

# The Role of Science, Technology, and Communication in Advancing Healthful Foods and Diets: A Workshop

Speaker, Moderator, and Planning Committee Biographical Sketches

## Eric A. Decker, Ph.D., M.S.

University of Massachusetts Amherst

## **Food Forum Chair and Planning Committee Chair**

Eric A. Decker is professor at the Department of Food Science at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He was the Department Head and director of the UMass Food Science Industry Strategic Research Alliance from 2008 to 2020. Dr. Decker continues to actively conduct research to characterize mechanisms of lipid oxidation, antioxidant protection of foods and the health implications of bioactive lipids. He has over 480 publications and he has been listed as one of the Most Highly Cited Scientists in Agriculture since 2005. Dr. Decker has served on numerous committees for institutions such as the Food and Drug Administration, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Institute of Food Technologists, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the American Heart Association. He has received recognition for his research and service from the American Oil Chemist Society, Agriculture and Food Chemistry Division of the American Chemical Society, Institute of Food Technologists, University of Massachusetts and the University of Kentucky. Dr. Decker has also been elected to serve as an officer for the American Meat Science Association, Institute of Food Technologists, and president of the American Oil Chemist Society. He holds an M.S. in food science and nutrition from Washington State University, and a Ph.D. in food science and nutrition from the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

## Carloyn Slupsky, Ph.D.

University of California, Davis

## **Moderator and Planning Committee Member**

Carolyn Slupsky is professor with a joint appointment in the Department of Nutrition and the Department of Food Science and Technology at the University of California, Davis. Her research expertise is in systems biology, where she integrates metabolomics, transcriptomics, proteomics, and metagenomics data to understand the impact of diet and environmental exposures on child metabolic and cognitive development. Her research is currently being supported by the NIH, USDA, and Arla Foods Ingredients, with previous research supported by Mead Johnson Nutrition, Fonterra, and ByHeart. After her post-doctoral training at the University of British Columbia, Dr. Slupsky developed methods for metabolomics analysis of biological fluids and tissues using Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) spectroscopy, which are used in laboratories around the world. Dr. Slupsky has been awarded the UC Davis Chancellor's Fellow, the Kinsella Endowed Chair of Food, Nutrition, and Health and the UC Davis Graduate Program Advising and Mentoring Award. She is a member of American Society for Nutrition, Institute of Food Technologists, American Society for Microbiology, and has served as a standing member on two National Institutes of Health study sections. Dr. Slupsky holds a Ph.D. in biochemistry from the University of Alberta.



#### Aviva Musicus, Sc.D.

Center for Science in the Public Interest

## **Speaker**

Aviva Musicus is science director of Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), a nonprofit organization that aims to improve population health by advocating for evidence-based and community-informed policies on nutrition, food safety, and health. As the leader of CSPI's Science Department, Dr. Musicus ensures that CSPI relies on the best available scientific evidence and rigorous scientific methods to inform its advocacy. She additionally manages CSPI's advocacy on food labeling, food additives, new food technologies, and sodium and added sugar reduction. Dr. Musicus is also adjunct assistant professor of nutrition at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, where she teaches and conducts research on nutrition policy. She has published over 50 papers examining critical food policy questions, including optimal design for food labeling, effects of food marketing, and broader impacts of food environments on health. Prior to joining CSPI, Dr. Musicus was a nutrition postdoctoral research fellow at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, where she was named Forbes' "30 Under 30" in Healthcare in 2021 for her contributions to public health research and its translation to policy. Dr. Musicus holds a Doctorate in nutrition from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and a Bachelor's degree in environmental studies from Yale University.

