



Health Leadership Fellows

James Y. Bender

Executive Director, Hearts and Hands



James Y. Bender has been executive director of Hearts and Hands since 2008. He earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Washington University in St. Louis and has graduate level studies from Empire State College in social policy.

James has more than 10 years of experience in both human services and professional fund raising and holds the professional credential of Certified Fund Raising Executive. Past work experience includes Heritage Centers, Our Lady of Victory Homes of Charity and the YMCA of Buffalo Niagara. He resides in Lackawanna with his wife and two daughters, and enjoys opportunities that relish in family, friends and his faith.

Rebecca A. Bostwick

Director, Lerner Center for Public Health



As director of the Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion at Syracuse University, Rebecca Bostwick oversees the center's administrative and program operations, staff and community partnerships.

She has been with Syracuse University since 2005, first as managing HIV/AIDS research projects, and then serving as deputy director for the University's Center for Health and Behavior. Rebecca has also worked for SUNY Upstate Medical University and the Central New York Health Systems Agency. She is a member of the board of directors for United Way of Central New York and chair of its Community Impact Committee.

Rebecca earned her master's degree in public administration, and a certificate in health services management and policy from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

Jorien Brock

Senior Director, Pride Center of WNY



Jorien Brock is the senior director of the Pride Center of WNY, where she serves the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and allied communities in the eight counties of western New York. Jorien works closely with community partners in health and human services, government agencies, academic institutions and private businesses, offering trainings on LGBT issues including cultural competency, intimate partner violence, health and the law. She has been an advocate for LGBT communities for more than 18 years, and is also active with issues related to women, poverty and homelessness.

Jorien is a licensed attorney, has her master's degree in social work, is a consultant, an adjunct professor, an artist and an experienced mediator.

Cornelia Brown

Founder and Executive Director, MAMI Interpreters



As founder and executive director of the MAMI Interpreters, Cornelia Brown, Ph.D., oversees the interpreting and translation organization; the not-for-profit is dedicated to ensuring equal access to health care for speakers of limited English. Cornelia is an ATA-accredited translator for Russian to English and is a licensed trainer for Bridging the Gap.

She was elected Linguist of the Year by the members of Intranet™, received the Kathryn Davis Peace Fellowship to Middlebury Russian School, was distinguished as Outstanding Woman of the Year and received the Diversity Achievers Award from the YWCA.

Brown holds a doctorate in Comparative Literature from UC Berkeley. She also writes fiction, gardens and runs.

Monica T. Brown

Program Officer, the Health Foundation of Western and Central New York



Monica T. Brown brings 20 years of experience to her role as program officer, a position she has held with the Health Foundation of Western and Central New York since 2014.

Before joining the Foundation, Monica spent more than 14 years with the American Red Cross serving Erie and Niagara Counties.

Also active with HIV/AIDS education and prevention efforts, she served as co-vice president of the Western New York Ryan White Care Network, and was co-chair of the Emerging Issues Committee and Finance Subcommittee of the New York State HIV Prevention Planning Group.

Monica received her bachelor's degree in psychology from the State University of New York College at Buffalo.

Ruth Camann

Director of Patient Services, People, Inc.



Ruth Camann has worked in the intellectually disabled field for more than 20 years, most recently as the director of patient services for the home health programs for People Inc., which includes the special needs certified home health agency that services the intellectually disabled.

Ruth is responsible for implementing a medical program for the intellectually disabled at the Community Vocational Rehabilitation Center in Niagara Falls, NY and Allentown Industries in Tonawanda, NY.

She was also involved in the Falls Prevention Consortium for the Health Foundation for Western and Central New York, which used Tai Chi to decrease incidents of falls and behavior episodes among participants. Ruth earned a bachelor's degree in nursing from Niagara University.

Marie A. Cannon

First Deputy Commissioner, Erie County Social Services



As first deputy commissioner of Erie County Social Services, Marie A. Cannon oversees the family independence portfolio which develops strategies to assist people in attaining self-sufficiency. Marie recently served as chief executive officer of Child Care Resource Network, the Erie County-designated professional development organization for child care professionals.

