

Health Leadership Fellows, Class of 2015-2017

Paul Allan

Director of Information Services, Mid-Erie Counseling & Treatment Services



Paul Allan has 16 years of not-for-profit experience in western New York and is currently serving as director of information systems at Mid-Erie Counseling and Treatment Services. Paul has worked to modernize Mid-Erie's technical infrastructure in order to prepare the organization for the future, and has sought to place Information Systems in a leadership role, with an eye to using data to improve client outcomes and business functions.

His role within the organization recently expanded to encompass aspects of operations and marketing. Paul has taken a leadership role in Mid-Erie's current rebranding efforts and is overseeing production of an expanded agency website.

Amy Bamrick

Director of Clinical Services, Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center



Amy Bamrick is the director of clinical services for Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center, a not-for-profit diagnostic, treatment and educational center for individuals with communication and learning difficulties. Amy oversees administration and programs for children and adults in four outpatient clinic sites in Erie and Niagara counties.

A licensed speech-language pathologist and a certified member of the American Speech-Language Hearing Association, Amy earned a master's degree in speech language pathology from State University of New York College at Buffalo, where she also served as an adjunct clinic supervisor in 2003-2004.

Amy is a certified LEAN Professional, and recipient of Business First's "40 under 40" Award.

Chima Chionuma

Chief Medical Officer, Syracuse Community Health Center, Inc.



Chima Chionuma, M.D., is the chief medical officer for Syracuse Community Health Center, an organization that provides comprehensive, patient-centered health care services at five main clinical sites and a school-based health program with eight centers located in Syracuse City Schools.

Chima joined SCHC as a staff pediatrician in 2007, and assumed her current role in December 2009. In her position as CMO, she provides guidance for all clinical services at SCHC. Additionally Chima leads and supervises more than 70 physicians and non-physician health care providers.

She is a diplomat of the American Board of Pediatrics and a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Brian Coleman

Rural Health Network Coordinator, Oswego County Opportunities, Inc.



Brian Coleman is the coordinator of the Rural Health Network of Oswego County, a program of Oswego County Opportunities. The Rural Health Network is a partnership of 35 member organizations seeking collaborative opportunities to improve the health and well-being of Oswego County residents.

Brian has served in the health and human services field for more than 12 years, and has experience managing residential and care management services for homeless and dually diagnosed consumers. Relatively new to health-related programs, he has long seen a need for collaboration between service providers.

He lives in Syracuse, NY with his wife and four children.

Christopher M. Curry

Associate Director, Catholic Charities of Onondaga County



Christopher M. Curry began his career at Catholic Charities of Onondaga County in 1996, and has served in various roles throughout the agency during his tenure.

As an associate director and a member of the executive leadership team since 2011, Chris oversees numerous programs including emergency assistance, homeless shelters for men and women, housing initiatives, services for older adults, health outreach and case management, refugee resettlement, and Project Joseph, a property management social enterprise.

He earned his bachelor’s degree from Tulane University, a Master of Public Administration degree and a Certificate of Advanced Study in Health Services Management and Policy from Syracuse University’s Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

Gary Damon, Jr.

Deputy Commissioner of Erie County Youth Services, Erie Department of Social Services



Gary Damon Jr. serves as deputy commissioner of Erie County Youth Services Division. In this role Gary oversees and provides leadership support at the Erie County Secure Detention Center, Non-secure contracts, Youth Detention Office in Family Court, Youth Bureau, Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative and fiscal. He is also a resident assistant at St. Francis High School in Athol Springs, NY where he supports and provides mentoring and guidance to the International population.

Gary has been an Adjunct Professor, College of Education, at Niagara University and a Site Facilitator for Say Yes to Education Buffalo. Gary earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Secondary Education and English from Niagara University and received his Masters of Arts in Organizational Leadership from Medaille College. Currently, he is a Doctoral Candidate in Executive Leadership at St. John Fisher College and is working vigorously towards earning his Ed.D. by the summer of 2017.

Shajuana Day

Diabetes Program Director, Jericho Road Community Health Center



Shajuana Day is a physician assistant and a Certified Diabetes Educator. Shajuana is currently the director of the diabetes education and support program at Jericho Road Community Health Center in Buffalo.

In 2008 she enrolled in a diabetes training program at Jericho Road Ministries, which was designed to increase the number of minority certified diabetes educators in western New York. Shajuana completed the certification in 2010, and at the time of her certification she was thought to be only one of two minority Certified Diabetes Educators in the western New York area.

