

# Maternal Health Disparities: The Women Behind the Data



Standing Committee on Reproductive Health, Equity, and Society  
Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professional Education

Join us for a Five-Part Webinar Series

Register [HERE](#)

## Series Schedule:

Webinars are held 12:00pm ET -- 1:00pm ET on the following Fridays:

- *May 3: Maternal Mental Health and The Work of Doulas*
- *May 17: Community Based Organizations and Innovative Models of Care*
- *May 31: Outcome Studies of Maternal Health Care and Disparities within Active-Duty Service*
- *June 14: Understanding Micro-aggression and Implicit Bias Awareness*
- *June 28: Building Trust in Healthcare Among Historically Marginalized Pregnant Women*

Join the discussion  
on **Slido.com**  
#maternal



## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

### May 3, 2024: Maternal Mental Health and the Work of Doulas



**Monica McLemore, PhD, MPH, RN** is a preeminent scholar of antiracist birth equity research, community-informed methods, and policy translation. She earned a bachelor's degree in nursing from The College of New Jersey, a master's in public health from San Francisco State University and a PhD in oncology genomics at the University of California, San Francisco. Dr. McLemore's has focused her career in reproductive health, rights, and justice. She retired from active clinical practice after 28 years when was awarded tenure in 2019. She has 93 peer reviewed articles, OpEds and commentaries and her research has been cited in the Huffington Post, Lavender Health, five amicus briefs to the Supreme Court of the United States, and three National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine reports. Dr. McLemore is the recipient of numerous awards and currently serves and she was inducted as a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing in 2019. She became the Editor in Chief of Health Equity

Journal in 2022. She currently serves as Director of Manning Price Spratlen Center for Anti-Racism and Equity in Nursing, at University of Washington School of Nursing and is a member of NASEM's Standing Committee on Reproductive Health, Equity, and Society.



**Karen A. McDonnell, PhD**, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Prevention and Community Health at Milken Institute School of Public Health at the George Washington University (GWU). Dr. McDonnell is a public health program evaluation and implementation specialist with over 20 years of experience working with community groups, public health agencies, and health care systems both locally and globally. Dr. McDonnell's expertise lies in using mixed methods to look at complex public health issues and programs. Recent work includes collaborations to develop and test a community-centered FGM/C prevention project, evaluating the National Domestic Violence Hotline/loveisrespect Helpline, taking a public health approach to gender-based violence, and evaluating multi-systems changes in the Clinical Translational Science Institute with Children's National and GWU. Dr. McDonnell conducted

trainings in public health policy, gender equity, and women's leadership and teaches coursework in Program Evaluation, Maternal and Child Health, and works with undergraduate and graduate students, medical residents, and community groups to further the exploration of methods to meet our current complex public health challenges. Dr. McDonnell is the recipient of the ASPPH Early Career in Public Health Teaching Award, ASPPH Academy of Distinguished Teachers, and the Milken Institute SPH Excellence in Teaching Award.



**Jasmine L. Garland McKinney, PhD, LCMHCA, NCC**, (she/her) earned a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Sociology from North Carolina State University and a Master of Science (MS) in Counselor Education from East Carolina University – where she also earned a graduate certificate in Substance Abuse Counseling. Dr. Garland McKinney earned her Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Counseling and Counselor Education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). She is a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor Associate (NC), Professional School Counselor (NC), and Nationally Certified Counselor. Dr. Garland McKinney’s clinical and scholarly efforts center on Black women’s experiences with maternal mental health, intergenerational trauma, and the relationship between Black mothers and daughters. Dr. Garland McKinney is a Postdoctoral Associate in the Community, Equity, Data, and Information Lab within the

College of Information Studies at the University of Maryland (College Park), where she continues to expand research on Black women’s maternal health experiences. Dr. Garland McKinney is a proud wife and mother of two girls, Blake and Cooper.



**Adaeze Okoroajuzie** is a senior program assistant with the Board on Health Care Services at the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. Prior to joining the National Academies, she was the president of GlobeMed at Howard University, a grassroots organization that works directly with the Nancholi Youth Organization (NAYO) in Blantyre, Malawi. She is a certified birth doula who provided free doula services to young mothers in Washington, DC through the Community Doula Network. Through her content creator account “DazetheDoula” she creates awareness and educates her community on birth education. Ms. Okoroajuzie obtained her Bachelor of Health Sciences, magna cum laude, with a minor in biology and maternal child health from Howard University and she is an expected Master's of Science graduate at Georgetown University Integrative Medicine and Health Sciences program August 2024.



**Octavia Smith** has been in the birth work field serving as a full spectrum Doula for the last 8 years providing support predominantly to wards 7 and 8 of Washington DC. Octavia currently serves in the role of Community Birth Work Coordinator for Mamatoto Village, a non-profit organization that provides accessible support during pregnancy, birth, & postpartum and create career pathways for Black women in perinatal health & human services. Octavia works closely with the organization’s Birth Workers and Care Specialists to provide effective care and support to birthing people perinatal and postpartum.

