

# Public Health Boot Camp 2019

## Participant Biographies

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### Yoselin Colorado

Hi! My name is Yoselin Colorado, my pronouns are she/her and I am the Community Health Apprenticeship Program Coordinator at Chicago House and Social Service Agency. I was born in Mexico and raised in southeast Wisconsin. I am closing in on my second year of living in Chicago after having completed a year of service with AmeriCorps as a Public Ally. I have my bachelors in Communication and Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. The roots of my work are grounded in providing access, inclusion, education and support. Through working with clients and communities of my own, I continue to get motivated by social justice and being someone people can see as a resource and someone who will listen. As a passionate person in the work I do, I also have a passion for self-care and hobbies. I love dancing to

salsa music, relaxing by the lake, going to live music events, spending time with my family, baking and eating sweets, travelling and trying anything new at least once. I am very excited to be joining the PHBC cohort and look forward to expanding my knowledge as a community health worker and advocate.



### Jonathan Doyle

Jonathan Doyle currently works at HOW as a Health Care Case Manager. He works with formerly homeless HIV Positive Clients and assists them with any health care needs they may have. Additionally, Jonathan runs the Health Care Department at HOW and helps shape access and policy for the agency.

Jonathan has worked in the field for over 10 years, been with HOW for two years, and is always looking to learn and do more.



### Jillona Flowers

My name is Jillona Flowers, but everyone calls me Jill. I am 28 years old and I was born and raised on the Westside of Chicago in the Austin neighborhood. I have one older brother. I am the only girl in my family and the youngest. I was the first in my family to attend college at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale and obtain my undergraduate degree in Psychology. This has allowed me to come back to my community and help those around me through providing services and training.

My interests include music, cooking, doing makeup, and traveling. I love to be surrounded by people I can learn from. I am naturally observant and can come across as shy, but I love meeting new people and working with others. It is important to me to empower those around me, and the younger generation coming up, because I was

taught that we are put on this earth to serve others and be selfless. I believe that the energy you put into the universe will multiply and come back to you, so it is imperative that we are always kind to one another and spread love and positivity.



### Val Holdahl

Val was born in Russia and adopted to a family in Oregon at age three; they lived in Oregon for over 20 years and moved to Chicago 3.5 years ago. Val initially moved to Chicago to pursue a prosthetic and orthotic program in Joliet, Illinois. They completed the first level of the program but decided to concentrate on other interests in Chicago where they were living. In 2016, Val worked as a behavioral health counselor for a residential mood and anxiety program in downtown Chicago. This is where Val became intrigued with residential programming. In June 2017, Val joined Project Fierce Chicago as a board member, to continue the organizing work of this group started for LGBTQ homeless young people seeking housing. In August 2017, Val left their job as a behavioral health counselor to join Chicago House Social Service Agency as the

Residential Case Manager for the Supportive Living Program. After 1.5 years in this position Val was hired on as a Residential and Medical Case Manager (Ryan White Part A) for two other buildings at Chicago House, Independent and Family Living Programs. Between their work at Chicago House and with Project Fierce Chicago Val is able to focus on their interests in public health, residential programming, housing advocacy, tenancy and life skills, disability, LGBTQ, and harm reduction. Outside of work, Val is pursuing an EMT certification in fall 2019 and has been volunteering with Chicago Action Medical as a street medic for 2 years. Val runs a side business as a dog walker and pet sitter, they love to travel and ride their bike.



### Nicole Holmes

Nicole Holmes is the Manager of the State of Illinois AIDS/HIV & STD Hotline at Center on Halsted. She received her Bachelor of Science in Health Education from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Her passion work is rooted in supporting sexual health/overall wellness in marginalized communities, including Black Women/Girls/Femmes by educating about health disparities. She has provided Public Health information to a Vice article as well as a Consent Guidebook written by dating expert Erin Tillman. When she is not working, she is spending time with her friends, family, and partner. She also enjoys trying new restaurants in Chicago and sleeping.



### Enrique Mendoza

Enrique is a born and raised Chicagoan who graduated from DePaul University earning his bachelor's degree in Political Science. He currently works as a Legal Advocate at the Legal Council for Health Justice where he connects people impacted by HIV to the full spectrum of health, educational, and vocational services they need to lead healthy lives. Enrique has been a longtime advocate of historically underrepresented, underserved communities and has committed to helping other communities who are beyond the scope of his work. His experience includes working as a child advocate for detained migrant children,

providing KYR workshops to immigrant families, and volunteering as a medical advocate to help survivors of sexual and domestic abuse. His future plans include going to law school and getting involved in the political arena.