Kelly Dryja

Assistant Director for Child & Family Services, Wyoming County Department of Mental Health



Kelly Dryja is the assistant director for child and family services at the Wyoming County Mental Health Department. In this role, Kelly is responsible for overseeing the mental health services delivery system for high-risk and/or high need children and their families, and coordinates the Children’s Single Point of Access committee meetings. Her previous experience includes providing individual and family counseling, multi-systemic therapy and supervising a preventive services program.

Kelly holds a bachelor’s degree in sociology from St. Bonaventure University. She is a licensed clinical social worker, and has a master’s degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Melinda DuBois

Regional Director of Patient Services, Planned Parenthood of Western & Central New York



As the regional director of patient services for Planned Parenthood of Western & Central New York, Melinda DuBois provides oversight to five health centers and the mobile outreach unit.

She recently joined the Planned Parenthood team after serving five years as the administrative director of health and counseling at SUNY Geneseo, where she was also the Deputy Title IX Coordinator for students experiencing sexual assault. In addition, she spent 15 years as the executive director of Buffalo WomenServices.

Melinda is a licensed master social worker, receiving her Master of Social Work degree from the University of Buffalo. She is also a certified yoga instructor, with additional training in trauma sensitive yoga. Melinda lives in East Aurora, NY with her family and two dogs.

Hope Fisher

Physician, TeamHealth Urgent Care



Hope Fisher, M.D. is a board certified emergency medicine physician. A practitioner at TeamHealth Urgent Care, she is an affiliate attending several hospitals within the Catholic Health System, and also serves as a sexual assault forensic examiner.

A Buffalo native, Hope received both her bachelor’s degree and Doctor of Medicine degree at Howard University. She completed her residency at Metropolitan Hospital in New York City, and practiced at Queens Hospital Center for 12 years before returning to Buffalo.

A mother of two with a passion for people, Hope’s interests include women’s health, socioeconomic disparities in medicine and public health education.

Kenneth M. Genewick

Director, Niagara County Office for the Aging



Ken Genewick has been the director for the Niagara County Office for the Aging for the past four years. In his role, he leads the organization’s work to promote independence and quality of life through directly and collaboratively providing community-based services to older adults and caregivers living in Niagara County.

Ken’s diverse private and public sector professional health and long term care experience allows him to bring a unique perspective on aging and its dual impact on both the system and the individual. He has a Master of Business Administration degree with a concentration in Health Systems Administration from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Pei C. Grant

Director of Research, The Center for Hospice & Palliative Care



Dr. Pei Grant is the director of research at the Center for Hospice & Palliative Care in Cheektowaga. The department performs clinical research that translates into tangible quality-of-life improvements for patients and families. Research interests range from end-of-life dreams and visions to the progression of delirium to other psychosocial interventions.

The research team’s published works on end-of-life dreams and visions have gained national attention, appearing in “Scientific American Mind”, “Psychology Today,” “Medscape” and “McKnight Long-Term Care News.” Pei also works alongside clinicians, insurance companies and other community partners to develop and evaluate programs that deliver better patient and family care.

Lisa Green Mills

Project Director, Syracuse Healthy Start, Onondaga Health Department



As project director for Syracuse Healthy Start, Lisa Green Mills focuses on reducing health disparities and infant mortality across Syracuse. Lisa’s past work as a pediatric nurse and coordinator of community based participatory research bring a unique perspective to her current role in engaging communities to find creative and empowering strategies to improve the health and wellbeing of families.

She received her bachelor’s degree in nursing from Binghamton University, and earned her Master of Public Health degree from the University at Albany.

Christine Kemp

Administrative Director, SNAPCAP



Christine Kemp is administrative director of the Safety Net Association of Primary Care-Affiliated Providers of WNY, which is responsible for growing the emerging organization to support members in pursuit of providing healthcare to those in need. She previously served as the program and policy analysis manager at the P₂ Collaborative of WNY, which allowed her to build upon her experience in public health research, communications and public policy.

Christine earned her Master of Public Health from the University at Buffalo, and a bachelor’s degree in psychology from SUNY Geneseo. She is a graduate of the Harvard Business School Club of Buffalo’s nonprofit management program.

Rachel Leidenfrost

Chief Communications Officer, Meals on Wheels WNY



Rachel Leidenfrost is the chief communications officer for Meals on Wheels WNY. Rachel is responsible for public relations, internal communications, brand development, marketing, advertising, social media, community engagement and government affairs. She also oversees the Volunteer Recruitment and Support Services departments.

Prior to her time at Meals on Wheels, she spent eight years with M&T Bank. After several jobs with the bank, she left as vice president of internal communications.

