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Institute for Health Equity Research **IHER**

Annual Report 2023



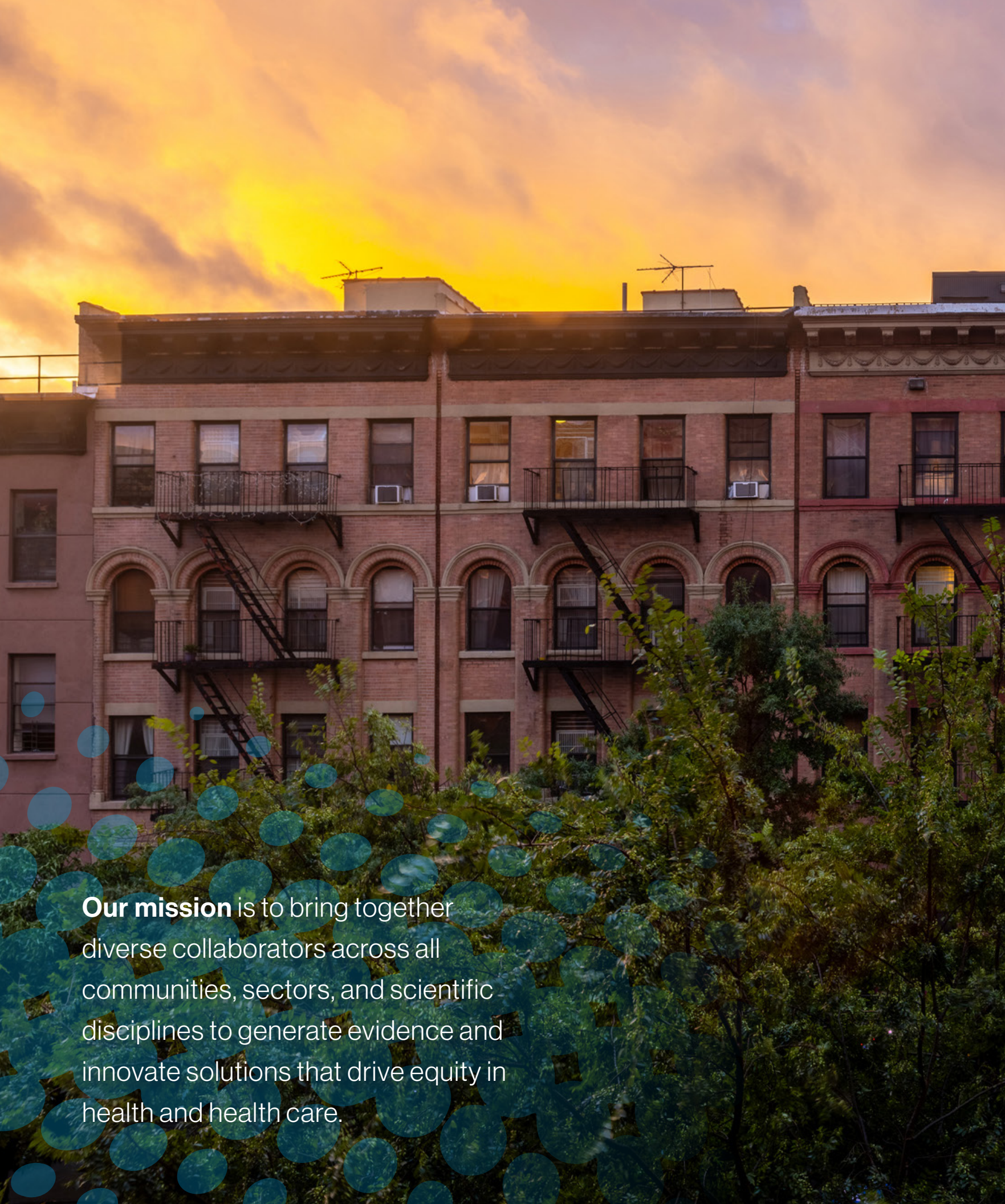
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Our mission is to bring together diverse collaborators across all communities, sectors, and scientific disciplines to generate evidence and innovate solutions that drive equity in health and health care.