#### Sarah Gebauer, Ph.D., FASN

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

## **Speaker and Planning Committee Member**

Sarah Gebauer is nutrition scientist in the Office of Nutrition and Food Labeling, Human Foods Program, U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA). She evaluates scientific evidence to inform regulations and policies related to nutrition labeling and label claims. Examples of significant projects include updating the "healthy" nutrient content claim and implementing the FDA regulatory definition of dietary fiber. Prior to joining FDA, Dr. Gebauer coordinated highly-controlled dietary interventions on the relationship between diet and risk of chronic disease (e.g., cardiovascular disease) at the USDA Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center. She serves on the Canada-U.S. Joint Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs) Working Group, which supports evidence preparation and nutrient prioritization for DRI reviews conducted by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Dr. Gebauer was recently recognized as an inaugural Excellence in Nutrition Fellow of the American Society for Nutrition (FASN) for her outstanding contributions to the field of nutrition and dedication to advancing the science and practice of nutrition. She has a Ph.D. in molecular medicine and a bachelor's degree in biology, both from Penn State University.

# Britt Burton-Freeman, Ph.D., M.S.

Illinois Institute of Technology

## Speaker

Britt Burton-Freeman is professor and chair in the Department of Food Science and Nutrition and Director, Center for Nutrition Research (CNR), Institute for Food Safety and Health at the Illinois Institute of Technology (Illinois Tech). Dr. Burton-Freeman's research investigates dietary strategies to address risk factors of cardiometabolic diseases focusing on plant foods/ingredients and their unique nutritional/phytochemical attributes. Her research characterizes the polyphenol profile of various fruits and spices tracing their metabolic



consequences after ingestion, including their dynamic relationship with the gut microbiome affecting local and systemic physiology and health status. Dr. Burton-Freeman also studies human variability in response to diet as part of the National Institutes of Health's Nutrition for Precision Health powered by the All of Us program. Dr. Burton-Freeman is actively involved in multiple professional societies dedicated to health and disease abatement, publishes in top journals and is co editor-in-chief of *Nutrition and Healthy Aging*. Dr. Burton-Freeman has held professional appointments in academia and the biotech industry leading research programs and teams to deliver on basic and clinical science objectives. Dr. Burton-Freeman received her B.S. in dietetics from the California State University, Chico, M.S. and Ph.D. in nutritional biology from the University of California, Davis and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Internal Medicine at University of California, Davis.

#### Anna Rosales, R.D.

Institute of Food and Technologists

#### Moderator

Anna Rosales is vice president of science & policy at the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT), a globally recognized non-profit food science association. In this role, Anna leads IFT's advocacy strategy, champions science, and builds collaborations across the food system. Her work blends a passion for healthy living with deep expertise in food and nutrition science, regulatory affairs, culinary arts, food law, and communications. Anna brings a unique background across private clients and multinational corporations in the domains of food and nutrition sciences, culinary arts, regulatory affairs, food law, and communications. This diverse background allows her to collaborate effectively on any food and nutrition-related project with key stakeholders and partners across the food system. Previously, Anna was director of nutrition and science communications at Barilla, a leading Italian food company. She also served as corporate dietitian for Yakult, where she educated health professionals and consumers about probiotics. Earlier, Anna was a chef instructor and consulting dietitian at the California Health & Longevity Institute at the Four Seasons Hotel & Resort in Westlake Village, CA, and contributed as a food writer and cooking guide for About.com. Anna began her career as a clinical dietitian at St. John's Health Center in Santa Monica, CA, and completed her dietetic internship with ARAMARK in New York City. Anna holds an associate's degree in culinary arts from the Illinois Institute of Art, a B.S. degree in nutrition & food studies from New York University, and a master's degree in international food law from Michigan State University.

## Ciaran G. Forde, Ph.D.

Wageningen University

## Speaker

Ciarán Forde is chair of sensory science and eating behavior at the Division of Human Nutrition and Health at Wageningen University and Research in the Netherlands. He leads research and education on how foods' sensory properties influence eating behaviors, energy intake and metabolism across the lifespan. Professor Forde coordinates undergraduate and graduate education in Sensory Science, Nutrition and Eating Behavior at Wageningen, and has published more than 160 articles on topics in sensory, nutrition and metabolism. He is an executive editor for the journal *Appetite*, and section editor ('Nutrition behavior') for the *European Journal of Nutrition*. He also holds editorial board positions at *Nutrition Bulletin*, *Journal of Future Food* and



Journal of Texture Studies. Professor Forde has spent the past 25 years conducting research in academic, public and private sector roles in the UK (GSK), Australia (CSIRO) and Switzerland (Nestlé Research) and Singapore (National University of Singapore/A\*STAR). He received his B.Sc. (Hons) in food chemistry and a Ph.D. in sensory science from the Department of Human Nutrition at University College Cork in Ireland.