### Tamesha Morris

I started my career as a volunteer six years ago working as a project volunteer/ community advocate at Trinity Hospital. During my time as a volunteer, I was responsible for collecting demographic data from participants that accepted HIV screening, acted as the liaison between the Emergency Department nurses, physicians, and the HIV Prevention Team to make sure routine HIV screening was integrated into the daily clinical flow, and provided basic HIV 101 education to the participants. As a volunteer, I took pride in my role providing navigation services to all of the participants that were a part of our program.

I am always striving to make changes to improve the way I provide care and education to the patients who enter into our healthcare system.

Currently, I am the Supervisor of Program Initiatives/ Routine Screening at Holy Cross Hospital. I am responsible for the overall coordination, development, and implementation of Sinai Health System's Integrated Opt-out routine HIV screening program at Holy Cross Hospital. I assist with the preparation and program planning for Hepatitis C screening and care coordination at Holy Cross Hospital. I collaboratively work with the HIV Program Team to engage the hospital and clinical leadership and monitors and analyzes quality assurance and improvement to ensure and measure sustainability.



### Rosalyn Murga

My name is Rosalyn Murga (She, Her, Hers), I was born and raised in Chicago, a native of the Pilsen community. I work for the AIDS Foundation of Chicago as a Medical Benefits Specialist. I coordinate efforts with Ryan White-funded agencies to identify individuals to be enrolled in health insurance programs; or ADAP. I obtained my B.A. in Latin American Latino Studies with a concentration in nutrition from the University of Illinois at Chicago. I am excited to be a part of this year's cohort for the Public Health Boot Camp which will push me closer to achieve my personal and career goal. I aspire to graduate with my masters in policy to help improve services and advocate for communities of color all around the city. I love the outdoors, dancing, reading, eating, and spending time with my loved ones.



## Somyiah Nance

*Kintsugi* is the art of repairing something broken with gold, and since childhood I have admired seeing that skill being transcribed into my community. Growing up in the black metropolis of Chicago, I was exposed to broken systems early on and witnessed loved ones unknowingly fill those cracks with progressive systems to heal. I want to focus on preventing problems in healthcare, starting by meeting people where they're at in order to provide them with the resources needed to have a positive impact before the need for a solution. I believe that by studying both the individual as well as the community, we have the potential to

positively impact populations on a macroscopic level. Learning how one impacts the other will help us make strides towards providing people experiencing disparity with the tools needed to receive equity and prosperity.

Working at Howard Brown Health allows me to be a part of a dedicated team working toward eliminating disparities in healthcare. Howard Brown Health is not only at the forefront of addressing core LGBTQ+ issues, including HIV/AIDS, but we are able to provide relatable healthcare by meeting people where they are at. At the Broadway Youth Center, we are able to give power to those that might not often have that opportunity. Working at the BYC allows me to work directly with young persons affected by HIV/AIDS all while putting them at the forefront of their care, giving them the tools they need to feel their best.

Since being welcomed into the Broadway Youth Center (BYC) family, I have been afforded me many opportunities to help my community while exploring my passions and interests. As a Youth Medical Benefits Navigator I have had the opportunity to educate young people on PrEP/PEP and engage them with topics related to sex positivity including safe sex practices and consent. We work hard to remove the stigma around STIs, including terminology and Opt-Out HIV screening. I have also been able to attend trainings on core concepts like restorative and transformative justice in addition to using the appropriate gender affirming language.

Since starting in October, I have been able to connect the Chicago Period Project with the BYC in order to provide our underserved youth with unlimited access to menstrual products. I also introduced an exercise and dance group into the space centering the promotion of confidence as well as physical and mental wellbeing. In addition to growing within my current organization and taking classes, I plan to work towards the development of my own nonprofit within the next five years. I aim for my nonprofit to be centered on exploring mental health and re-allocating the resources needed for the holistic wellbeing of marginalized youth. I plan to address crucial issues within my community like the school to prison pipeline, food deserts and language barriers in healthcare. I intend to utilize learned best practices to provide underserved communities with support in defunded agencies like education and mental healthcare keeping in mind core concepts like restorative justice.