Director's Welcome

We are delighted to share IHER's 2023 Annual Report. During the past year, many of our ambitious goals came to fruition, a testament to the commitment and spirit of collaboration exemplified in our mission: to bring together diverse collaborators across all communities, sectors, and scientific disciplines to generate evidence and innovate solutions that drive equity in health and health care. Our team's remarkable accomplishments will have a lasting regional and national impact.

To address the current mental health crisis, we incorporated mental health services in Black churches in Harlem through a newly established psychiatry residency program and collaborated with others across the nation to bring this model of care to other communities. Moreover, we held successful community events and established new collaborations and programs to benefit youth mental health and prevent youth suicide. This groundbreaking work shows the impact community leaders, in partnership with clinicians and researchers, can have on one of the nation's most pressing issues.

We also took a major step towards achieving equity in kidney health. Our work influenced the US Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network, the national organization that oversees transplant guidelines, not only to stop using these flawed, raced based calculations, but also to give individuals affected by the flawed calculations back the time they lost. This extraordinary achievement demonstrates the urgency to examine and change systems of care that increase health inequities.

In 2023, we welcomed three health equity scientists into our research family: Andrew Maroko, PhD, who now leads IHER's Geospatial Health Research group which focuses on analyzing location data to find patterns in communities related to their environment, exposures, and mobility and how those may impact health behaviors and outcomes. We were also joined by two NIH FIRST Faculty Scholars:

Diddier Prada, MD, PhD, who studies environmental risks and health disparities, and Marcee Wilder, MD, MPH, who studies social determinants of health and their impact on high blood pressure. We are excited to continue to expand the breadth of our investigative team and increase collaborations across disciplines.

In December 2023, we hosted our inaugural symposium, From Inquiry to Action: Improving Health Through Equity Centered Solutions. This interactive day included important conversations with community, academic, clinical, industry, policy and funder stakeholders about the use of cross-sector data and cross-sector engagement to achieve equity. We are continuing to cultivate these discussions locally and spur collaborations that will lead to innovative research questions and new opportunities for interventions to improve the lives of those most affected by disparities in health and health care.

Our work has been widely highlighted in the media and in high impact scientific journals. We expanded opportunities for learning and engagement through a new Community-Engaged Research Seminar Series and East Harlem Walking Tours that highlight community assets and community experts who are our research partners. We continued to support early-career investigators through the Exceptional Scholars Program aimed at achieving a more diverse research workforce.

As we look back to a successful year, we also look forward to 2024 with a reaffirmed charge. We could not have done it without the unwavering support from our Task Force Members, Mount Sinai leadership, our community, clinical, and policy partners, donors, funders, collaborators and our exceptional faculty and staff. We thank you deeply for your continued support and believe this will be another remarkable year, where we continue to make lasting impact and build an environment for continued collaboration and partnership.



Carol Horowitz, MD, MPH

Director, Institute for Health Equity Research
Professor, Population Health Science and Policy, Medicine
Dean for Gender Equity in Science and Medicine, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai



