



Critical Resources for Community Health: The State of Hospital Community Benefit in Massachusetts

Speaker Bios

Enid Eckstein

Enid Eckstein is a former vice president of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East with thirty years of experience representing health care workers. At 1199SEIU, she directed a hospital division, a nursing home division, and led contract negotiations and labor management work at Massachusetts hospitals and nursing homes. Representing more than 52,000 healthcare workers throughout Massachusetts, 1199SEIU is the most politically active union in the Commonwealth. During her tenure at 1199SEIU, she worked to build alliances with public health and community-based organizations to achieve healthier communities. She also worked for the national AFL-CIO, the SEIU International Union, and an occupational health and safety organization. She is active in many community organizations and serves on the boards of several organizations, including the Boston Center for Independent Living. Since leaving the union, she completed an Executive Master of Healthcare Leadership at Brown University.

John Erwin

John Erwin serves as executive director of the Conference of Boston Teaching Hospitals (COBTH). COBTH is an organization of thirteen Boston-area teaching hospitals that advocates for public policies at the local, state, and federal levels impacting academic medical centers' missions of medical education, patient care, and biomedical research. Prior to becoming executive director of COBTH in October of 2005, John was at Tufts Health Plan for seven years holding several progressively responsible positions, ultimately becoming the government affairs and compliance officer. Prior to Tufts Health Plan, John held several positions in the public sector including staff director of the Boston City Council, overseeing financial and research staff assigned to Council committees, and assistant director of the State Council on Vocational Education under Governor Michael Dukakis. John is former chair of the Association of American Medical College's Government Relations Committee, serves on the steering committee of the Boston Alliance for Community Health, the advisory council of the Massachusetts Health Policy Commission, and served on Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley's Advisory Task Force on Community Benefits and Mayor Martin Walsh's Public Health Transition Committee. John grew up in Boston, graduated from Boston Latin School, received a B.S. from the University of Massachusetts, and an M.B.A. with a concentration in non-profit management from Boston University.

Elmer Freeman

Elmer Freeman, M.S.W., Ph.D.(c) is the executive director of the Center for Community Health Education Research and Service, Inc. (CCHERS), a community/academic partnership promoting community engagement through education, research, and service. His career in healthcare spans four decades as a clinician, planner, policymaker, administrator, researcher and now activist community organizer. Prior to joining CCHERS in 1997, he served as chief executive officer of the Whittier Street Health Center in Roxbury for 17 years. His leadership of CCHERS has led to its recognition as a national model of a community/academic partnership by Community Campus Partnerships for Health in 2010. He has organized three “ten taxpayer groups” over the past two years and signed on to two others. These “ten taxpayer groups” have been the catalyst for the formation of the Ten Taxpayer Alliance and the impetus around the MA Department of Public Health’s revision and update of the Determination of Need regulations.

Rebekah Gewirtz

Rebekah Gewirtz has served as the executive director of the Massachusetts Public Health Association (MPHA) since January 2014. She manages the day-to-day operations and provides strategic vision for the organization. She is engaged in fundraising, member and stakeholder recruitment and retention, and advancement of policy priorities. In 2015, under Rebekah’s leadership, MPHA was selected through a competitive process as a Social Innovator with the Social Innovation Forum. Previously, Rebekah served for nine years as the director of government relations at the National Association of Social Workers, MA Chapter. In this capacity, she was a leader in the campaign to raise the minimum wage in 2006. She was co-chair of the Campaign for our Communities from 2011 through 2013, working with the support of nearly 100 organizations for a state revenue package that would be adequate and fair. Rebekah also served her own community as Ward 6 alderman in the city of Somerville for 10 years. She was first elected in 2005 and was re-elected four times. Rebekah was named a *Woman to Watch* by the political youth group, Democratic Leadership for the 21st Century. Upon graduation from the McCormack Institute of Policy Studies at UMass Boston she received the Outstanding Public Service Award. In November 2013, Rebekah was honored by the Greater Boston Labor Council with their leadership award.

Phillip O. González

Phillip González serves as program director at Community Catalyst, Inc., a national non-profit advocacy organization working to build consumer participation in the health care system. Phillip oversees the Hospital Accountability Project at Community Catalyst. In that role he helps develop Community Catalyst’s initiatives and strategy on a range of issues related to hospital community benefit programs. Phillip’s professional experience includes fundraising, health policy analysis, organizational development, project management, community outreach, and workforce diversity. Phillip holds a master’s degree in public policy from the University of Massachusetts-Boston, and a bachelor’s degree from the University of Vermont.

