

Speaker Biographies and Agenda

John Auerbach; President, CEO Trust for America's Health

John Auerbach is president and CEO of TFAH, where he oversees TFAH's work to promote sound public health policy and make disease prevention a national priority. Over the course of a thirty-year career he has held senior public health positions at the federal, state, and local levels. As Associate Director at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) he oversaw policy and the agency's collaborative efforts with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), commercial payers, and large health systems. During his six years as the Commissioner of Public Health for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, he developed innovative programs to promote health equity, combat chronic and infectious disease, and support the successful implementation of the state's health care reform initiative. As Boston's health commissioner for nine years, he directed homeless, substance abuse, and emergency medical services for the city as well as a wide range of public health divisions.

Mr. Auerbach was previously a professor of practice in health sciences and director of the Institute on Urban Health Research and Practice at Northeastern University; program director of one of the country's first community health centers; and director of a clinical training program at a tertiary care safety-net hospital.

Jamie Bussel, MPH; Senior Program Officer Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Jamie Bussel, MPH, is a senior program officer at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. She is deeply committed to discovering, learning, and exploring cutting edge ideas with the potential to help build a culture of health and ensure that all children and families have what they need to thrive. She currently serves as the lead on the Foundation's efforts to prevent childhood obesity. Through her programming, Bussel helps foster multidisciplinary partnerships and systems-level change strategies to transform the health of people and places. A strong believer in the impact of our physical, social, and educational environments on health, she hopes that her work will contribute to a healthier future for all our children. She received an MPH in behavioral sciences/health education from Rutgers University, School of Public Health, and a BA in English literature from the University of Michigan. A New Jersey native, she lives in Bedminster with her husband, two daughters, and two rescue dogs.

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Ruth Petersen, MD, MPH; Director, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Ruth Petersen serves as the director of CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (DNPAO). The Division provides national leadership on nutrition, physical activity, and obesity prevention through policy and guideline development, surveillance, epidemiological and behavioral research, and technical assistance to states and communities. Dr. Petersen has held numerous leadership positions in multiple settings including health care, local and state health departments, national advisory groups, academic settings, the private sector, and global health platforms. Her broad, deep, and diverse experience with populations and partners and stakeholders are strong assets for leading DNPAO in its focused efforts to prevent chronic diseases through population-wide public health initiatives and health system innovations.

Dr. Petersen received her MD and MPH from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After training in obstetrics and gynecology in Rochester, New York, she completed the UNC Preventive Medicine Residency and a post-doctoral fellowship in health services research. Throughout her career, she has drawn on her expertise in patient care, health system change, disease prevention, and community engagement to develop and guide programs, research, and policy to improve health behaviors and reduce chronic disease.

Renée Boynton-Jarrett, MD, ScD; Associate Professor Boston University School of Medicine/ Boston Medical Center

Renée Boynton-Jarrett, a pediatrician and social epidemiologist, is an associate professor at Boston Medical Center and Boston University School of Medicine. She is the founding director of the Vital Village Network. Vital Village uses a trauma-informed lens to improve community capacity to promote child wellbeing in Boston and support coalitions nationally through the NOW Forum. Her scholarship has focused on early-life adversities as life course social determinants of health. She has a specific concentration on psychosocial stress and neuroendocrine and reproductive health outcomes, including obesity, puberty, and fertility. She is nationally recognized for work on the intersection of community violence, intimate partner violence, and child abuse and neglect and neighborhood characteristics that influence these patterns. Through dedicated community partnerships her current work is developing community-based strategies to promote child wellbeing and prevent childhood adversities. She has received numerous awards for teaching, clinical care, and public health including the Massachusetts Public Health Association Paul Revere Award for outstanding impact on public health and an honorary degree. She received her AB from Princeton University, her MD from Yale School of Medicine, and ScD in Social Epidemiology from Harvard School of Public Health, and completed residency in Pediatrics at Johns Hopkins Hospital.