Lynne Richardson, MD

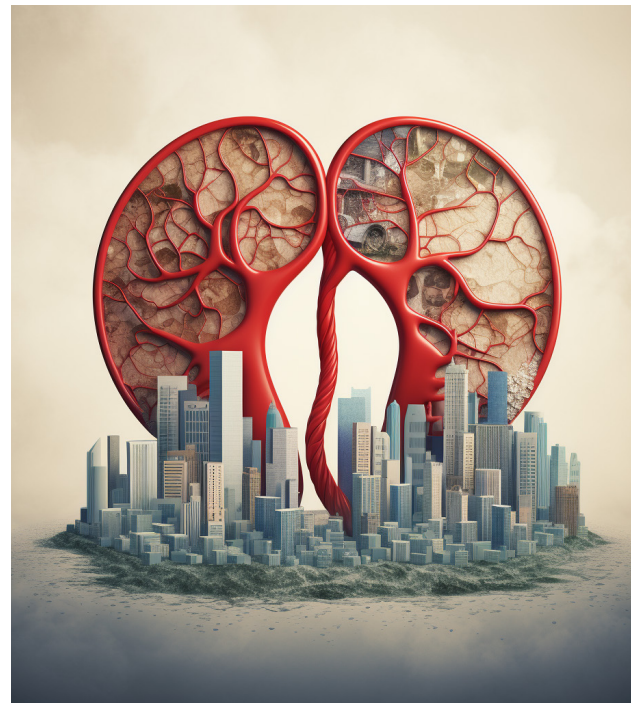
Co-Director, Institute for Health Equity Research
Mount Sinai Endowed Professor of Emergency Medicine and Health Equity Science
Professor, Population Health Science and Policy, Artificial Intelligence and Human Health
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

Media Spotlight

Louisa Holaday, MD, was featured in US News for her research published in JAMA Network showing women who live in neighborhoods with high rates of incarceration can face increased risk of adverse birth outcomes. mshs.co/3TQ18J2



Carol Horowitz, MD, MPH, was featured in the Wall Street Journal Article calling attention to the need for sustained efforts to diversify clinical trials to ensure that medical advancements can benefit all. mshs.co/3TNJHsN



Dinushika Mohottige, MD, spoke with USA Today to discuss a flawed and biased kidney function test that overestimated kidney function in Black patients, masking the severity of their kidney disease and resulting in delays to appropriate treatment including kidney transplants. mshs.co/3SbsAzC



Kimberly T. Souffront PhD, RN, FNP-BC, was profiled in the premier issue of Sunday Best Magazine, a new monthly publication geared to an Africana audience. The article featured a lengthy profile of her many impressive contributions to research and patient care. mshs.co/3vuTwld



Sidney Hankerson MD, MBA, was highlighted in Harlem World Magazine for his work with community partners to create a model for church-affiliated mental health clinics that can be replicated nationwide. mshs.co/3Sbm7VI



Lynne D. Richardson, MD, was interviewed by Soulivity magazine, discussing how health equity research conducted by IHER investigators is bridging the gap to more equitable health outcomes for all. mshs.co/3NW8qr7

Major Accomplishments



Genomics

We lead efforts to ensure that diverse and lower resource communities are among the first, not last, to benefit from advances in science and technology. Efforts include developing simple, English-Spanish language materials to help parents of sick children understand genetic testing and test results and working to bring genetically-guided medication prescribing to people with pain and depression. We also lead efforts to use genetic risk of kidney disease nearly exclusively found in people with African ancestry to improve care of Black people with high blood pressure across the United States. This work is done in close collaborations with community partners, including Elder Mimsie Robinson, a local pastor, shown here teaching hundreds of researchers about ethics, equity and genetics.

Kidney Health Equity

Commonly used medical equations to calculate kidney function based on race inaccurately label Black people as having better kidney function, which led to inequitable delays in getting put on transplant waitlists, and getting transplants. Our work influenced the US Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network, the national organization that oversees transplant guidelines, not only stop using these flawed, race-based calculations, but also to give individuals affected by the flawed calculations back the time they lost. At Mount Sinai, patients moved up by up to 10 years.

Additionally, we have started building a new program to open access to kidney transplant for undocumented individuals.

Advancing Linguistic Equity

Our work with the Mount Sinai Health System medical leadership has resulted in the identification of marked differences in mortality from sepsis for individuals with a preferred language other than English or Spanish. Interventions to improve

the identification of patients with limited English Proficiency and increase the use language interpreter service are being designed to address disparities in care for these patients.

Mental Health Equity

Embedding mental health in the community

In the past year, we began examining the effects of providing evidence-based depression screening and a brief counseling program in 22 Black churches across New York City. This project seeks to enroll 600 study participants.