Paul Hattis

Dr. Paul Hattis is senior associate director of the Master of Public Health program and associate professor in the Department of Public Health and Community Medicine at Tufts University Medical School. In his career as a physician-attorney, Dr. Hattis has worked in a wide variety of roles in the fields of health administration, law and policy, as well as in the field of preventive medicine. In addition to his administrative and teaching roles, Dr. Hattis’ research efforts have recently focused on the issue of consumer advocacy in shaping health policy with special interests in health care costs and hospital community benefit issues. Dr.

Hattis served three years on the Massachusetts Health Policy Commission, filling the position of consumer advocate as an appointee of Attorney General Coakley.

Juan Leyton

Juan Leyton is the executive director of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI). DSNI is an innovative, resident-led, planning and organizing community non-profit dedicated to rebuilding the Dudley neighborhood of Boston, home to more than 24,000 residents, as a vibrant urban village. When DSNI was conceived in 1984, nearly one-third of Dudley land lay vacant and scarred after years of disinvestment, arson, and dumping. Since DSNI's first community meetings in 1985, 600 of 1,300 vacant lots have been transformed into nearly 300 new homes, a town common, gardens, urban agriculture, parks, and playgrounds. Three hundred housing units have been rehabbed. Business is growing. Rebuilding continues today. Before emigrating from Chile two decades ago, he was active in the human rights and grassroots movement. Since his arrival in the United States, he has been involved in community organizing and development, social policy, and political work. Prior to joining DSNI, Juan served as executive director of Neighbor to Neighbor Massachusetts, an organization with a mission to achieve social justice through community organizing, advocacy, civic engagement, and leadership development. He holds master's degrees in community economic development and public policy from Tufts University and Southern New Hampshire University. Most recently, he worked as a consultant with the Local Enterprise Assistance Fund and some of Boston's leading non-profits like Sociedad Latino, Family Independence Initiative and the Greater Boston Latino Network.

Rob Restuccia

Since 2000, executive director Robert Restuccia has helped Community Catalyst establish an impressive track record working with low-income communities and state and local partners to achieve health care reforms in more than 40 states. Community Catalyst has led successful national campaigns to pass and implement the Affordable Care Act, expand children's health coverage, curb conflicts of interests created by pharmaceutical marketing, protect consumer interests in hospital and insurer conversions, strengthen hospital community benefits, and protect Medicaid from federal and state budget cuts. Rob has represented the interests of health consumers for over 20 years. He was a founder of Health Care For All and became its executive director in 1989. Under his leadership, it became one of the largest and most effective state consumer health care organizations in the country. Rob serves on the board of directors of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation and the Commonwealth Care Alliance. He has a bachelor's degree from Harvard College and a Master of Public Administration from Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Frank Robinson

In 2015 Frank Robinson, Ph.D., became the vice president of Public Health & Community Relations for Baystate Health. In this role, Dr. Robinson is responsible for integrating clinical and community care to better serve vulnerable people and populations across the spectrum of diversity and create healthier communities. In leading Baystate's efforts to expand the definition of health to include economic opportunity; access to education, nutritious food and culture; safe neighborhoods, and other underlying essentials of a person's and a community's ability to thrive, Dr. Robinson focuses on building community partnerships to achieve large-scale health improvements, including resource development, health education and health equity initiatives, and community benefits. Dr. Robinson also represents Baystate Health in the area of Community Relations by building a shared agenda and common goals for community improvement with neighborhood, community and business representatives and other key stakeholders.

Audrey Shelto

Audrey Shelto is president of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation, a position she assumed in August 2013. She is widely recognized for her expertise in all aspects of health care and leads the Foundation's strategic agenda to broaden health coverage and reduce barriers to care through grants, research, and policy initiatives. Prior to joining the Foundation, she worked at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, focusing on medical cost and care management initiatives. Audrey's other professional experience includes; chief operating officer of Neighborhood Health Plan; executive director of the Boston Mayor's Advisory Committee on Health Care; associate commissioner of Massachusetts's Department of Mental Health; and, assistant budget director for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Administration and Finance. She holds a master's degree in management of human services from the Heller School at Brandeis University, and a bachelor's degree with honors from the University of Connecticut. Audrey serves on the boards of the Justice Resource Institute and the MA Health Policy Forum as well as the leadership advisory committee of the Kraft Center for Community Health.