## Devin G. Peterson, Ph.D.

The Ohio State University

## **Speaker**

Devin Peterson is College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences distinguished professor in the Department of Food Science and Technology at The Ohio State University. He received the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE), Excellence in Flavor Science Award from the Flavor and Extract Manufacturers Association, Institute of Food Technologists Stephen Change Award for Lipid and Flavor Science, and the Fred Kavli Innovations in Chemistry Lecture Award (American Chemical Society). His research focuses on identifying and analyzing the chemical stimuli that contribute to the flavor of food, including gustation (taste), olfaction (smell), and somatosensation (pungency, irritation, tactile). He is the founding director of the Flavor Research and Education Center and is the faculty director of the Oklahoma State University Foods for Health Theme Initiative. He has published more than 121 peer-reviewed scientific articles. He earned his Ph.D. in food science from the University of Minnesota.

#### Kristi Muldoon Jacobs, Ph.D.

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

## Speaker

Kristi Muldoon Jacobs serves as director of the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Office of Premarket Additive Safety within the Human Foods Program, where she provides strategic leadership for multidisciplinary teams of experts in toxicology, chemistry, microbiology, and regulatory science. Under her direction, the office is responsible for evaluating the safety of direct and indirect food additives, color additives, and substances that are Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS), ensuring a robust scientific foundation for regulatory decisions that protect public health. Dr. Muldoon Jacobs completed her postdoctoral research at the National Institutes of Health's National Cancer Institute, where she focused on tumor suppression and cancer biology. In addition to her years of service at FDA she also worked at U.S. Pharmacopeia as a senior scientist and director in regulatory affairs responsible for ensuring quality and responsible regulatory engagement in the arena of dietary supplements, drugs and foods. She brings more than 20 years of experience as both a technical authority and senior leader in the regulatory safety assessment of FDAregulated products. Recognized internationally for her contributions to advancing science-based regulatory approaches, Dr. Muldoon Jacobs has served as a U.S. expert to key international food safety bodies, including the Joint Food and Agriculture Organization/World Health Organization (FAO/WHO) Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the International Council for Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (ICH). She is particularly known for her leadership in promoting and applying innovative and alternative risk assessment methodologies, such as the Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC),



quantitative structure—activity relationship (QSAR) models, and read-across techniques. Dr. Muldoon Jacobs holds a Ph.D. in molecular biology and biomedical sciences from Rutgers University.

#### Richard Black, Ph.D.

WISEcode

## Speaker

Richard Black is chief science officer of WISEcode, a startup company whose mission is to be the source of the most complete, accurate, nutritionally comprehensive, global food and ingredient database. Dr. Black is also adjunct professor at the Tufts University Friedman School of Nutrition Science & Policy and the chief nutrition advisor at Thrive365, a company that seeks to expand while simplifying diet choices for people suffering from type II diabetes, helping with blood glucose management. Dr. Black recently served on the Dean's Advisory Board for McMaster University's Faculty of Science and is a frequent consultant to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation on issues concerning nutrition and health. Dr. Black has over 30 years of experience in the food and beverage industry, having served as the chief nutrition officer and VP global nutrition sciences at both Kraft/Mondelēz and PepsiCo. He was the recipient of the Institute of Food Technologists' Babcock-Hart Award (given for significant contributions in food technology that resulted in public health through some aspects of nutrition) and the inaugural U.S. Department of Agriculture John A. Milner Lectureship award. Beginning his career as an assistant professor in nutrition sciences at the University of Toronto, he has also worked for Kellogg, Nestlé, Novartis, and International Life Sciences Institute North America. Dr. Black attended McMaster University and earned a B.S. in chemistry as well as in psychology (summa cum laude) along with a Ph.D. in experimental psychology.