She is a Canisius College graduate and received a master's degree from the University at Buffalo. Marie was a management fellow of the Anderson School of Business at UCLA, and was named a Business First "Forty under Forty" award recipient. She enjoys reading, Zumba and gardening.

Mindy Cervoni

Vice President of Administrative Services, Community Services for the Developmentally Disabled



Mindy Cervoni was appointed to her current position as vice president of administrative services at Community Services for the Developmentally Disabled in 2001. In her job she oversees the human resources, information systems, purchasing, transportation and building and property management departments.

Mindy has chaired the Developmental Disabilities Alliance of WNY Human Resources Committee since 2009, and has been on the Buffalo Niagara Human Resource Association Workforce Readiness Committee since 2007.

She has a bachelor's degree in psychology from SUNY Potsdam and a master's degree in clinical psychology from the University of South Carolina Aiken. She is a Certified Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt professional, and is currently obtaining a Certified Lean Professional credential.

Lesley Gooch-Christman

Executive Director, ACCORD



Committed to community action for the past 18 years, Lesley Gooch-Christman first came to ACCORD as manager of domestic violence community collaboration and victim services, adding child and teen crisis services before becoming ACCORD's first human resources director in 2000. In 2012 Lesley assumed the role of deputy executive director and in 2014 became ACCORD's second executive director.

She graduated from University at Buffalo in broadcast communications, is a Certified Community Action Professional, is credentialed through the Family Development Credentialing program and acts as a credential instructor. Lesley also provides volunteer coordination for Wellsville's community soup kitchen.

Julie Dale

Executive Director, Community Action Partnership for Madison County



Julie Dale joined Community Action Partnership for Madison County as executive director in 2009. Prior to joining the CAP for Madison County staff, Julie served as the program director for Healthy Families Pima County in Tucson, Arizona.

She obtained her undergraduate degree at the University of Arizona, and completed her graduate education at the University of Maryland. Through her graduate studies Julie became interested in human development throughout the entire lifespan and continued at the University of Maryland to complete a graduate certificate program in gerontology. Julie has worked in the field of social service and family support for 20 years.

Annie Deaver-Dabney

Community Health Worker Supervisor, UB Emergency Medical Services, Inc.



Annie Deaver-Dabney is a community health worker supervisor with the HealthiER program at Erie County Medical Center. A licensed master social worker with more than 15 years of experience as a clinician, Annie acts as an administrator, advocate and outreach director. She has expertise in domestic violence which includes group facilitation, individual therapy and court advocacy.

In addition to non-profit management, Annie has experience in hospice care, higher education administration and employment counseling. She volunteers facilitating workshops and presentations on domestic violence and mental health. Annie is a contributor to the weekly publication BlackWNY magazine, and is an avid runner and a dancer.

Kathleen Dermady

Nurse Midwife, SUNY Upstate Perinatal Center



Kathleen Dermady is the director of Centering Pregnancy Special Care for Women with Diabetes, a New York State licensed midwife at the SUNY Upstate Regional Perinatal Center and a member of the clinical faculty at SUNY Upstate Medical University.

Kathleen combines knowledge, experience, resources and enthusiasm in providing health care for women with high-risk pregnancies.

Kathleen earned her doctorate in Nursing Practice from Stony Brook University, her master's from Syracuse University and her midwifery degree from Frontier University.

She is a member and vice-chair of the New York State Board of Midwifery, and is a founding board member of the New York State Association of Licensed Midwives. Kathleen is involved in national and state issues on midwifery and women's health, she is a clinical educator for students in midwifery and nursing and medicine at SUNY Upstate Medical University and Stony Brook and is an outspoken representative for women's issues in legislative and patient advocacy efforts.

LaTonya Diggs

Community Health Worker Supervisor, UB Emergency Medical Services, Inc.



LaTonya Diggs, MSW, is a community health worker supervisor for the HealthiER program at University Emergency Medical Services, Inc. An accomplished professional with extensive project management, program and policy evaluation experience, LaTonya has worked in the human service field for more than 15 years.

