Ronika Alexander-Parrish, MEd, US Medical Director, Population Health Innovation and Equity, Director, Doctor of Public Health Fellowship in Vaccines Medical Development, Pfizer

Marvell Adams Jr. is a nationally respected advocate, educator, and nonprofit leader with more than 20 years of experience serving caregivers, older adults, and marginalized communities. Unanimously appointed CEO of Caregiver Action Network in 2023 after a nationwide search, Marvell brings deep expertise across residential care, health system process improvement, life plan communities, and accreditation, including 13 years as a CARF International surveyor.

Ronika "Nikki" Alexander-Parrish is a Medical Director in U.S. Medical Affairs at Pfizer, where she leads Population Health Equity and Innovation across Vaccines and Antivirals. In this role, she provides medical and strategic leadership to advance equitable evidence generation, inform policy-relevant insights, and integrate public health perspectives into medical and business decision-making.

Alexander-Parrish began her biopharma career in women's health and spent more than a decade as a Clinical Scientist supporting Pfizer's vaccines portfolio, with a focus on evidence generation across the development lifecycle. She has also led medical affairs strategies supporting antiviral therapies.

Her work is grounded in public health practice and community-engaged research. Prior to joining Pfizer, she led clinical research initiatives at Wayne State University and served as a public health nurse with local health departments in Michigan.

With more than 20 years of experience, Alexander-Parrish brings a perspective shaped by frontline nursing, community-based research, and leadership in vaccine development and medical affairs. She is the founding Director of Pfizer's Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) Fellowship in Vaccines Medical Development and is currently pursuing a DrPH at Morgan State University.

Uché Blackstock, MD, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Advancing Health Equity

Dr. Uché Blackstock is a physician, author, and changemaker reimagining the future of health. A Harvard-educated emergency physician with over 17 years of frontline experience, she is the Founder and CEO of Advancing Health Equity, a strategic consulting firm that partners with leaders and organizations across the healthcare and public health ecosystem to create systems where everyone can thrive.

Recognized by TIME on its inaugural TIME100 in Health list, Dr. Blackstock is also the New York Times-bestselling author of Legacy: A Black Physician Reckons with Racism in Medicine. As a former MSNBC and NBC News medical contributor, her voice and analysis have shaped national conversations on trust, leadership, and justice in health. A dynamic and passionate speaker, she engages audiences across industries in honest, forward-looking discussions about how we build institutions worthy of the communities they serve and the bold leap of faith it took to found a mission-driven company dedicated to that work.

Kasey Boynton, Senior Director, Global Operations & Partnerships, Sanofi

Kasey Boynton brings over 15 years of combined experience driving business transformation, operational excellence, and digital innovation across the biopharmaceutical value chain. Her expertise spans the full life cycle of global clinical research programs — from strategic planning and protocol design to end-to-end execution of Integrated Evidence Generation strategies that optimize product value and accelerate time to market.

A recognized leader in AI and digital transformation, Kasey has pioneered the design and implementation of AI-driven, regulatory-ready Real-World Evidence (RWE) platforms and automated RWE pipelines, advancing data-driven decision-making across R&D, medical affairs, and commercial organizations. Her work in patient journey mapping and decentralized clinical trial innovation has redefined how organizations identify evidence gaps, translate real-world insights into robust marketing strategies, and deliver measurable patient-centered outcomes.

Kasey is passionate about expanding patient access to clinical trials and life-saving therapies. Through strategic partnerships with health systems and technology providers, she has led initiatives to increase trial accessibility, optimize protocol design using advanced analytics, and remove barriers that prevent diverse patient populations from participating in research. Her focus on patient-generated data and decentralized trial models demonstrates her commitment to making clinical research more inclusive and equitable in practice.

Chance Browning, Chief Operating Officer, Caregiver Action Network

Chance Browning is the COO at Caregiver Action Network. His previous work includes consulting for both Reingold and ScoutComms, serving a variety of nonprofit clients in the military and veteran community, and focusing on strategic planning, storytelling, media relations, nonprofit programming, and public and community relations. Prior to that, he served as the Director of Communications for Student Veterans of America.