## Katie Brown, Ed.D., R.D.N., FAND, FASN

National Dairy Council

## **Moderator and Planning Committee Member**

Katie Brown is president of National Dairy Council (NDC), a non-profit dairy nutrition research and education organization. In this role, Dr. Brown leads efforts to promote health and prevent diet-related diseases, including obesity. She is committed to advancing strategies to reduce obesity prevalence through NDC's extensive research portfolio, consumer insights, and innovative behavior change interventions. In her previous staff role with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND), Dr. Brown led a multi-site in-school childhood obesity prevention program, authored numerous publications, and presented at several national and international conferences. She served as faculty for the Certificate of Training in Adult Weight Management program of the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR), and as an expert reviewer or member of evidence-based position paper workgroups with the AND. Dr. Brown previously served as a volunteer leader and member of obesity prevention organizations including the Society of Nutrition Education and Behavior, the Energy Balance Workgroup, and the AND Prevention of Childhood Obesity Coalition taskforce. Dr. Brown recently completed a Certificate of Training in Obesity for Pediatrics and Adults from the CDR. She holds a B.S. and M.S. in nutrition and a doctorate degree in education.



Marco Palma, Ph.D., M.S. Texas A&M University

## **Speaker and Planning Committee Member**

Marco A. Palma is professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Texas A&M University. His research focuses on consumer economics, experimental and behavioral economics, and neuroeconomics. Dr. Palma is a Texas A&M Presidential Impact Fellow and AgriLife Research Faculty Fellow. He serves as director of the Human Behavior Laboratory, a transdisciplinary facility that uses state-of-the-art technology to measure neurophysiological responses in human decision-making. His work integrates these responses with traditional behavioral research methods to better understand, predict, and influence behaviors that enhance health, prosperity, and well-being. Dr. Palma also serves as interim associate director of the Institute for Advancing Health through Agriculture leading Responsive Agriculture. In this role, he promotes innovation in agriculture and the food environment to build a system that is economically prosperous while delivering safe, nutritious, and abundant food to support public health. He earned both his M.S. and Ph.D. in food and resource economics at the University of Florida.

## Sara N. Bleich, Ph.D.

Harvard University

## **Speaker**

Sara Bleich is inaugural vice provost for special projects at Harvard University, professor of public health policy at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, and a faculty member at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. With more than 190 peer-reviewed publications, she is a policy expert and researcher who specializes in diet-related diseases, food insecurity, and racial inequality. Prior to this, Dr. Bleich served in the Biden Administration as the director of nutrition security and health equity at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service and as the senior advisor for COVID-19 in the Office of the Secretary at USDA. As a White House fellow during the Obama Administration, she worked at USDA as a senior policy adviser for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services and on First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! initiative. Dr. Bleich was elected to the National Academy of Medicine in 2023 and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2025. She holds a B.A. in psychology from Columbia University and a Ph.D. in health policy from Harvard University.

## Johan B. Ubbink, Ph.D., M.S.

University of Minnesota

#### **Speaker**

Job Ubbink is professor and head of the Department of Food Science and Nutrition at the University of Minnesota. He has worked for over 15 years in R&D positions in the food industry, including 11 years at the Nestle Research Center (Lausanne, Switzerland). Prior to joining the University of Minnesota, he was associated with the California Polytechnic State University (San Luis Obispo), the University of Bristol (UK) and the ETH Zurich (Switzerland). He was visiting scientist at Moscow State University (Russia), and he has taught as visiting professor at the School of Food Engineering, University of Campinas (Brazil). His research interests include the materials science of foods and ingredients, ingredient upcycling and sustainable processing, the impact of food processing on society and the cultural aspects of food and diet. He earned an



M.S. in physical and macromolecular chemistry from Leiden University and a Ph.D. in chemical technology and materials science from Delft University of Technology.