She has developed and implemented programs and services that have successfully addressed the needs of low-income families and individuals. LaTonya is a native of Queens, New York and is a wife and a mother of two.

Tara A. Ellis

President and Chief Executive Officer, Meals on Wheels WNY and Meals on Wheels Foundation

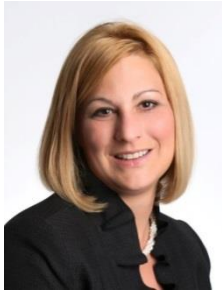


Tara A. Ellis serves as the president and chief executive officer of Meals on Wheels for Western New York and the Meals on Wheels Foundation. Tara is responsible for overseeing programs serving more than 1.2 million meals annually. Prior to joining Meals on Wheels, she worked at the Hauptman-Woodward Institute, M&T Bank, the Erie County Legislature and the New York State Senate.

A Buffalo Seminary alum, Tara received her bachelor's degree from the University at Buffalo and her master's degree from the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University. President of the Buffalo Seminary Alumnae Association, she also holds board seats with the New York State Chapter of the Meals on Wheels Association of America, and the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs.

Helen Evans

Associate Director, AWSRHN



Helen Evans is the associate director at AWSRHN, a non-profit organization in western New York which impacts community health and wellness with a special emphasis on rural access to care. Helen was previously employed as a public health educator at a local health department.

Her professional interests are health literacy, community needs assessments and fostering collaborations to address health priorities. Certified in CDCynergy Social Marketing, Helen motivates health and human service leaders to utilize social marketing techniques to improve service delivery. She earned her bachelor's degree in secondary education at SUNY Fredonia and lives in Angelica, NY with her husband and three sons.

Ann Feightner

Program Officer, Total Senior Care



Ann Feightner is employed as program officer for Total Senior Care, a Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE). In this role she is responsible for leading program operations and implementing strategic planning for growth of the agency's community-based long term care services. Ann has 20 years of executive level experience in health and human services, and in ethical and accountable practices in nonprofit management and governance.

Ann holds a master's degree in human services administration from Buffalo State College. She lives in Allegany, NY with her daughter and enjoys travel and outdoor activities.

Susan Furtney

Executive Director of Community Engagement and Primary Care Administration, St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center



Susan Furtney has more than 20 years of business development, strategic planning, analytics and operational leadership experience in for-profit and non-profit healthcare organizations. Susan is currently the executive director of community engagement and primary care administration at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center.

In this position, she is responsible for establishing and growing community partnerships to improve the health outcomes of St. Joseph's patient population in the greater-Syracuse area. She also oversees the community based primary care centers that provide medical and dental services to vulnerable residents in Syracuse.

Susan earned a master's degree in public health, health policy and management from Emory University and a bachelor's degree in public health, health policy and administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Liz Woike-Ganga

Vice President of Clinical Operations, Lake Shore Behavioral Health, Inc.



Liz Woike-Ganga is a Buffalo, NY native. After graduating from Yale University, Liz spent a year in Costa Rica on a Fulbright Scholarship, and two years in the Peace Corps in Gabon, Africa. After returning to Buffalo, she worked at Vive, Inc., as assistant director while pursuing a master's degree in social work at University at Buffalo.

A licensed clinical social worker, Liz worked as a counselor and program director at Lake Shore Behavioral Health's Lower West Side Counseling, treating underserved populations including Hispanic and refugee clients. Currently vice president of clinical operations, she oversees 10 mental health and substance abuse treatment programs located in Buffalo and the Southern Tier.

Susan Green

Clinical Associate Professor, UB Graduate School Social Work



Susan A. Green, LCSW, is clinical associate professor and co-director of The Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care within the Buffalo Center for Social Research at the School of Social Work at the University at Buffalo. Susan works and volunteers with various community agencies and projects in western New York.

