

Understanding Breastfeeding Promotion, Initiation and Support Across the United States: An Analysis

Committee

Ifeyinwa Asiodu

Co-Chair

Ifeyinwa Asiodu, PhD, RN, IBCLC, FAAN, is an associate professor in the Department of Family Health Care Nursing at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) School of Nursing, and an affiliated faculty member of the UCSF Bixby Center for Global Reproductive Health and UCSF Center for Health Equity. As a researcher, public health nurse, and lactation consultant, her research is focused on the intersection of racism, systemic and structural barriers, life course perspective, and human milk and lactation. Dr. Asiodu uses a critical ethnographic lens to inform her work with the long-term goal of her research program being to reduce infant feeding inequities and increase access to high quality human milk feeding care, lactation support, and equitable maternity care practices in Black communities. She has received several awards, including the 2022 American Public Health Association's (APHA) Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Section's Outstanding Leadership and Advocacy Award. Dr. Asiodu also leads the MILK Research Lab at UCSF, which is currently leading research prioritization activities focused on human milk feeding and lactation-related questions identified by Black and Indigenous pregnant and postpartum people. Dr. Asiodu received her PhD and MS degrees in nursing from the University of California, San Francisco, and a BSN from the University of Southern California.

Julie A. Caswell

Co-Chair

Julie A. Caswell, PhD, MS, is Distinguished University Professor Emeritus in the Department of Resource Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her research focuses on understanding the operation of domestic and international food systems, with particular interest in the economics of food quality and labeling, especially for safety and nutrition, and international trade. Dr. Caswell is a fellow of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) and she is past-president of AAEA. Dr. Caswell held a Fulbright Distinguished Lectureship at the University of Tuscia in Viterbo, Italy in 2009. Dr. Caswell has served on several National Academies committees, including chairing the committee that published Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Examining the Evidence to Define Benefit Adequacy in 2013. Dr. Caswell was senior associate dean for education and student development in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Dr. Caswell received her PhD jointly in agricultural economics and economics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Sara N. Bleich

Member

Sara N. Bleich, PhD (NAM), is the inaugural vice provost for special projects at Harvard University, director of the social sciences program and Carol K. Pforzheimer Professor at Harvard Radcliffe Institute, 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 180 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 as the director of nutrition security and health equity at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (2022-2023) and as the senior advisor for COVID-19 in the Office of the Secretary at USDA (2021-2022). As a White House Fellow from 2015-2016, she worked at USDA as a senior policy adviser for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services and on the Let's Move! initiative. Dr. Bleich was elected to the National Academy of Medicine in 2023 and holds a BA in psychology from Columbia University and a PhD in health policy from Harvard University.

Kimarie Bugg

Member

Kimarie Bugg, DNP, FNP-BC, MPH, IBCLC, is president and CEO of Reaching Our Sisters Everywhere (ROSE), a national nonprofit created in 2011 to address breastfeeding inequities in the African American community and a career pediatric, perinatal, and neonatal nurse professional. Kimarie has spent four decades working in the Atlanta metropolitan area and nationally promoting perinatal health, breastfeeding, and community-based impact solutions. She previously worked in private pediatric practice and for Emory University School of Medicine as a nurse practitioner at the state level, as a perinatal nurse consultant, in the hospital's pediatric emergency center, special care nursery, and as a bedside breastfeeding consultant. She was the first African American IBCLC in Georgia (1987). She is a member of the faculty for Boston Medical Center's Communities and Hospitals Advancing Maternity Practices, a Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, and a past board of directors and chair of the United States Breastfeeding Committee (USBC) ethics committee. Dr. Bugg is known nationally for her work in lactation, anti-racism and health equity strategies, the nonprofit world and marginalized community empowerment. She has received innumerable awards and recognition, including multiple lifetime achievement awards. She provides health equity through breastfeeding engagement, training, education and resources for healthcare providers, lactation support providers and community transformers nationwide. Dr. Bugg is an adjunct faculty member at Morehouse School of Medicine.