He has worked for the past 15+ years in communications and marketing within a variety of sectors, and as a political organizer at the state, local, and presidential levels.

He holds a MA in Political Communications from American University, which includes certificates through the AU Public Affairs and Advocacy Institute and the AU Campaign Management Institute. He also earned my BFA from Midwestern State University. His passion throughout his career has been giving voice to underrepresented populations, which has included advocating on behalf of veterans and military families, within education policy, and on behalf of the LGBT community and those living with HIV/AIDS.

Caroline DeLongchamps, Program Director, Patient-and Family-Centered Care, Quality and Safety, MUSC Health System

Following a transformative experience in the pediatric ICU with her son, Caroline DeLongchamps returned to the hospital, not as a parent, but as a volunteer. What began as a way to give back, quickly grew into a sustained commitment to improving care, leading to her service on the Patient and Family Advisory Council and participation in national conversations on patient-and family-centered care.

Over the past 16 years, Caroline has become a trusted voice in the field, now speaking at many of the same conferences she once attended as a learner. She currently serves on the American Hospital Association's Quest for Quality Prize Committee and is the Director of Patient-and Family-Centered Care at the Medical University of South Carolina, where she focusses on advancing a model of care grounded in meaningful partnerships among patients, families, and care teams.

In recognition of her impact, Caroline was selected as the university's 2019 commencement speaker, where she was also awarded an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters.

Alayna Effron, Ed.D, Msc., C.H.E.S, VP, Strategic Partnerships, HealthyWomen

Alayna Effron, Ed.D., MSc, CHES, brings more than two decades of experience advancing public health and women's health through national-scale initiatives and innovative program development. She has worked with a diverse range of stakeholders across the public and private sectors, including patient advocates, health care professionals, researchers, communication strategists, biotechnology developers, and policy leaders, to generate and promote reliable, evidence-based, and accessible health information.

Her career spans corporate, nonprofit, nongovernmental, hospital-based, and community settings across the globe, where she has focused on expanding access to care through strengthened education, information, and cross-sector partnerships. Dr. Effron has led and supported the development, implementation, and long-term sustainability of health education programs that elevate knowledge, build awareness, and address inequities across a wide range of national health priorities. She currently serves as Vice President of Strategic Partnerships at HealthyWomen.
Dr. Effron holds a Doctorate in Health Education from Columbia University, a M.Sc and B.S. in Public Health and Health Promotion from Indiana University, Bloomington and is a Certified Health Education Specialist with the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing.

David Fajgenbaum, MD, MBA, MSc, Co-Founder and President, Every Cure

David Fajgenbaum, MD, MBA, MSc, is Co-Founder and President of Every Cure and a physician-scientist at the University of Pennsylvania where he is one of the youngest tenured professors ever at Penn Medicine. He is also battling a deadly disease as a patient and alive thanks to a repurposed treatment he discovered and described in his national bestselling memoir 'Chasing My Cure'. He has advanced 13 more repurposed treatments for cancers and rare diseases and co-founded Every Cure to unlock more hidden cures, which has received over $100M from ARPA-H and TED's Audacious Project.

One of the youngest ever awardees of multiple top NIH and FDA grants, Dr. Fajgenbaum has published over 100 scientific papers in leading journals, such as The New England Journal of Medicine, The Lancet, and the Journal of Clinical Investigation. He has been profiled by The New York Times, GMA, TODAY, and Forbes 30 Under 30 and awarded the 2016 Atlas Award along with then VP Biden, 2022 NDRI Service to Science Award alongside Nobel Laureates Katalin Kariko and Drew Weissman, and 2023 Philadelphia Citizen of the Year award. Dr. Fajgenbaum earned a BS from Georgetown University, MSc from the University of Oxford, MD from the University of Pennsylvania, and MBA from The Wharton School. Beyond his coursework, David was a Division I college quarterback and founded and led a national grief support network during college and graduate school.