A trauma and family therapist, she is a member of the steering committee for advanced social work practice in trauma, has published articles and presents locally, nationally and internationally. Susan has just completed her thirtieth year of officiating girls and women's basketball.

Crystal Jackson Cheek

Director, Western New York Independent Living, Inc.



A native of Buffalo, NY, Crystal Jackson Cheek joined Western New York Independent Living, Inc. as its director in 2006. Through her work in human services, over the last 16 years she has had opportunities to serve diverse populations including people with various disabilities such as intellectual disabilities, developmental disabilities and behavioral health. Crystal's current platform is educating children, older adults and veterans on successfully living independently with the programs and services of WNYIL, Inc.

Crystal completed her undergraduate education at SUNY Empire State College, where she majored in public administration. She completed her master's degree in counseling and human services at Canisius College.

Elizabeth (Liddy) Hintz

Director of Emergency and Child Welfare Services, The Salvation Army



Elizabeth (Liddy) Hintz is director of emergency and child welfare services at The Salvation Army in Syracuse, NY. Since 2009, Liddy has served as the systems administrator for the Homeless Management Information Systems for Onondaga County. She has more than 30 years of human service experience from direct care through her current management of seven programs, seventy staff and a \$7 million dollar budget. Liddy additionally has 10 years of grant writing, strategic planning and performance management

experience.

She has her master's in social work and a certificate in conflict resolution from Syracuse University. Liddy's hobbies include cycling, golf and reading.

Randy Hoak

Commissioner of Senior Services, Erie County



Randy Hoak is the commissioner of senior services for Erie County. In this role, Randy directs the designated Area Agency on Aging. The Department of Senior Services strives to enhance the independence, quality of life and well-being of area older adults through the provision and monitoring of community based services and supports.

Prior to his career in adult day services he held positions with a local senior center and a skilled nursing facility. Randy holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Canisius College. He enjoys spending time with his wife and four children.

Jeffrey Jackson

Program Director, FACES



A native of Minneapolis, Jeffrey Jackson, Ph.D., and has been a resident of Syracuse, NY for the past 21 years. A graduate of Binghamton University and Syracuse University, Jeffrey holds degrees in English, information management and mass communications.

Jeffrey is currently the program director for FACES, a program dedicated to HIV prevention and education. FACES interventions primarily target men who have sex with men and minority women who are at high risk of infection.

He has been married for 18 years to Legenetta and has two adult children.

Donna Kahm

President and Chief Executive Officer, Southern Tier Health Care System



Donna Kahm serves as the president and chief executive officer of Southern Tier Health Care System, a rural health care network serving Allegany, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua counties. Donna is responsible for administering board relations, strategic planning, grant writing and budget management, and also fosters collaboration among the network's 14 member agencies and community partners. Projects she has guided include the Southern Tier Child Advocacy Center, Southern Tier Emergency Medical System and the Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner program.

Donna holds a bachelor's degree in business administration/human resources from Empire State College. She also attended The Academy for Health Care Leadership Advancement at Cornell University.

Heather Kemmis

Vice President of Home Care, The Centers at St. Camillus



Heather Kemmis is the vice president of home care for The Centers at St. Camillus, as well as Integrity Home Care Services, the organizations licensed home care agency. Heather has been with St. Camillus since 2002, becoming the center's first rehabilitation manager in 2006.

A licensed occupational therapist, she is a 1996 graduate of the University at Buffalo, where she also serves as an adjunct occupational therapy instructor.

Heather enjoys spending time with her family, watching her children participate in sports, camping, kayaking and hiking.

Kimberly Lee

Operations Director, Neighborhood Health Center



Kimberly Lee is the newly appointed operations director for the Neighborhood Health Center, an organization she has been with for six years.

Kimberly's previous positions include business office manager and billing lead. Her personal interests include genealogy and camping.

David Mann

Lieutenant, S.O.S. Unit, Buffalo Police Department



David Mann has been a member of the Buffalo Police Department for 28 years, serving as lieutenant in charge of the department's Sex Offense Section since 1995. The SOS is responsible for investigating cases of sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse, missing persons and juvenile delinquency that occur in the City of Buffalo. The department also administers the registration and management of over 1,000 registered sex offenders in the City of Buffalo.