Lori B. Feldman-Winter

Member

Lori Feldman-Winter, MD, MPH, is professor of pediatrics at Cooper Medical School of Rowan University and former division head, adolescent medicine, Department of Pediatrics, at The Children's Regional Hospital at Cooper University Healthcare in Camden, NJ. She is the co-director of a four-year integrated course at Cooper Medical School of Rowan University entitled the Scholars Workshop, a curriculum including biostatistics, epidemiology, medical and health system science research, patient safety and quality improvement, health and health care disparities, and history of medicine. Dr. Feldman-Winter is the past chair of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)-Section on Breastfeeding, and former chair of the policy and education committees and executive committee for the AAP Section on Breastfeeding, former member of the AAP Task Force on SIDS, and former AAP representative to the United States Breastfeeding Committee (USBC). She is currently a board member of the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM), member of the protocols committee, ABM representative to the USBC, and associate editor for the Journal of Breastfeeding Medicine. She is recently board certified as a specialist in breastfeeding and lactation medicine by the NABBLM. She completed medical school at Albert Einstein College of Medicine with distinction in molecular immunology, and internship/residency at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. She went on to complete her MPH at Rutgers University as a HRSA Fellow and received special distinction from the New Jersey Department of Health for her fieldwork entitled, "Integrating Breastfeeding Education to Eliminate Disparities."

Allison S. Gabriel

Member

Allison S. Gabriel, PhD, MA, is the Thomas J. Howatt Chair in Management at Purdue University's Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr. School of Business and faculty director of Purdue's Center for Working Well. She serves as an associate editor for the Journal of Applied Psychology. Dr. Gabriel studies how employees promote their well-being at work and home, studying emotions, recovery, relationships, and experiences unique to women—specifically women's health and motherhood. Her research has been featured by Fast Company, Forbes, The New York Times, and The Wall Street Journal, and she has written for the Harvard Business Review. For her scholarly achievements, she has received five early- to mid-career achievement awards, including the 2021 Academy of Management (AOM) Organizational Behavior Division Cummings Scholarly Achievement Award, the 2021 Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP) Distinguished Early Career Contributions-Science Award, the 2020 AOM Human Resources Division Early Career Award, the 2019 AOM Research Methods Division Early Career Achievement Award, and the 2018 Western Academy of Management Ascendant Scholar Award. Her research on women's health at work has received the AOM Organizational Behavior Division Outstanding Publication in OB Award, the AOM Human Resources Division Scholarly Achievement Award, and the William A. Owens Scholarly Achievement Award.

Jeff D. Niederdeppe

Member

Jeff Niederdeppe, PhD, MA, is senior associate dean of faculty development in the Jeb E. Brooks School of Public Policy and a professor of communication and public policy at Cornell University. He is founding co-director of the Collaborative on Media and Messaging (COMM) for Health and Social Policy (commhsp.org) and co-director of the Cornell Center for Health Equity (CCHEq). His research examines the mechanisms and effects of media campaigns, strategic messages, news coverage, and social media content in shaping health behavior and social policy. He is committed to producing, supporting, and disseminating innovative and rigorous research to support efforts to achieve health equity. He has published more than 200 peer-reviewed articles in communication, public health, health policy, and medicine journals, and his work has been funded in recent years by the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. He was elected as a Fellow of the International Communication Association in 2022, was awarded the Early Career Award in 2016 from the Public Health Education and Health Promotion Section of the American Public Health Association, and was named the Lewis Donohew Outstanding Scholar in Health Communication Award in 2014 from the Kentucky Conference on Health Communication. He serves on the editorial boards for seven journals in communication and public health. He previously served on the consensus committee for a 2018 National Academies report on Getting to Zero Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities: A Comprehensive Approach to a Persistent Problem and on several National Academies workshop planning committees.