## Jack Bobo, J.D., M.S.

University of California, Los Angeles

## **Speaker**

Jack Bobo is executive director of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Rothman Family Institute for Food Studies and an honorary professor at the University of Nottingham. He previously served as director of the Food Systems Institute at Nottingham and as director of Global Food and Water Policy at The Nature Conservancy. Earlier, Jack was CEO of Futurity, a food foresight company, and spent over a decade as a senior advisor on global food policy at the U.S. Department of State. Named one of *Scientific American's* 100 most influential people in biotechnology and recipient of the Borlaug CAST Communication Award, he is the author of *Why Smart People Make Bad Food Choices*, which explores how psychology and food environments shape consumer behavior. Jack has delivered more than 1,000 speeches in over 50 countries, inspiring audiences on food security, agricultural innovation, and the future of food. Through his leadership at UCLA, consistently ranked among the very best public universities in the United States, he is advancing Nudge the Planet, an initiative to reduce polarization and build trust in food and agriculture. Jack holds a J.D., an M.S. in environmental science, a B.S. in biology, and a B.A. in psychology and chemistry, reflecting his interdisciplinary approach to reshaping food systems for a sustainable and nutritious future.

# Susan Mayne, Ph.D.

Yale University

# **Moderator and Planning Committee Member**

Susan Mayne is professor (adjunct) at the Yale School of Public Health and former director of the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) at the Food and Drug Administration. During her tenure as director from 2015-2023, FDA advanced landmark nutrition and food safety policies. Prior to joining the FDA in 2015, she spent nearly three decades at the Yale School of Public Health, where she held an endowed chair as the C.-E.A. Winslow Professor of Epidemiology. Her career there included two leadership positions: chair of the Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology and associate director for Population Sciences at the Yale Cancer Center. She conducted extensive research on food, nutrition, and chronic disease, and is author/coauthor of nearly 250 scientific publications with her work being cited more than 17,000 times. She served on several National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine committees including Dietary Reference Intakes committees, and she completed two terms on the U.S. Food and Nutrition Board. She is the recipient of numerous national awards including most recently the Conrad A. Elvehjem Award for public service in nutrition from the American Society for Nutrition (2024). Dr. Mayne received a B.A. in chemistry from the University of Colorado. She earned a Ph.D. in nutritional sciences, with minors in biochemistry and toxicology, from Cornell University.



**Jen C. Bordenick, Dr.P.H.** *The Unbiased Science Podcast* 

#### **Panelist**

Jen Bordenick is an executive and expert in digital health trends, health communications, and policy. As chief strategy officer at Unbiased Science, Jen translates complex health and science into accessible stories for the public on social media. With 25+ years of experience, Jen has a proven track record of leading multisector organizations, convening c-suite executives, crafting national policy and developing actionable research. Her distinct viewpoint on digital health and wellness, shaped by her current doctoral research, focuses on effective methods to combat health myths, navigating artificial intelligence (AI) and social media, and empowering people with information to make health decisions. Prior to that Jen led Executives for Health Innovation (EHI), a preeminent organization bringing together health and tech's most influential leaders to address complex health challenges through thought leadership, education, and advocacy for advancing health. An adjunct professor at Milken Institute School of Public Health at The George Washington University, Jen teaches and learns from the next generation of health leaders. She leverages her expertise and extensive network to help organizations connect authentically with the public and inspire action. She earned her Dr.P.H. from The George Washington University.

#### Brinda Adhikari

Why Should I Trust You? Podcast

#### **Panelist**

Brinda Adhikari is an award-winning executive producer, showrunner and journalist with over 20 years of experience under her belt. She was most recently the executive producer of "The Problem with Jon Stewart," and before that, she worked at ABC and CBS news for nearly 20 years. She is committed to impact-driven storytelling. She is currently the co-creator and co-host of the podcast called "Why Should I Trust You?" which looks at the breakdown in trust for science, medicine, public health and institutions writ large and what if anything we can do to rebuild it. It hit #18 on the news and commentary charts this year. One of the things it does is host conversations between supporters of the Make America Healthy Again Movement and traditional public health. She earned a Bachelor's degree in political science and history from Oberlin College.