### Elaine Seaton

Elaine F. Seaton is the Manager of Care Coordination at the University of Chicago's Care2Prevent Pediatric and Adolescent Infectious Disease program. Elaine is also the co-founder of Destined For Greatness, Inc. a local non-profit organization. Elaine has 19 years of Case Management experience, beginning her career in 2000, as a Child Welfare Specialist working with children and families who were involved in the Illinois

Department of Children and Family Services. She has been at the University of Chicago since 2013, where she has had the wonderful opportunity to wear a variety of hats including; Medical Case Manager, Group Facilitator, CommunityLinks Specialist, Task Supervisor and currently, Manager of Care Coordination. When Elaine is not busy at her 9 to 5, she works with kids at her non-profit organization, Destined For Greatness, Inc.

Valuing education, Elaine has attended Chicago State University earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology with a minor in Social Work. She then earned a Master of Science in Non-Profit Management at Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership. She is currently in pursuit of Certification as an Alcohol and Drug Counselor.

While Elaine is all about education, she admits that the most valuable learning environment did not come from the classroom; her most valuable lessons were learned after becoming a wife and mother. Elaine and her husband are the proud parents of four amazing children and two dogs.



### David Sgarbossa

David was born in Los Angeles before moving to Chicago, where the city stole his heart. After graduating from DePaul with a dual degree in Sociology and Women and Gender Studies, I enrolled in a social work program here in the city. After spending near too much time looking for work, I started working at Howard Brown Health as a Ryan White Part C Medical Case Manager, which felt like a dream job. My professional interests include LGBTQ issues, HIV, Sexual Assault and Intimate Partner Violence Prevention. I am currently the Associate Director of Social Services at Howard Brown Health, where I oversee our Ryan White Case Management Programs and our Hep C Case

Management program.



### Aditi Singh

Aditi Singh develops and manages AFC's government relations activities including serving as point on HIV and other health related state legislative matters. Prior to joining AFC, Aditi was a Staff Attorney and Policy Analyst at Chicago Appleseed where she worked on reforming state and local policies to address criminal justice debt and other ways in which people were criminalized for their poverty. Aditi was also previously a Staff Attorney at the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights where she protected and promoted access to education for court-involved youth in

the Chicago- area. She earned her B.A. in World Literature from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2012 and her J.D. from the University of Illinois College of Law in 2015. She is admitted to practice in Illinois and the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.



### Ashley Tolliver

I was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois on the southside of the city. I am a graduate of the University of Illinois at Chicago where she earned her B.A in Applied Psychology with a minor in sociology.

I am currently serving as the Youth Health Advocacy Coordinator at the Broadway Youth Center. I support day to day operation for BYC's clinic and counsel young patients navigating their way through the healthcare system. On a daily basis, I see young people for PEP and PrEP intakes and follow ups, contraceptive & abortion counseling, medicaid and private insurance and also implement systems to support healthy medical relationships between providers and patients. I would consider

myself to be a youth worker, which in and of itself is an all-encompassing role. I appreciate my role in creating space for young people in the movement for healthcare equity.

My career goal is to eventually become a figure in policy creation around public health as it relates to marginalized groups, especially in cities like Chicago. I would like to illuminate young voices and foster in the next generation of healthcare leaders.



### Lisa Vasquez

Lisa Vazquez has been a part of the Erie Family Health Centers Family since 2012. She proudly works for Erie's Lending Hands for Life Program as a Bilingual LHL Coordinator. Lisa was recently promoted to supervisor for their HIV/HEP C/PrEP program and is now responsible for properly training staff in carrying out PrEP and Hepatitis C services throughout all 13 sites. Lisa also works with health care teams to improve linkage, retention and an undetectable viral load for HIV+ and HCV+ patients. She tracks care coordination for their HIV, Hep C, and Prep programs and provides lots of one-on-one education to patients. Lisa has committed her life in working in the Health Care Field providing linkage to care with HIV, HEP C, PrEP, and

Substance Use Treatment Services for over 12 years now.

The Center Lisa serves is right in the heart of Humboldt Park where she grew up. Since the age of 10 Lisa knew she wanted to work in a field that would allow her to help others and make a difference in people's lives within her community. Lisa Vazquez went on to earn her BSW degree at St. Augustine College, graduating as Valedictorian of her class. She became a compassionate and dedicated

Social Worker who has been working in the Health Care Field ever since. Her passion for helping others is something she truly loves doing on a day to day basis. Lisa also loves spending time with family, watching movies, and having backyard Barbecues on nice summery days!