Marianne E. Page

Member

Marianne Page, PhD, is a Professor of Economics and Director of the Center for Poverty and Inequality Research at the University of California, Davis. She has authored numerous scholarly articles focusing on low-income families. A labor economist, she is an expert on intergenerational mobility and equality of opportunity in the United States. She has also published on issues related to the U.S. safety net, education, and gender. Her research has appeared in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, the *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, and the *Journal of Labor Economics* and has been funded by the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Dr. Page is a Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research and a Research Fellow with the Institute for the Study of Labor. She received her Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Michigan.

Rafael Pérez-Escamilla

Member

Rafael Pérez-Escamilla, PhD, MS, (NAM), is a tenured professor at the Yale School of Public Health where he is the director of the Office of Public Health Practice, the Global Health Concentration, and the Maternal Child Health Promotion Program. His three-decades long research program has led to global improvements in infant and young child feeding, early childhood health and development, and household food and nutrition security. He has published more than 350 peer-reviewed research articles and has given hundreds of lectures across world regions. He is a member of the National Academy of Medicine (elected in 2019) and served on the National Academies' Food and Nutrition Board from 2012 to 2018. He served in the 2010 and 2015 U.S. Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committees. He is co-editor-in-chief of the Maternal and Child Nutrition journal and deputy editor of Current Developments in Nutrition. He has a BS in chemical engineering from Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City, a master's degree in food science, and a PhD in nutrition from the University of California, Davis, where he also completed a postdoctoral program on nutrition and early childhood development. He served as a committee member of the National Academies' consensus study on Feeding Infants and Children from Birth to 24 Months, which published its report in 2020. He served as a committee member of the National Academies' consensus study on Complementary Feeding Interventions for Infants and Young Children Under Age 2, which published its report in 2023. He was a lead coordinator and co-author of the 2023 Lancet Series on Breastfeeding and served from 2019 to 2023 in the Development Group of the World Health Organization Guideline for Complementary Feeding of Infants and Young Children 6-23 Months of Age.

Vena A. Romero-Briones

Member

A-dae Romero-Briones, JD, LL.M., is vice president of policy and research, California Tribal Fund, and Nourishing Native Foods and Health at First Nations Development Institute. A-dae first joined First Nations as associate director of research and policy for native agriculture. She formerly was the director of community development for Pulama Lana'i in Hawaii, and is also the co-founder and former executive director of a nonprofit organization in Cochiti Pueblo, New Mexico. A-dae previously worked for the University of Arkansas School of Law Indigenous Food and Agricultural Initiative while earning her LL.M. degree in food and agricultural law. Her thesis was on the Food Safety Modernization Act as it applied to the federal-tribal relationship. She wrote extensively about food safety, the Produce Safety Rule and tribes, and the protection of tribal traditional foods. A U.S. Fulbright Scholar, A-dae received her BA in public policy from Princeton University and received a JD from Arizona State University's College of Law, as well as an LL.M. in food and agricultural law from the University of Arkansas.

Diane L. Spatz

Member

Diane L. Spatz, PhD, RN-BC, FAAN, FAWHONN, is a professor of perinatal nursing and the Helen M. Shearer Professor of Nutrition at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, sharing a joint appointment as a nurse scientist in lactation at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. She has over 25 years of experience as a nurse scientist, educator, and clinician in human milk and breastfeeding globally. She served on the Congressional Taskforce on Research Specific to Pregnant Women and Lactating Women and the World Health Organization's Taskforce on Donor Milk and Milk Banking. She is the current treasurer of the International Society for Research in Human Milk and Lactation. She is vice chair of the American Academy of Nursing's (AAN) Expert Panel on Breastfeeding and AAN's representative to the United States Breastfeeding Committee. Dr. Spatz holds a PhD, MSN, and BSN all from the University of Pennsylvania. She is a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing and an inaugural fellow of the Association of Women's Health Obstetric and Neonatal Nursing (AWHONN). She has been recognized as an "Edge Runner" of the AAN for her 10-step model to promote and protect human milk and breastfeeding for vulnerable infants which has been adopted as the national model for AWHONN's Evidence Based Practice Guideline. Her model has been implemented globally in countries such as Thailand, China, Japan, and Chile. Dr. Spatz has over 230 peer-reviewed manuscripts, and she currently serves on Medela Americas' scientific and clinical advisory board.

