

Better Benefits, Better Health: Tackling Diabetes and Obesity

About the Guest Speakers and Moderator

Introduction:



Craig Willingham, MPH, is the Managing Director of CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute where he oversees a diverse portfolio of food policy related research. Previously he worked for the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Center for Health Equity where he developed and implemented strategies to make it

easier for consumers to buy healthier products in food retail venues throughout the City. He has a diverse professional background that includes business management, secondary school education, regional agriculture, and technical training.

Keynote address:



Donna Rey, MS, EdD, is the Executive Director of the 1199SEIU Benefit and Pension Funds and CEO of the 1199SEIU Funds Administrative Operations. The Funds provide self-insured, self-administered healthcare and retirement benefits to the members and retirees of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East.

The seven Benefit and Pension Funds cover more than 450,000 lives, spend \$2.5 billion annually on health benefits, and manage \$17.8 billion in pension assets.

Dr. Rey launched the "Healthy Living" initiative to support 1199SEIU members in achieving better health outcomes. She spearheaded the Primary Care 4 All campaign, encouraging members to re-engage with primary care providers; and launched the Health Is the Key podcast and Members' Voices video series, featuring 1199SEIU members. She also participated in the WeightWatchers®/Oprah Winfrey discussion "Making the Shift: A New Way to Think about Weight," exploring the culture of weight loss and respecting personal choices.

Dr. Rey serves on the boards of directors of Healthix and the Northeast Business Group on Health (NEBGH). She received a Bachelor of Science from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, a Master of Science from the W. Averell Harriman School for Management and Policy and a Doctorate in Education from Columbia University.

Research presentation:



Katy T. Fraser, MSPH, RD, is a specialist in nutrition evaluation with a decade of experience developing and evaluating clinical, community-based, and large-scale public health interventions as well as local, state and federal food policy. Fraser coordinates the Institute's portfolio of evaluation work, including evaluations of food

access and security programming at NYC organizations such as GrowNYC, West Side Campaign Against Hunger, City Harvest, and others. Fraser led the Institute's Community Food Evaluation Workshop, an effort to increase evaluation capacity at community food organizations through trainings, technical assistance in evaluation. Fraser's recent projects include an

evaluation of an online grocery shopping program in the Mississippi Delta, research on NYC food workers, environmental scan of predatory marketing in NYC, and analysis of the impact of COVID-19 policy on food benefit access and food security. Fraser was named to the 40 under 40: The Rising Stars in NYC Food Policy Class of 2021.

Panelists:



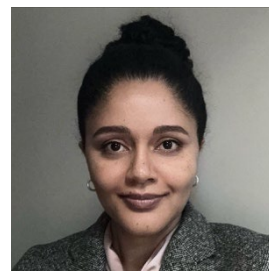
Earle Chambers, MPH, PhD, is an epidemiologist and Professor in the Departments of Family & Social Medicine; Epidemiology & Population Health; and Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine-Montefiore Health System. He currently serves as Director of Research in Family and Social

Medicine, Associate Director of the NY Regional Center for Diabetes Translation Research, and Co-Director of the National Center for Engagement in Diabetes Research (CEDER). In 2025, Dr. Chambers was named the Inaugural Director of the Institute for Health Equity at Einstein-Montefiore – a newly-launched entity devoted to a long-held mission of advancing scientific health equity work across Montefiore Einstein to improve health and healthcare delivery in the Bronx.



Kara Marlatt, MPH, PhD, is Senior Director of Scientific Research at Weight Watchers, where she translates scientific research and real-world data into actionable strategies that improve member health outcomes at scale. She holds a PhD in human physiology and MPH in epidemiology from the

University of Minnesota and has over 15 years of research experience in metabolic health outcomes among people living with obesity and diabetes.



Adey Tsega, MPH, holds a Master of Public Health degree in Epidemiology from Columbia's Mailman School of Public Health and is currently the Senior Manager of Population Health Analytics at the 1199SEIU Benefit and Pension Funds.

Her work includes overseeing clinical and quality measurement reporting on Benefit Fund populations, developing and maintaining program evaluation for various clinical and healthy living interventions as well as participating in and contributing subject matter expertise on key major initiatives aimed at health promotion, quality improvement and cost containment. Adey also manages analytic projects that help provide business intelligence and analytic insights to support clinical and operational decision-making.

Adey has over 14 years of experience in clinical and healthcare data analysis, quality measurement and outcomes analysis. Prior to her current position, Adey worked as an Epidemiologist for the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Bureau of HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control as well as the Bureau of Environmental Health.

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Moderator:



Nevin Cohen, PhD, is the Director of the CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute and Associate Professor of Public Health at the CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy. For the past 10 years, his scholarly work has involved community-based research on urban food policy and food systems disparities, and he is an expert on the food policies and policymaking processes of New York City, where for 7 years he also held staff positions in city government. He is the author of *Beyond the Kale: Urban Agriculture and Social Justice Activism in NYC* (The University of Georgia Press).

About the forum: Join us for a conversation on what it takes to improve diabetes and weight loss outcomes in the real world. This forum will share new research conducted in partnership with 1199SEIU Benefit Funds on a fully subsidized behavioral weight management program offered to a diverse population of healthcare workers living with diabetes and pre-diabetes control, how program engagement shapes outcomes, and what these findings mean in the era of GLP-1 medications.

Additional Resources:

1199SEIU Benefit Funds Healthy Living Resource Center:

<https://www.1199SEIUBenefits.org/HealthyLiving>

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