Rachel has her bachelor’s degree in public communications from Buffalo State College and her Master of Business Administration degree from Canisius College. Rachel is an active community volunteer and a member of Leadership Buffalo’s class of 2011.

Lenny Liguori

Executive Director/CEO, Directions in Independent Living, Inc.



Lenny Liguori has served as executive director of Directions In Independent Living for 15 years. He is a person that is very self-driven and is one who always finds himself at the center of everything but not comfortable with the spotlight.

Although Lenny excels at interfacing with other people, he is also not very comfortable around others and he enjoys a lot of alone time. In spite of Lenny’s perceived shortcomings, he insists on being the best at his job.

As someone living with a disability, Lenny has also come to the realization that he is a role model for disabled. When he was growing up, his disability was often downplayed or hidden. Lenny believes the very purpose of his job is to celebrate disabilities.

He holds a bachelor’s degree in sociology and a master’s degree in counseling from St. Bonaventure University.

Megan MacDavey

Program Officer, The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation



Megan MacDavey joined the Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation as program officer in January 2015. Prior to this role, Megan managed a care transitions initiative at P₂ Collaborative, in which she partnered with offices for the aging and hospitals across western New York.

She has extensive experience with grant writing, community organizing, communications and fundraising from past positions and volunteer experiences including her work at Cleveland’s Healthcare for the Homeless. Megan has a master’s degree in social administration with a focus on community development from Case Western Reserve University Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences and a bachelor’s degree in sociology from SUNY Geneseo.

Christopher Marcello

Budget and Housing Coordinator, New York State Office of Mental Health



Chris Marcello is the coordinator of budget and housing services for the New York State Office of Mental Health field office, located in Buffalo, NY. Chris directs two major functions for the 19-county western region.

As budget coordinator, he manages fiscal matters related to the design and operation of community mental health services. As housing coordinator, Chris oversees the development of the Office of Mental Health community housing. Chris has been with the Office of Mental Health since 2004. Previously he worked for the New York State Division of Budget and the City of Buffalo’s Budget Office.

Chris holds a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Pittsburgh.

Antara Mitra

Program Director, Maternal and Infant Community Health Collaborative, REACH CNY, Inc.



Antara Mitra is program director at REACH CNY, and has been responsible for the implementation and execution of the Maternal and Infant Community Health Collaborative in Oswego County. As program director, Antara works closely with various community partners to improve birth outcomes and reduce health disparities. Prior to this she worked in county government as well as in hospital administration.

Antara received her Master of Business Administration from the University of Miami, and a Master of Public Health degree from Syracuse University and SUNY Upstate Medical University. She is an award-winning published author.

Tak Nobumoto

Senior Director of Project Management, Mount St. Mary’s Hospital



Tak Nobumoto currently serves as senior director of project management at Mount St. Mary’s Hospital. In that role, he leads information technology related projects to deploy clinical, business and support systems throughout the hospital. Tak is also responsible for the daily operations of IT systems that include delivering support for all end users.

As Mount St. Mary’s merges with the Catholic Health System of Buffalo, he will be responsible for leading the transition of IT systems and services to the CHS systems. Prior to working in the hospital setting, Tak worked for the UBMD Practice Plans as director of operations.

Tamara Owen

President and CEO, Olmstead Center for Sight



Tamara Owen is president and chief executive officer of Olmsted Center for Sight, a non-profit agency serving individuals who are blind. Prior to April 2013, Tammy was a senior executive at Kaleida Health for 23 years, most recently serving as president of Buffalo General Medical Center & Gates Vascular Institute.

A native of Boston, Mass., Tamara earned her Master of Business Administration and an Executive MBA from the University at Buffalo. She also received a Bachelor of Science in physical therapy from University at Buffalo; a Master of Science in sports medicine/education from Springfield College in Springfield, Massachusetts; and a Bachelor of Science in physical education/athletic training from Springfield College.

An active member of the Buffalo community, she has served on numerous local boards and held adjunct faculty positions at the University at Buffalo, D’Youville College and Daemen College.

Kim Osborne

Vice President of Operations, Family Health Network of Central New York



Kim Osborne is the vice president of operations at Family Health Network, a network of Article 28 and Federally Qualified Health care facilities serving rural communities in central New York.

Kim directs the daily operations of all locations, including the development and oversight of quality improvement initiatives, personnel management, regulatory compliance and business development. She received the Rosemarie Fostner Award from the Community Health Care Association of New York State, recognizing her exemplary work and dedication to ensure high quality care for all.

Kim received her bachelor’s degree in nursing from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Kimberly Palermo

Director of Habitation Services, Community Services for the Developmentally Disabled, Inc.