Tamika Felder, Founder and Chief Visionary Officer, Cervivor, Inc.

Tamika Felder is Founder and Chief Visionary Officer, of Cervivor, Inc., a cancer survivor, award-winning women's health advocate, and Chief Visionary at Cervivor, Inc.— a nonprofit dedicated to cervical cancer advocacy and support. Tamika also has a mission to eradicate cancer and shine a spotlight on patient voices in health care. Named a "Cancer Rebel" by Newsweek, Tamika is a highly sought-after speaker on cervical cancer advocacy, cancer prevention, HPV education, and living life with purpose.

She's shared her story on panels convened by the White House, trained thousands of ambassadors using her signature patient advocacy framework, and traveled internationally to share her experiences with women around the world.

Tamika currently serves as a Co-Chair on the National HPV Vaccination Roundtable and as a steering committee member for the National Health Council's Cervical Cancer research project. She was appointed to the National Cancer Advisory Board by President Biden.

She is regularly tapped by leading organizations and Fortune 500 companies around the globe to share her story and expertise. An award-winning television producer and host, Tamika is a captivating personality as well as an engaging and talented storyteller.

Patrick Gee, PhD, JLC, Founder & CEHD, iAdvocate, Inc. & P.Gee Consulting, LLC

Dr. Patrick O. Gee is a health care consultant, community activist, and servant-leader who brings a systems-level lens to social justice and health equity. As a leader in the Cardiovascular Kidney Metabolic Health (CKMH) collaborative, he drives interdisciplinary strategies that integrate cardiovascular, renal, and metabolic care to better address complex comorbidities through patient-centered models.

Dr. Gee holds a bachelor's degree, a master's in criminal justice, and a PhD in Justice, Law, and Criminology. His 24-year tenure with the Virginia Department of Corrections, culminated in his role as a Corrections Major and Chief of Security. His dedication to volunteerism and community outreach has been recognized with the Virginia DOC Volunteerism and Community Outreach Award, the Governor's Award for Volunteerism, and the NABCJ Owen Bell Award for Chapter Development.

Dr. Gee is Chief Executive Hope Dealer of iAdvocate, Inc., an Ordained Elder at Mountain Movers Ministry, and Chair of the PATIENTS Program Steering Committee. His clinical research leadership includes roles in major PCORI-funded and federally supported studies, including principal investigator of the RECHARGE Study.

A kidney disease survivor, Dr. Gee brings lived experience to his advocacy, championing holistic, human-centered care and amplifying the voices of underserved communities.

Celina Gorre, MPH, MPA, Chief Executive Officer, WomenHeart

Celina Gorre is the CEO of WomenHeart, the leading nonprofit focused on greater awareness and education on the number one killer of women, as well as the injustices that women face in their heart journeys. Prior to WomenHeart, Celina served as executive director of the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases, where she led the GACD Secretariat based in London, funding research in over 70 countries around the world. She also worked in the field with United Nations Populations Fund and UNICEF in Angola as a senior advisor to the Angolan government on HIV/AIDS and child survival and to multinational companies on their social and local community investments.

Celina also has extensive experience developing health and social programs for multinational companies. She has worked for the Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (now GBCHealth), guiding companies such as Nike, Volkswagen, Colgate, American Express, and Chevron, on their strategy implementation for employees, consumers, and communities. She holds a Bachelor's degree in psychology, a Master's in Public Health in epidemiology, both from UCLA, and a Master's in Public Administration from Harvard University.

Caitlin Grzeskowiak, PhD, Chief Research & Innovation Officer, Epilepsy Foundation

Caitlin Grzeskowiak, PhD, is the Chief Research and Innovation Officer at the Epilepsy Foundation of America, where she leads initiatives designed to accelerate research, innovation, and patient-centered impact across the epilepsy field. Since joining the Foundation in 2020, she has helped expand programs that connect patients, researchers, clinicians, startups, and industry partners to advance new treatments, tools, and care solutions.