David is married, has one son and two dogs, and recently took up running again after a 16-year hiatus.

Isiah Marshall, Jr.

Associate Professor and Graduate Program Director, Daemen College



Isiah Marshall Jr., a native Texan, is an associate professor and graduate program director at Daemen College in Amherst, NY. Prior to his appointment at Daemen College, Isiah was the Bachelor of Social Work program coordinator for six years at Winston-Salem State University. Before his academic career, he worked as a nursing home social worker and hospital discharge planner in the Baltimore–Washington metropolitan area.

Isiah received his bachelor’s degree from Texas Southern University , and his Master of Social Work and doctorate degree in sociology from Howard University. His research/areas of interests include social work education, African-American populations, LGBT populations of color, long-term care and gerontology.

Isiah has published work in the Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, Social Work in Health Care and he co-wrote a book “LGBT Psychology: Research Perspectives on People of African Descent” with Dr. Michele K. Lewis.

Carol Murphy

Executive Director, New Hope Education Center (Harvest House)



Carol Murphy is a community advocate with experience in the issues of poverty and homelessness, especially as it relates to youth. Located within the Harvest House Ministry Center, Carol serves as executive director of the New Hope Education Center, which provides advanced training for young adults from Buffalo’s poorest neighborhoods.

She additionally oversees two other ministries within Harvest House, which include The Baby & Children’s Ministry that donates clothing to more than 6,000 children annually and to Good Neighbor’s Health Center, which administers free primary, vision, dental and mental health to children in poverty as well as the uninsured.

Carol is a graduate of Western Washington University, with additional coursework at Canisius College.

Tracey Olson

Chief Nursing Officer, WNY Children's Psychiatric Center



As chief nursing officer at Western New York Children's Psychiatric Center, Tracey Olson's professional experience encompasses care delivery and leadership oversight across diverse populations of individuals with mental illness and developmental disabilities whom are experiencing acute and chronic physical illness.

Tracey is an appointed member of the New York State Office of Mental Health, where she sits on the Nursing Leadership Council representing children's services. She earned her Bachelor in Applied Studies in nursing from Trocaire College, her bachelor's in nursing from University at Buffalo and is projected to complete her master's degree in Nursing Executive Leadership and Change from Daemen College in 2014.

Jessica Pirro

Associate Executive Director, Crisis Services



Jessica Pirro, MSW, has been with Crisis Services since 1999. As associate executive director, Jessica is responsible for all clinical and agency operations that provide numerous services to those in crisis 24 hours a day. She has previously held program management positions with the center.

Jessica received both her undergraduate and graduate degrees from Syracuse University. She has been involved in various community coalitions and not-for-profit boards. Jessica resides in the Parkside area of Buffalo with her husband, stepson and two dogs.

Nick Randell

Program Officer, The Peter & Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation



Nick Randell has been a program officer at The Tower Foundation for five years. There, Nick manages a grant portfolio that focuses on services for youth, particularly those with intellectual and mental health disabilities.

Previously he served as the administrative director of the outreach arm of University at Buffalo's engineering school. Nick recently published an article in *The Foundation Review*, titled "Practice, Practice, Practice: Preliminary Findings from an Evidence-Based Practice Funding Initiative."

He received his master's degree in business administration from the University at Buffalo, earned his master's degree in English literature from the University of Virginia and a bachelor's degree from Oberlin College. Nick is a kayaker and a beer snob, living in Buffalo, NY with his wife Liz, son Ted and daughter Emma.

Laurie Reger

Executive Director, The Hemophilia Center of Western New York. Inc.



Laurel (Laurie) Reger is executive director of The Hemophilia Center of Western New York, Inc. Prior to the Hemophilia Center, Laurie was employed with Wyoming County Community Hospital as director of physician and rehabilitation services. In this role she oversaw recruitment of the medical staff, service contract preparations and management of several outpatient clinics including the pediatrics, maternity and women's health, physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech departments.