Kimberly Palermo is passionate about her work with not-for-profit organizations in the health and human services industry. She has spent more than 25 years supporting men, women and children faced with poverty, addiction, mental health diagnosis and/or a developmental disability.

In her current role serving as a director at Community Services for the Developmentally Disabled, Inc., Kimberly has been instrumental in developing and executing the agencies mission and strategic goals. She is known for her vision, motivational leadership, team development, creative problem solving and influence in the field. Kimberly has

personal mission to enhance the lives of others.

Paul A. Pettit

Public Health Director, Genesee & Orleans County Health Departments



Paul Pettit was appointed the public health director of the Genesee and Orleans County Health Departments in January of 2008.

Working in the public health sector for 16 years, Paul became the director for Genesee County through a collaborative pilot project focusing on shared services between Genesee and Orleans counties. This shared service relationship has been recognized as a best practice and a model for public health delivery in New York State.

He has a bachelor’s degree from the University of Rochester and a master’s degree from Roberts Wesleyan College.

Brian Pilarski

Executive Director, Seneca-Babcock Community Association



Brian Pilarski is the executive director of the Seneca-Babcock Community Association, which has the reputation as one of the most respected community centers in Buffalo. During Brian’s tenure, which began in 2006, the SBCA has tripled in capacity.

Brian developed a strong sense of devotion for the nonprofit sector at an early age. A beneficiary of a youth program at the Buffalo Boys and Girls Club nearly 20 years ago, his experience gave him a deep appreciation for how nonprofits seek to improve the quality of life for the community.

Brian’s career in human services started when he served as a commissioned Officer with the United States Army. He is currently a Maryvale School Board of Education member.

Lynn Pullano

Chief Executive Officer, Child Care Resource Network



Lynn Pullano has 30 years of experience in nonprofit management, strategic marketing, education and research. Lynn is the chief executive officer of the Child Care Resource Network, an organization that supports families, child care providers and the community by developing and advocating for high quality, accessible and affordable child care for all children. In addition to her role as CEO, Lynn serves as project director for Help Me Grow WNY, an early childhood developmental screening/support initiative.

She founded the Erie/Niagara Birth-8 Coalition and was instrumental in creating the Children’s Center for Success, which is a unique, trauma-informed approach to child care.

Lynn holds a bachelor’s degree in marketing/management from Canisius College and a Master of Education degree from the University at Buffalo.

She resides in Hamburg, NY with her husband and two daughters.

Debra A. Riter

Assistant Director of Social Work – Behavioral Health, Erie County Medical Center



Debra A. Riter is an assistant director of social work at Erie County Medical Center. Throughout her 25-year career, Debra has held many leadership roles, with a particular interest in program development. She is a licensed clinical social worker and a credentialed alcohol and substance abuse counselor.

Debra received her master’s degree in social work from the State University of New York at Buffalo in 2006. Her focus has primarily been in mental health and chemical dependency. Because of Debra’s efforts, Erie County Medical Center has been designated a New York State Education Department site that is able to provide continuing education to social worker’s throughout western New York.

Debra resides with her family in Hamburg, NY.

Anne Ryan

Executive Director, Read to Succeed



Anne Ryan is a results-focused professional with 25 years of experience in not-for-profit and government service. Anne has expertise in early childhood/public education, organizational leadership and development. Prior to Read to Succeed, she served as director of resource and project development with Catholic Charities, and vice president of community impact for early childhood/youth programs at United Way.

As the first executive director of Success By 6, Anne was also responsible for the early implementation of the program, which is the United Way’s flagship early childhood initiative that works with child care and other early childhood professionals to help them deliver the best possible learning experience.

In 2006, she was awarded the NYS Association for the Education of Young Children’s Champion for Children award. She is a 1999 graduate of Leadership Buffalo.

Christine Schuyler

Director of Health & Human Services, Chautauqua County



Christine Schuyler, Chautauqua County director of health and human services, has 25 years of progressively responsible experience in various health and human service roles. As public health director and social services commissioner, Christine recognized the need to address the social determinants of health, streamline services and increase efficiencies to improve overall health and well-being. This vision resulted in the integrated Department of Health and Human Services in 2012.

Christine has 25 years of experience in various health and human service roles, including nursing, sales, physician relations and hospital administration. She holds a bachelor’s degree in nursing from Gannon University, and a master’s degree in health care administration from Bellevue University.

