and doctorate in geography from the University at Buffalo.

William's research interests include community health needs assessments, epidemiology of alcohol and drug use, prevention of drug/alcohol abuse, advanced GIS applications, spatial models, factors in suicide, evaluation of alcohol/drug abuse prevention programs, and applied health promotion projects. He has published more than 80 peer-reviewed articles and chapters, has been the Principal Investigator/Co-Principal Investigator on more than a dozen National Institute of Health (NIH) grants, and currently is the PI of a Drug Free Communities grant to support the West Side Youth Development Coalition.

Morgan Williams-Bryant

Deputy Commissioner, Erie County Youth Services, WNY



Morgan Williams-Bryant has managed and developed positive youth programs across Erie County for the past 13 years. Previous to her current position, Morgan worked for the Community Action Organization of Erie County, Inc. (CAO).

During her tenure, Morgan has successfully administered nearly \$2 million in grant funding for youth programming and in 2008, took the reins as Chair of the CAO Education Task Force, raising more than \$50,000 in scholarship funds for college-bound high school and GED students.

Currently, with Erie County Youth Services, Morgan oversees management for the Secure Juvenile Detention Center, Runaway and PINS (Persons In Need of Supervision) population and the Erie County Youth Bureau, providing more than \$1.7 million in funding to non-profit organizations, 11 Municipal Youth Bureaus and 32 towns and villages throughout the county.

She has a bachelor's degree in communication from the State University of New York College at Buffalo and received her master's degree in organizational leadership from Medaille College.

Lisa Zakes

Quality and Compliance Director, Complete Senior Care in Niagara Falls, WNY.



Lisa Zakes, RN, BSN, CPHQ, in her present role, advocates for elderly participants, and develops strong quality services as this new organization grows. Lisa's work experiences began with acute care nursing in the Catholic Health System. She then branched out at Associated Healthcare where, as a regional manager, she opened four locations in Niagara, Orleans and Genesee counties providing home ventilator and respiratory services to rural communities. Lisa has extensive Managed Care experience that includes her work at Health Now New York, Inc. as corporate manager of healthcare quality improvement.

Her community involvement includes being a founding member of Hospice of Orleans County, Rotary Club officer and volunteer for Girl Scouts of WNY and the North Tonawanda History and Carrousel Factory Museums.

She is a graduate of SUNY at Buffalo School of Nursing and a Certified Professional in Health Care Quality from the National Association of Healthcare Quality.

A lifelong resident of Niagara County, Lisa lives in North Tonawanda, NY with her husband, Gary and daughters.