## Hank Cardello, M.B.A.

Georgetown University

## **Panelist**

Hank Cardello currently serves as executive in residence and chair of the Portion Balance Coalition at Georgetown University. He is a regular contributor to *Forbes* on industry matters pertaining to consumer health, food policy, and industry practices. Mr. Cardello co-founded the Global Obesity Business Forum and served as architect of the confectionery industry's Always a Treat commitment with the Partnership for a Healthier America. For over three decades, Mr. Cardello was an executive at some of the world's largest food and beverage companies, including president of Sunkist Soft Drinks, Inc., vice president of marketing for Canada Dry, director of marketing for Coca-Cola USA, and brand manager for Anheuser-Busch and General Mills. He has served as chief executive officer for several ingredient companies and, in 2000, was identified as a "Top 10 Innovator" in the Nutritional Foods industry. Mr. Cardello's perspectives have been shared in



numerous publications, including the *Wall Street Journal, The New York Times*, the *Washington Post, The Economist*, and *TIME* magazine, as well as in major broadcast media, such as CNN, NPR, the BBC, Good Morning America, CNBC, and the major television networks. Mr. Cardello is the author of the book *Stuffed: An Insider's Look at Who's (Really) Making America Fat* and the landmark report *Better-for-you Foods: It's Just Good Business*. He has moderated expert panels at the White House, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the Partnership for a Healthier America among others. Hank holds a B.S. degree Magna Cum Laude in materials science and metallurgical engineering from Lehigh University, and an M.B.A. in marketing from the Wharton Graduate School, University of Pennsylvania.

## Christopher Gardner, Ph.D.

Stanford University

#### **Panelist**

Christopher Gardner is Rehnborg Farquhar professor of medicine at Stanford University, and nutrition scientist, and has studied for more than 30 years what to consume and to avoid for optimal health, and how best to motivate individuals to achieve healthy dietary behaviors. He recently completed a 2-year term serving on the U.S. Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee and is the past chair of the American Heart Association's Nutrition Committee. He has conducted and published dozens of human nutrition intervention trials, including trials of Mediterranean, ketogenic, vegan, low-fat and low-carb diets and their effects on cardiometabolic health. Some of his current interests include stealth nutrition, unapologetic deliciousness, and institutional food settings. He is currently working on personalized nutrition explorations with several colleagues, with particular focus on the gut microbiome. Professor Gardner's work was recently featured in a Netflix docuseries (Jan 2024) – "You Are What You Eat: A Twin Experiment". He earned his Ph.D. in nutrition science from the University of California, Berkeley.

## Kristin Reimers, Ph.D., R.D.

Conagra Brands

## **Planning Committee Member**

Kristin Reimers is research fellow of nutrition and health at Conagra Brands, where she leads the organization's nutrition strategy to promote health through sustainable innovation, attribute communication, corporate social responsibility, and food policy and regulations. She has been with Conagra since 2006. During her time at Conagra, Dr. Reimers' has led numerous clinical nutrition research and communication initiatives, all aimed at enabling consumers to lead healthier lives with convenient foods. Prior to joining Conagra, Dr. Reimers was director of programs at the Center for Human Nutrition in Omaha, NE for 16 years, where she conducted nutrition research and developed programs in the areas of obesity, hydration, and sports nutrition. Dr. Reimers' publications include over 50 chapters, abstracts, continuing education units and journal articles. She holds professional memberships in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the American Society for Nutrition. An lowa native and long-time Nebraska resident, she received her B.S. from the University of Northern Iowa and her master's and doctoral degrees in human nutrition from the University of Nebraska.



Chelsea R. Singleton, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Tulane University

## **Planning Committee Member**

Chelsea Singleton is a nutritional epidemiologist and assistant professor in the Department of Social, Behavioral, and Population Sciences at Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. Her research aims to document and dismantle structural barriers to healthy eating in low-income and historically racialized communities. In 2018, she completed a U.S. Department of Agriculture-funded post-doctoral fellowship with the Institute for Health Research and Policy at the University of Illinois at Chicago and in 2020, she was awarded a National Institutes of Health K01 grant to evaluate the effects of community violence on food access, purchasing, and consumption in low-income Black communities. With additional research having been funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, National Cancer Institute, and National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. She has held leadership positions in the American Public Health Association and the Society for Nutrition Education & Behavior. She holds an M.P.H. in epidemiology from Tulane University and a Ph.D. in epidemiology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.