We have worked in conjunction with the Department of Education at Mount Sinai and the New York City Mayor's Office to host numerous events helping individuals in all five boroughs get mental health care and counseling in their local communities, involve young people in conversations around youth-engaged mental health research, and spearheaded a workgroup that is conducting an environmental scan of peer and community health worker models to address mental health in NYC.

Additionally, we established a partnership between Mount Sinai and the Hope Center Harlem (a church-affiliated community health center) to increase access to holistic mental health services and programs to Upper Manhattan. The initiative also includes a training model for psychiatrists to provide direct care attentive to social determinants of health in community-based settings.

Alongside Hope Center partners, we hosted the inaugural HOPE in Harlem Conference & Wellness Street Fair, which drew over 500 attendees, with approximately 300 community members joining for the Street Wellness Fair.



Youth Suicide Prevention

In the past year, we began testing the implementation of a suicide prevention program in YMCA youth basketball leagues and Boys & Girls Clubs in New York City. The program has a specific focus on racial discrimination, trauma and stigma and is delivered in accessible, culturally-relevant settings.

Community Engagement



Participants at a 'Hope Bodega', an intergenerational storytelling event held at RiseBoro, a community partner organization, in June 2023.

We are dedicated to building bi-directional communication and authentic partnerships between academic and community partners while fostering the capacity of each in advancing health equity.

In our work through the co-led New York Community Engagement Alliance (NYCEAL), we worked with dozens of community organizations and hundreds of community health workers to build community resiliency, counter health misinformation, promote trust in science, and built a text-based platform to both capture community concerns in real-time, and stimulate interest in clinical trial research participation. Our "Project CARE" art initiative opens discussions from community perspectives to share strategies to improve resilience and promote trust in science. We reached over 500,000 people through our community events and disseminated educational materials in 12 languages to nearly 1.5 million people. We helped foster community connectivity through "Hope Bodega", a storytelling initiative that encourages participants to share mementos from their home that symbolize joy, hope, strength, courage, and more, and culminates in a community exhibit. We also award mini-grants that fund innovative community projects focused on uplifting mental wellbeing.



NYCEAL community partner, RISE, leads the VAX UP Far Rock! campaign to encourage Far Rockaway residents to keep their community safe from COVID-19.

Shaping our Future Research Workforce

Exceptional Scholar Awards

The Exceptional Scholar Program provides early-stage investigators from groups underrepresented in science with internal funding to help maintain momentum or accelerate their success towards an established career as a federally-funded investigator. Each Exceptional

Scholar receives up to \$50,000 to support their research. They also receive career development resources and programs, as well as access to external networking resources. The 2023-2024 recipients of this prestigious award are:



Stephanie Tankou, MD, PhD
Assistant Professor of Neurology

Dr. Tankou is investigating the impact of vancomycin, a common antibiotic drug, on the human gut microbiome and immune function in patients with multiple sclerosis (MS), an immune disorder for which there is no cure.



Chinwe A Nwaneshiudu, MD
Assistant Professor of Anesthesiology, Perioperative and Pain Medicine.

Dr. Nwaneshiudu is using blood-based biomarker analysis to study post-operative pain, opioid use and misuse, and the development of opioid use disorders.

NIH FIRST Faculty

Mount Sinai received NIH funding to support early-stage investigators from underrepresented groups in biomedical sciences. As part of this important initiative, IHER has

committed to hiring three health equity scholars. In 2023, we welcomed Drs. Diddier Prada, MD, PhD and Marcee Wilder, MD, MPH as part of this program.



Diddier Prada, MD, PhD
Assistant Professor of Population Health Science and Policy and Environmental Medicine and Public Health

Dr. Prada's research focuses on understanding and reducing health disparities due to environmental factors. For example, he found that air pollution, which Black people are more commonly exposed to due to residential, racial segregation, is harmful people's bones, and leads to more risk of osteoporosis and related bone fractures.