Laurie obtained her bachelor's degree in Physical Therapy from Daemen College and her master's degree in health service administration from D'Youville College. She has a passion for health, fitness and exercise.

Rebecca Schaeffer

Child Psychiatrist, Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Buffalo Department of Psychiatry, UB School of Medicine



Rebecca L. Schaeffer, M.D., is a part-time faculty member for the Department of Psychiatry at the University at Buffalo; she is board certified in general and child and adolescent psychiatry.

Prior to her appointment with the University, Rebecca worked for Wediko Children's Services, where she focused on children with mental illness.

She is a graduate of Barnard College of Columbia University and the University at Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. During training Rebecca was chief resident, where she spearheaded a major clinic restructuring that resulted in improved training, continuity of care and collaboration among providers.

Rebecca is on the board of Planned Parenthood. She is a runner and a cook who lives in Amherst with her family.

Christine P. Schaller

Administrator, Genesee County Nursing Home



Christine P. Schaller has spent 40 years in long term care, providing services to the disabled and elderly. Christine currently serves as administrator of the Genesee County Nursing Home.

She earned a bachelor's degree and master's degree from Cornell University, and a Master of Business Administration from the Simon Business School at the University of Rochester. Christine's lifelong professional goal has been to provide leadership, organization and the systems to support the professionals who care for others.

Personally, she enjoys time with her family and two grandchildren, her circa-1900 house and her two cats.

Nancy Seller

Senior Vice President of Educational Services, Upstate Cerebral Palsy



Nancy Seller is a certified school district administrator with 40 years of experience in special education. Nancy is currently senior vice president for educational services at Upstate Cerebral Palsy in Utica, NY. Under her leadership, the agency educates children with developmental disabilities from birth through age 21. Nancy serves on the board of directors of the Mohawk Valley Perinatal Network and the board of directors of the Women's Fund of Herkimer and Oneida Counties.

Lynn M. Siradas

Director of Foster Care and Adoption Services, Organizational and Staff Development, New Directions Family Services



Lynn M. Siradas, MS, CASAC, has worked in the human services field for 30 years. Currently Lynn is the director of foster care and adoption services, organizational and staff development for New Directions Youth and Family Services, where she has led culture initiatives.

Lynn is an affiliate to the Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care. She facilitates groups for local organizations as part of a collaborative between the Red Cross of WNY and the Trauma Institute at the University at Buffalo.

Lynn is co-author in a trauma research project led by Dr. Ricky Greenwald, Psy.D. She additionally completed the managing organizational change certificate program at the University at Buffalo and the Institute for Nonprofit Agencies. Her professional interests include addictions, trauma treatment, organizational culture and services to youth.

Stephanie Smith

Director of Communications and Development, Jericho Road Community Health Center



A Pittsburgh native, it is through Stephanie Smith's volunteer refugee work in Tanzania that led her to Buffalo and to her work with Jericho Road. Since 2007 Stephanie has experienced Jericho Road as an AmeriCorps member, home visitor, program coordinator, branch director, and Jericho Road Ministries' executive director.

Since the recent merger between Jericho Road Family Practice and Jericho Road Ministries, she continues to serve the changing needs of the organization's Community Health Center as the director of communications and development.

Stephanie holds a bachelor's degree from Houghton College and a certificate in administrative management from the University at Buffalo. She is an avid West Side resident, runner and lover of the outdoors.

Kelly Walters

Executive Director, Parkway Senior Center



Kelly Walters has been the executive director of the Parkway Center for more than eight years, and has worked with seniors and the Utica community for more than 18 years in various capacities. In 1997 Kelly was elected to the City of Utica Common Council for the 5th District where she served two terms.

Most recently she was the recipient of the 2014 Woman of the Year Community Leadership Award, presented by the Mohawk Valley Chapter of New York State Women, Inc. for her service in the community.

Kelly is a graduate of Utica College, where she earned a bachelor's degree in political science and a minor in sociology.