Alison M. Stuebe

Member

Alison Stuebe, MD, MSc, is professor of maternal-fetal medicine at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine and Distinguished Professor of Infant and Young Child Feeding at the Gillings School of Global Public Health. She has published more than 200 peer-reviewed articles. She has been awarded grant funding from the National Institutes of Health, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute, and the American Heart Association. Her current research focuses on advancing justice, belonging, and humanity in maternal health, and she contributed to the development of the Couplet Care Bassinet. She is a past president of the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine and a former board member of the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine. At the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, she is a member of both the Breastfeeding Expert Work Group and the Maternal Mental Health Expert Work Group, and she chaired the Task Force on Reinventing Postpartum Care. She completed her obstetrics and gynecology residency at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. She completed fellowship training in maternal fetal medicine at Brigham and Women's, and she earned a MS in epidemiology from the Harvard School of Public Health.

Cecília Tomori

Member

Cecília Tomori, PhD, MA, is associate professor and director of Global Public Health and Community Health at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing and holds a joint appointment at the Bloomberg School of Public Health's Department of Population, Family and Reproductive Health. Dr. Tomori is internationally recognized for her expertise on breastfeeding, infant sleep, and maternal child health. Dr. Tomori's work combines anthropological and public health approaches to investigate and address historical, cultural and structural forces that have undermined breastfeeding and contributed to persistent health inequities. She focuses on creating enabling, equitable environments for breastfeeding in the United States and globally. Dr. Tomori is an author of the 2023 Lancet Breastfeeding Series, several books on breastfeeding and reproduction, and numerous other publications. She earned her MA and PhD from the University of Michigan and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Julie Ware

Member

Julie Ware, MD, MPH, IBCLC, FAAP, FABM, is an associate professor of Pediatrics in the Division of General and Community Pediatrics, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, and the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. She is an experienced board-certified pediatrician who specializes in Breastfeeding Medicine within the Center for Breastfeeding Medicine. Dr. Ware received her undergraduate degree from the University of Texas and completed her MD degree and Pediatric Residency training at Baylor College of Medicine. After years of general practice with a focus on Breastfeeding Medicine, she completed an MPH degree at the University of Memphis. Julie is also an Internationally Board-Certified Lactation Consultant. Dr. Ware has served on the Executive Committee of the AAP Section on Breastfeeding and on the Board of the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM), and was recently elected as the President-Elect of ABM. Dr. Ware is currently on the leadership team of the Southwest Ohio Breastfeeding Coalition and one of the Ohio AAP Chapter Breastfeeding Coordinators. She founded the All Moms Empowered to Nurse (AMEN) Peer-to-Peer Breastfeeding Support group serving African American moms in Cincinnati. Dr. Ware's particular interest is improving maternal and child health through the promotion and support of breastfeeding, especially in those populations least likely to breastfeed. Her research and community efforts are focused on the elimination of disparities in breastfeeding and infant mortality.

Shannon E. Whaley

Member

Shannon E. Whaley, PhD, is director of research and evaluation at Heluna Health's PHFE WIC Program, the largest local agency WIC program in the nation. In her 25-year career with PHFE WIC, Dr. Whaley has become an expert in the planning, development and evaluation of interventions designed to optimize the healthy development of children and families served by WIC. Her work spans a broad range of topics including childhood nutrition and obesity, prevention of prenatal alcohol use, promotion of early literacy for low-income children and examination of the impact of the WIC food package on WIC participants. Her most recent focus is on factors associated with WIC program retention and on impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on WIC families. She has given over 70 professional presentations and published over 100 research articles. Dr. Whaley received the National WIC Association Leadership Award in 2014 and served as vice chair on the National Academies Committee to Review the WIC Food Packages (2014-2017). Dr. Whaley has a MA and PhD in developmental psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Meredith Young

Staff Officer