Her work at the Epilepsy Foundation includes leading key epilepsy-focused initiatives including the Research Roundtable for Epilepsy, the biannual Pipeline Conference, the Epilepsy Foundation Shark Tank, the Accelerator Course for epilepsy-focused startups, and the Epilepsy Foundation's Next Generation Clinician and Scientist Fellowships portfolio. Prior to joining the Foundation, Dr. Grzeskowiak worked on civic science outreach and cross-disciplinary science policy initiatives at Research!America. She completed her postdoctoral training at Stanford University School of Medicine, where she developed technology related to predicting patients' responses to immunotherapy, and earned her PhD in Molecular and Human Genetics from Baylor College of Medicine.

Devin Jopp, EdD, MS, Chief Executive Officer, Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology

Since 2020, Dr. Jopp has served as the Chief Executive Officer for the Association for Professionals in Infection Prevention & Control (APIC), the leading professional association for infection preventionists (IPs), with approximately 15,000 members located across all 50 U.S. states and more than 70 countries. Infection preventionists work to prevent infections by isolating sources of infections and developing and implementing evidence-based practices to prevent and contain the spread of dangerous organisms.

Dr. Jopp career has spanned over 25 years in nonprofit leadership and prior to coming to APIC, served as CEO of the American College Health Association. He has been recognized as one of the top 100 most influential healthcare leaders in the world, one of the top 50 healthcare IT experts in the US, and a top association leader. Dr. Jopp serves on the Forbes Nonprofit Council and on the Fast Company Executive Board, where he is a frequent contributor and influencer.

Dr. Jopp holds a bachelors of arts (B.A.) in computer information systems from the College of Notre Dame of Maryland, a master's of science (M.S.) in computer and information sciences from Hood College and a doctorate of education (Ed.D.) from George Washington University's executive leadership program in human and organizational learning. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the National Health Council.

Annie Kennedy, Chief Mission Officer, EveryLife Foundation for Rare Diseases

A veteran leader in the rare disease patient focused drug development movement, Annie joined the EveryLife Foundation in 2018, where she's led numerous, community-driven evidence development efforts including the National Economic Burden of Rare Disease study, The Guide to Patient Involvement in Rare Disease Therapy Development, and advocacy efforts leading to the establishment of FDA's Rare Disease Innovation Hub. Annie previously held leadership roles at Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy (PPMD) and the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) where she led landmark legislative, regulatory, newborn screening, transitions, and access policy efforts including the MD CARE Act, and the Patient Focused Impact Assessment Act (PFIA), which became the Patient Experience Data provision of the 21st Century Cures Act.
She is a sought-after advisor to patient-centered organizations and initiatives across the nonprofit and government sectors, and in 2024 was named by Women We Admire as one of the Top 50 Leaders in Washington, DC.

Annie's community roles have included service on the Board of Directors of Cure SMA, the National Duchenne Newborn Screening Steering Committee, the NIH Strategic Planning Working Group on Engaging the Public as Partners in Clinical Research, and as a member of the NIH NCATS Advisory Council. She currently serves on the Boards of Directors of Patient Focused Medicine Development (PFMD) and the TREAT-NMD Neuromuscular Network.

Kimberly LeBlanc, MS, CGC, Senior Director, Undiagnosed Disease Network (UND) Coordinating Center

Kimberly LeBlanc is a genetic counselor and the Director of the Undiagnosed Diseases Network (UDN) Coordinating Center in the Department of Biomedical Informatics at Harvard Medical School. The UDN Coordinating Center oversees the activities of the UDN, a network of clinical sites and research cores that evaluate patients with difficult-to-diagnose conditions. As part of the UDN Coordinating Center, Kimberly supervises direct interactions with participants, including helping participants navigate the UDN case submission, evaluation, sequencing, and research process. Kimberly also works with investigators from the sites and cores to develop and implement network-wide clinical and participant engagement protocols and research projects. She received her master's degree in human genetics and genetic vounseling from the Stanford University School of Medicine.