Marcee Wilder, MD, MPH
Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine and Population Health Science and Policy

Dr. Wilder's work focuses on social determinants of health and assessing disparities in blood pressure control for Medicaid and uninsured patients.

Leading Important Conversations

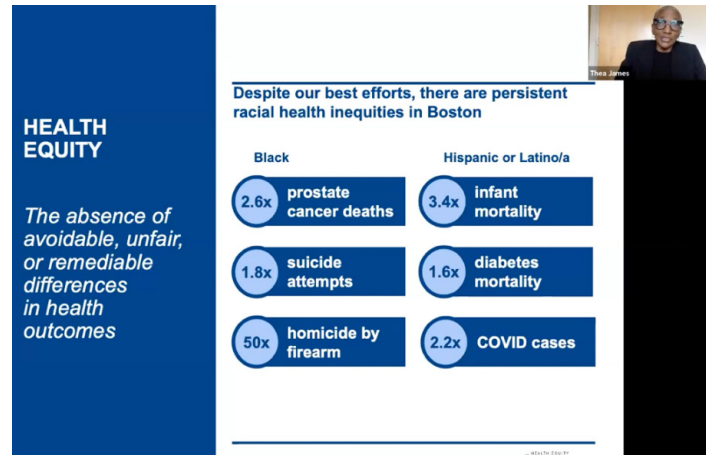
Health Equity Speaker Series

During 2023, we hosted the Health Equity Speaker Series, featuring renowned and inspirational health equity leaders and researchers. Seminars are open to the general public and recordings may be accessed on our [website](#).

In April, we welcomed **Dr. John Rich, MD, MPH, Director, Rush BMO Institute for Health Equity (RuBHE) at Rush University Medical Center** in Chicago, IL. In his talk, he discussed ways we can identify culturally responsive practices towards healing as well as approaches to examine and measure the multiple factors affecting health outcomes in different populations.



In June, **Dr. Thea James, MD, MPH, MBA, Vice President of Mission, Associate Chief Medical Officer and Co-Executive Director of the Health Equity Accelerator at Boston Medical Center**, talked to us about her experience operationalizing equity in her work and provided a comprehensive look at the organizational transformation their hospital has gone through to achieve its equity mission.



In August, **Dr. Altaf Saadi, MD, Assistant Professor of Neurology; Associate Director, Mass General Asylum Clinic; and Principal Investigator, Neurodisparities and Health Justice Lab** spoke to us about the health challenges immigrant and asylum seekers are facing and frameworks being used to respond to increasing needs.



In September, **Dr. Marie Bernard, MD, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity (COSWD)**, explained NIH's vision on how they plan to move DEIA initiatives forward.

Mount Sinai-Royalty Pharma (MS-RP) Alliance for Health Equity Research

In 2023, the RP-MS Alliance for Health Equity Research continued to foster research collaboration and exchange of ideas. We launched several joint research projects bringing together IHER investigators and the RP data analytics team to examine a huge claims database with an equity lens to better understand the differences in care. This database includes more than 200 million de-identified patient records and will be a powerful tool in identifying and addressing potential causes of health disparities across medical conditions.



On December 1, 2023, the Alliance held its inaugural symposium, **From Inquiry to Action: Improving Health through Equity-Centered Solutions**, that brought together community, academic, clinical, industry, policy and funder stakeholders to generate new ideas and partnerships that advance health equity.



The agenda included renowned health equity leader, Dr. Mary Basset, MD, as keynote speaker, IHER's Dr. Sidney Hankerson, MD, MBA, and Dr. Dinushika Mohottige, MD, MPH, as presenters as well as panels on the application of cross-sector data to transform clinical care and cross-sector engagement to drive research. It was an inspiring event, showcasing the results of work from multi-sector partnerships and the benefits of these collaborations to the advancement of health equity. Read more on the event [here](#).



Publication Highlights

Over the past year, IHER faculty and staff published over 120 articles in peer-reviewed journals, helping to advance health equity across disciplines. You may access them all [here](#).

