



***Maternal Health in Crisis:
Ensuring Nationwide Access to Maternity Care Providers***

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

(In order of appearance on the program)

KATHRYN SANTORO, MA is Director of Policy and Development at the National Institute for Health Care Management (NIHCM) Foundation, a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization whose mission is to promote improvements in health care access, management and quality. Ms. Santoro currently leads NIHCM's *Driving Value* webinar series and directs the organization's maternal and child health programs. Under these projects, she conducts research and analysis on health policy issues in support of improving practices used by health care decision makers and industry leaders.

Ms. Santoro joined NIHCM Foundation in September 2004 after receiving her Master's degree in Public Policy from the George Washington University with a focus on women's health policy. Ms. Santoro previously served as a Project Consultant for Women in Government where she was responsible for compiling a state-by-state report card on access to cervical cancer screening. While pursuing her Master's degree, Ms. Santoro was a Communications Assistant for a health policy consulting firm and a Graduate Intern for a Washington, D.C. based women's and children's policy research organization. Ms. Santoro attended Villanova University in Villanova, PA and graduated with a BA cum laude in Political Science.

EMILY ECKERT is a reproductive and maternal health policy and program implementation specialist. She currently works as a health systems transformation analyst on at the Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs. In this capacity, Ms. Eckert supports state Title V programs as they design, implement, and evaluate policies and programs to improve continuity of coverage and care for pregnant women and children. Prior to joining the team at AMCHP, Ms. Eckert worked as a community organizer and certified health insurance Navigator for the Pennsylvania Health Access Network in Philadelphia.

LISA KANE LOW, PhD, CNM, FACNM is the Associate Dean of Clinical and Professional Graduate Programs and former Director of the midwifery education program at the University of Michigan. She holds joint appointments as an Associate Professor in the School of Nursing, Department of Women's Studies and Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

She completed two degrees at University of Michigan; her undergraduate degree in nursing and doctorate in nursing/women's health and women's studies. Her Master's degree in midwifery is from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She also completed a post-doctoral fellowship in interdisciplinary women's health research in the Department of OB/GYN at UM. Dr. Low is a fellow in the American College of Nurse-Midwives and the American Academy of Nursing and continues to work clinically as a midwife within the UM Health System.

She is currently serving as the President of the American College of Nurse Midwives and has held previous leadership roles in ACNM including overseeing the development of national standard setting documents, development of a Tool Kit for maternity care professionals to promote healthy physiologic birth found at BirthTOOLS.org and with the Reducing Primary Cesarean project, a perinatal learning collaborative. She is also a participant in the national multi-stakeholder AIM project focused on reducing maternal mortality which is led by ACOG.

MALLORY SCHWARZ is a Chicago, IL native who has lived in DC for five years. She studied political science and gender studies at Saint Louis University and began her career as a reproductive health advocate and political organizer on the state level in St. Louis, Missouri. Ms. Schwarz came to the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists after four years as the Director of Government Relations for a national abortion rights advocacy organization, Republican Majority for Choice, and was thrilled at the opportunity to expand her portfolio to encompass public health and physician issues, while remaining an advocate for women's access to health care. Outside of work, she is a committed volunteer with several non-profit organizations tackling family homelessness in the DMV, expanding access to menstrual hygiene products, and encouraging individuals towards heightened civic engagement.

KATY B. KOZHIMANNIL, PhD, MPA is an associate professor at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. She conducts research to inform the development, implementation, and evaluation of health policy that impacts reproductive-age women and their families. She is particularly interested in institutional and government policies affecting health care delivery, quality, and outcomes during the perinatal period. She also conducts research on policy impacts among special populations, including working mothers, racial and ethnic minorities, low-income women, and rural populations. Her current research examines the

measurement and improvement of maternity care quality, with a focus on vulnerable populations and geographic variations.

Ms. Kozhimannil holds a Ph.D. in Health Policy from Harvard University, an M.P.A., in Public Policy and Administration from Princeton University, and a B.A., from the University of Minnesota.

ASHLYN CHRISTIANSON, MA is the public health manager for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota (Blue Cross) and serves as a liaison between the Government Market Solutions division and external groups to align all public health priorities and initiatives. She is currently responsible for the cross-functional program management of the organization's Ramsey County High Risk Pregnancy pilot, which launched in 2017.

Prior to Blue Cross, Ms. Christianson worked in community health at Goodhue County Public Health Service where she managed grants, implemented evidence-based initiatives (such as stigmas related to mental health), and evaluated Policies, Systems and Environmental changes (PSE's) within the community, schools and work site locations.

Ms. Christianson earned her bachelor's degree in women's health and global health promotion from the University of Northern Iowa. She also holds a master's degree in community and public health from Western Illinois University. Ms. Christianson has completed internships at the Kennedy Space Center and the Jimmy Carter Center in Ghana, West Africa where she studied Guinea Worm Disease eradication.