Gerry Langan, Pulmonary Hypertension, Patient Advocate + Speaker

Gerry Langan is a pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH) and congestive heart failure (CHF) patient advocate, speaker, and content creator who turns vulnerability into impact. After a delayed diagnosis in 2018 at the age of 28—following months of medical gaslighting—she began sharing her story online to raise awareness about rare disease, build community, and remind others they are not alone. Her social media (@ltsgerrylangan on TikTok, Instagram and YouTube) offers an honest and often humorous look at life with chronic illness—from site changes and ER visits to joy-filled everyday wins.

Gerry is deeply passionate about helping patients find their voice. She's spoken at national rare disease and chronic illness conferences, taught social media advocacy workshops, and collaborated with nonprofits, local legislators, and pharmaceutical companies to ensure patient perspectives shape care, messaging, and policy.

She's the creator and the host of Rarely Typical, a podcast and blog that explores the realities of chronic illness with compassion, grit, and faith. She was the 2023 Advocacy Trailblazer award winner for Health Union and FiercePharma and named Top 10 Chronic Illness Influencers for 2025 and 2026 by FeedSpot.

Through storytelling, education, and connection, Gerry's mission is clear: to help patients advocate for themselves, feel empowered in their medical journeys, and make PAH a household name.

Hilary Marston, MD, MPH, Principal, Drug & Biological Therapies, Canal Row Advisors

Hilary Marston, M.D., M.P.H. is a Principal at Canal Row Advisors, supporting biotechnology companies and venture investors with regulatory and clinical development strategy. Prior to this, Dr. Marston served as the inaugural Chief Medical Officer of the US Food and Drug Administration. In that role, she oversaw clinical matters that involved several of the FDA's product development centers, including financial incentives for rare disease product development and research participant policy.

She also led Agency response to health crises, including epidemics and shortages.

In addition to her work at Canal Row, Dr. Marston serves on the Board of Governors of the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute. Dr. Marston previously served as Senior Advisor for Global COVID-19 Response on the White House COVID-19 Response Team, Director for Medical Biopreparedness and Response at the U.S. National Security Council, and Policy Advisor for Pandemic Preparedness at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. Dr. Marston also worked at McKinsey & Company and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Dr. Marston trained in Internal Medicine and Global Health Equity at Brigham & Women's Hospital. She completed her M.P.H. at the Harvard School of Public Health.

Amber McCracken, Senior Director, Programs and Impact, Patient Advocate Foundation

Amber McCracken is the Senior Director of Programs at the Patient Advocate Foundation. In this position, Amber oversees the development, creation, and promotion of education programs that are impactful, holistic, and aligned with the organization's mission to accelerate health care access for all people, including their Opening Doors to Clinical Trials initiative.

Amber has more than 25 years of experience managing domestic and international public health education programs at purpose-driven nonprofits, companies, and public relations agencies. She has an extensive marketing and communications background, which combined with her public health experience, results in dynamic health programs that resonate with both patients and health care providers.

John M. O'Brien, PharmD, MPH, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Pharmaceutical Council

John M. O'Brien, PharmD, MPH, is President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Pharmaceutical Council (NPC). NPC serves patients and society with policy-relevant research on the value of patient access to innovative medicines and the importance of scientific advancement.

Dr. O'Brien's experience spanning the private sector, academia, and government gives him a unique perspective on the business risk of public policy.

Prior to joining NPC, Dr. O'Brien was senior advisor to the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services and deputy assistant secretary of planning and evaluation (health policy) during the previous Trump administration. He has also held senior roles in the life sciences and managed care industries, was a career official at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), and served as a health policy fellow in the U.S. Senate.

Dr. O'Brien earned his doctorate in pharmacy at Nova Southeastern University, his master's degree in public health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, studied pharmacy and public policy at the University of Florida, and is a graduate of the AHIP-Kellogg Certified Health Insurance Executive program.