VIEWPOINT

Redressing the Harms of Race-Based Kidney Function Estimation

In this JAMA Viewpoint paper, Dr. Mohottige and colleagues describe how race-based kidney function estimation has contributed to racial disparities in the burden of kidney disease. Following recent efforts to eliminate racialized kidney function estimation and redress the harms done by these policies, the authors discuss opportunities to improve trust and advance health equity and justice moving forward. mshs.co/3Zhmkry

JAMA Network | **Open**



Original Investigation | Public Health

Neighborhood Incarceration Rates and Adverse Birth Outcomes in New York City, 2010-2014

Findings from this cross-sectional study led by Dr. Holaday suggest that living in a neighborhood with high rates of incarceration is associated with adverse birth outcomes even for newborns who did not have an incarcerated parent. These results underscore the need for research on the community-level effects of incarceration. mshs.co/48A81Ch

Designing a Road Map for Action to Address Bias and Racism Within a Large Academic Medical Center

Gary C. Butts, MD, Pamela Abner, MPA, Leona Hess, PhD, Ann-Gel S. Palermo, MPH, DrPH, Ben Cotilletta, Arthur Gianelli, MBA, MPH, and Lynne D. Richardson, MD

In this article, IHER's Co-Director, Lynne Richardson, MD, and colleagues describe the Road Map for Action to Address Racism, a plan developed by a 51-member Task Force to Address Racism and intended to unify and systematize antiracism efforts across the Mount Sinai Health System.

mshs.co/4bCF0sf

New York City's Community-Based Organizations and the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Descriptive Analysis of Local Organizations' Response Efforts and Their Role During Public Health Crises

Devin A. Madden, Anna Reva, Mimsie Robinson, Chris Leto, Jerilyn Cortez-Weir, Nihal Mohamed, Natalie Privett, Carol R. Horowitz, and Nita Vangeepuram

In this publication, a group of academic and community partners present a descriptive landscape analysis of what local community organizations in New York City were doing in the early stages of the pandemic to adapt while continuing to meet their constituents' needs, some of the fears they held about the future, and what all of this meant not only for their communities, but also for their staff. mshs.co/3wgGk3D

Task Force

“Carol and Lynne and their IHER colleagues are using data and science to bring the promise of personalized, equitable medicine to every American. Across the Mount Sinai ecosystem, their research informs how we train the next generation of providers, deliver care in our hospitals, and engage our community so that we continually improve how we serve every person whose life we touch.”

— Ken Mehlman

IHER Task Force Member
Partner, Global Head of Public Affairs and Co-Head, KKR Global Impact

Lisa Opoku Busumbru

Former Global Head, Goldman Sachs Partner Family Office in Asset and Wealth Management

Gerald J. Cardinale

Founder and Managing Partner
RedBird Capital Partners

Dr. Martin R. (Marty) Chavez

Partner and Vice Chairman
Sixth Street

Edith W. Cooper

Co-Founder, Medley

Margaret Crotty Riggs

President and CEO, JSI Research and Training and World Education

Richard A. Friedman

Chairman, Goldman Sachs Asset Management

Kimberley D. Harris

Executive Vice President of Comcast Corporation and General Counsel, NBCUniversal

Melody L. Hobson

President and Co-CEO, Ariel Investments, LLC

Pablo Legorreta

CEO, Royalty Pharma

Kenneth B. Mehlman

Partner, Global Head of Public Affairs & Co-Head, KKR Global Impact

Jodie Patterson

Author and Founder, Georgia & Doobop

Robert F. Savage

Co-Founder and Partner, KSH Capital LP

Dr. Srishti Gupta Narasimhan

Board Member and Advisor, Health and Education

Thank You

We are so proud of all we have accomplished since IHER's launch, and we are immensely grateful to the generous donors who sustain these efforts. Philanthropic support has been integral to our early success, and we are continuously inspired by the robust network of friends and supporters who share our passion for addressing the pervasive inequities present in health care. Thank you for your dedication, and for all that you do to dismantle and eliminate health disparities.



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