Sandra Schwartz

Director of Outpatient and Community Based Services, The Centers at St. Camillus



Born in Aubonito, Puerto Rico, Sandra Schwartz moved to Middletown, NY with her family at the age of six. Sandra has built her career in health care, working in developmental disabilities and child welfare before becoming the director of outpatient and community based services at the The Centers at St. Camillus.

She is married and has two grown children. Sandra is an avid reader and writes poetry.

Bonnie Slocum

Executive Director, Madison County Rural Health Council, Inc.



Bonnie Slocum serves as executive director of the non-profit Madison County Rural Health Council, Inc., which convenes partners and coordinates efforts to improve health and access to healthcare in Madison County, NY.

She has had a career in human services with county, private and grassroots organizations and has been a board/advisory board member for a library, food pantry, Time Bank and the Office for the Aging. Bonnie particularly delights in collaborating to develop innovative projects.

She holds a master’s degree in health services management from the New School for Social Research.

Chandra Smith

Director of Day Care and Education Services at the Salvation Army, Syracuse



Chandra Smith has worked in early education for more than 22 years. She began her career as a toddler teacher for a day care center and has been in her current position for 7 years. Her professional goal is to provide quality child care for children in a safe and thriving environment.

Chandra is compassionate about meeting children and family needs. This passion is what drives Chandra to seek out partnerships and supports in the community. Chandra is dedicated to supporting children development and providing child care experiences that are impactful. Chandra strives to ensure children are socially and emotionally ready to learn.

Chandra received a bachelor’s degree in English with a minor in education from LeMoyne College.

Jessica Soule

Executive Director, Cayuga Community Health Network



Jessica Soule began working for the Cayuga Community Health Network in February 2014, later joining the staff as the program coordinator for the Healthy Neighborhoods Program. Jessica was named the executive director in May 2015.

She interned for Cayuga County Health Department in 2013 while finishing her Master of Public Health degree from SUNY Upstate Medical and Syracuse University. Jessica has worked in substance abuse prevention, coalition building and chronic disease.

She worked as a newspaper reporter for 10 years in Michigan and New York, and was editor of The Skaneateles Journal from 2008 to 2013.

Jessica earned her bachelor’s degree from Central Michigan University.

Christine Steinman-Reale

Director of Patient Services, St. Camillus Home Care Agency



Christine Steinman-Reale has worked in home care since 1995. Currently the director of patient services for St. Camillus Home Care, Christine has prior experience in case management, intake coordination, quality assurance and as a nursing supervisor.

She received her bachelor’s degree from the College of Nursing at SUNY Upstate Medical University, and is currently pursuing her Master of Science in nursing education. She most recently achieved her certification in case management and earned her Six Sigma yellow belt.

Christine resides in Syracuse, NY with her husband and four teenage children.

Kelly D. Whitman

Program Director, Lake Shore Behavioral Health



A native of Farrell, Pa., Kelly Whitman has 14 years of experience in management in the human services field. During this time Kelly has served various populations including the homeless, developmentally disabled, severely mentally ill and youth. She is currently the director of The Lighthouse, a residential substance abuse treatment facility for pregnant and parenting women.

A licensed clinical social worker, Kelly completed her undergraduate degree in psychology and English at Emory University in Atlanta, Ga. She completed her master’s degree in social work at the State University of New York at Buffalo. Kelly enjoys singing, reading and spending time with her two children, Denise and Dennis.

Robyn Wiktorski-Reynolds

Advocate Program Director, Crisis Services



Robyn Wiktorski-Reynolds has worked in the domestic violence and sexual assault field since 1999. As a manager with Crisis Services for 11 years, Robyn has been serving in her current role as director of the advocate program since 2006. She oversees operations of this 24-hour program, as well as the rape crisis center for Erie County and a state approved domestic violence victim service provider. Robyn’s experience includes direct victim services, program management and multidisciplinary collaborations.

She received her bachelor’s degree in English and women’s studies from Buffalo State College, and in 2001 Robyn received her master’s degree in social work from the University of Texas at Austin.

Ann Marie Zimmerman

Medical Director, Universal Primary Care Southern Tier Community Health Center Network, Inc.



Ann Marie Zimmerman grew up on the west coast before completing her bachelor’s and master’s degrees at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Conn. She graduated from the University of Washington School of Medicine in 1988, and completed her Family Practice Residency and a one year Obstetrical Fellowship Program at Cleveland MetroHealth in 1992.

After two years of practicing emergency and obstetrical medicine in American Samoa, Ann Marie returned to the United States, eventually settling in the Olean area in 1998 where she joined the Universal Primary Care Southern Tier Community Health Center Network, Inc. Under her medical directorship, Universal Primary Care has achieved financial stability by converting into a federal grant supported community health center.