His academic appointments include: senior fellow at the USC-Schaeffer Center for Health Policy and Economics, clinical assistant professor at the Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship program, and assistant professor of clinical and administrative sciences at the Notre Dame of Maryland University College of Pharmacy.

Dr. Alok Patel, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor and Medical Journalist, Stanford Medicine, Lucile Packard Children's Hospital

Dr. Alok Patel is an award-winning medical journalist, television contributor, pediatrician, and self-proclaimed hype man for public health. He serves as an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and department head of strategic communication for Stanford Children's Hospital, devoting his clinical time to the treatment and management of hospitalized children and communication strategies to amplify public health measures.

Outside the clinical world, Dr. Patel is a national medical contributor for ABC News, hosting the segment Patel It Like It Is, where he breaks down health, science, and lifestyle topics. He's worked across other platforms including CNN, PBS, NBC, and Netflix, with work including everything from the documentary series, The Human: The World Within, which trended worldwide on Netflix's top 10 list, to medical mystery shows, science films, and even on-the-street medical trivia shows that made strangers second guess their health choices. He also co-hosts the HBO Pitt Podcast, which follows the medical show, The Pitt and has a parenting book coming out this year with Penguin Random House.

Dr. Patel also serves as a key influencer for the American Academy of Pediatrics and on the executive committee for the AAPs council on communication and media.

Melissa Penn, JD, MPH, Director, Patient Engagement, Research & Development, Bayer

Melissa Penn leads Patient Engagement R&D at Bayer Pharmaceuticals, shaping strategic patient partnership models across complex therapeutic areas, including cell and gene therapy. With more than 20 years of experience spanning rare and non-rare conditions, she focuses on co-creation with patient communities across research design, trial execution, and cross-sector collaboration. She began her career in regulatory litigation representing NYC agencies, including the Department of Health, and later founded and led the NYC Hemophilia Chapter. Melissa has built standing patient councils and scalable engagement frameworks that inform evidence generation and development strategy. She is an attorney and holds a Master of Public Health.

Raj Ratwani, PhD, Vice President of Scientific Affairs, MedStar Health Research Institute, Director, MedStar Health National Center for Human Factors in Healthcare, Professor, Georgetown University School of Medicine

Raj Ratwani, PhD is Vice President of Scientific Affairs at the MedStar Health Research Institute, Director of the MedStar Health National Center for Human Factors in Healthcare, and a Professor at the Georgetown University School of Medicine. He is a national leader in patient safety, health care technology, and the safe use of artificial intelligence in clinical care. His work focuses on designing systems and digital tools that align with how clinicians and patients actually think and work. Dr. Ratwani's research has influenced healthcare policy and frontline practice, has been published in leading journals such as JAMA and Health Affairs, and is frequently featured in national media.

Anita Ravi, MD, MPH, MSHP, FAAFP, Chief Executive Officer & Founder, PurpLE Health Foundation

Dr. Anita Ravi, MD, MPH, MSHP, FAAFP is a board-certified family medicine physician, public health researcher, and educator who specializes in the health care of survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), including women who have experienced domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual assault.

She is the Founder, President, and CEO of PurpLE Health Foundation, a pioneering nonprofit organization working to establish GBV care as a recognized field of health care. Through its novel care model, survivors receive free, GBV-focused medical care, while clinical insights generated through this work inform research, clinician training, and policy engagement to elevate standards of care.

Dr. Ravi earned her medical degree from the University of Michigan and holds a Master of Public Health from Yale University and a Master of Science in Health Policy Research from the University of Pennsylvania. She is also a graduate of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Veterans Affairs Clinical Scholars Fellowship Program.

Her leadership is informed by more than 20 years of learning from and serving survivors, and has been recognized with numerous honors, including being named a Fellow of the National Academy of Medicine, New York State Family Physician of the Year, and a L'Oréal Paris Women of Worth Honoree.

Susan Sheridan, MIM, MBA, DHL, Founding Member, Patients for Patient Safety (PFPS) US

Susan E. Sheridan, MIM, MBA, DHL, is President and CEO of Patients for Patient Safety US (PFPS US). Prior to her role at PFPS US, Sheridan served as the Director of Patient Engagement for the Society to Improve Diagnosis in Medicine (SIDM), the Patient and Family Engagement Advisor at the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Director of Patient Engagement for the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) and led the Patients for Patient Safety program at the World Health Organization (WHO). She recently served on the Patient Safety Working Group of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) and is currently the co-chair of the National Academy of Medicine's (NAM) Patient Safety in the Era of AI initiative. She is also a member of the Lucian Leape Institute, member of the Board of Directors of the Leapfrog Group and is a member of the Global Leadership Network of the Future of Health.

Sheridan had previously spent 10 years in patient advocacy inspired by adverse family experiences in the healthcare system. In 2009, Sheridan was named to Modern Healthcare's list of Top 25 Women in Healthcare as well as Modern Healthcare's 100 Most Powerful People in Healthcare.

Ken Stern, Founder & Chair, Longevity Project

Ken Stern is the Founder and Chair of the Longevity Project, which fosters public conversation and research on the impact of longer lives on civil society. He is also the host of the award-winning podcast Century Lives from the Stanford Center on Longevity.

Stern is the best-selling author of three books, including Healthy to 100: How Strong Social Ties Lead to Long Lives. He is also a regular contributor to publications including Vanity Fair, The Atlantic, Slate, The New York Times, and USA Today.

He is the CEO of Palisades Media Ventures, a Washington, DC–based thought leadership company.

Stern previously served as CEO of National Public Radio. During his tenure, NPR's audience more than doubled to over 26 million weekly listeners. Among his achievements was launching NPR's podcast service, as well as expanding NPR Music, mobile offerings, and NPR.org. During a period of significant retrenchment at major news outlets, Stern led the expansion of NPR News both domestically and abroad.

Earlier in his career, Stern held roles in American International Broadcasting and Democratic politics and began his media career with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Munich. He holds degrees from Haverford College and Yale Law School.

Shyrea Thompson, Founder & Principal, The Iris Collaborative

Shyrea Thompson brings expertise in patient advocacy, patient navigation, health equity, education, workforce development, community engagement, and nonprofit management. In 2018, she founded the IRIS Collaborative, a social enterprise that bridges people, purpose, and profit, which includes Fund II Foundation's Black Maternal Health Equity project, the World Health Organization's Cervical Cancer Elimination Initiative, Tigerlily Foundation's ANGEL Advocates & HEAL Policy Center of Excellence, Pfizer, Inc., and Henrietta Lacks' Family-led HELA100 Initiative.

After starting her career on Capitol Hill, she held various frontline roles as a nonprofit Executive Director at Capital City Area Health Education Center, co-founder of DC Pink Divas, and Senior Advisor to the CEO at Susan G. Komen. As a sought-after moderator, storyteller, and producer, her work has been featured in the Washington Business Journal, Essence, O, The Oprah Magazine, and Campaign US. She was a national spokesperson for the award-winning Know Your Girls breast health education Ad Council campaign. She is honored to be an inaugural National Minority Quality Forum (NMQF) 40 Under 40 Leaders in Minority Health and an NMQF Advisory Board Member. Shyrea earned her B.S. and Nonprofit Management certification from The George Washington University (GWU) and is a professor in the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration.

Tim Vaske, Senior Director, Federal Issue Advocacy & Alliance, Genentech

Tim Vaske serves as a senior director on the Genentech Issue Advocacy and Alliances team. In this role, he works with patient advocacy organizations and other key stakeholders to influence policy around innovation, access, and affordability. Tim has more than two decades of experience at the intersection of biopharma, public health, and healthcare policy, as well as stakeholder engagement and advocacy. His past experiences include roles at Gilead Sciences, PhRMA, and the American Heart Association.