

ACRIA Center at GMHC Presents
HIV & AGING CONFERENCE

ACRIA
Center



I'm Still Standing

HUNTER

**Brookdale Center
for Healthy Aging**

Program Agenda

	Lecture Hall	Classroom 1	Classroom 2	Lounge (Floor 8)
10:00 – 10:10	Welcome and Introductions			
10:10 – 11:15	Keynote Fireside Chat: Dr. Demetre Daskalakis w/ Victoria Graves-Cade <i>(also live-streamed)</i>			
11:30 – 12:15	Women, Aging, and HIV Research Jasmine Manalel PhD Anjali Sharma, PhD	Intimacy, Consent, and Cognitive Decline Leah Daly, Alzheimer's Foundation of America	Spanish Language Session Luis Nava, Latino Commission on AIDS Yolanda Diaz, Iris House	
12:15 – 1:00				Lunch!
1:00 – 1:30	Stretch Session with Victoria Graves-Cade	Experience is the New Sexy Media Orientation Christopher Culp		Network!
1:30 – 2:15	Menopause and HIV Tonya Taylor, PhD Kerry Murphy, PhD	Long-Term Survivors Recommendations for a New Generation and Healthy Living Lawrence Bryant, PhD	Women of Color: Intergenerational Discussion on PrEP Omi Singh, GMHC Nickell McKenzie-Woody, Ana Martinez, Kiera Whittle, Antionettea Etienne, Alftan Dyson	
2:15 – 3:00 Breakout Sessions	Women, Aging, and HIV Michelle Lopez	Housing Lauren Groetch, The Family Center Joshua Elmore, Legal-Aid	Sexual Health and Wellness Deanna Berlin	
3:05 – 4:00	Advocacy Panel <i>(also live-streamed)</i>			

Speaker Bios

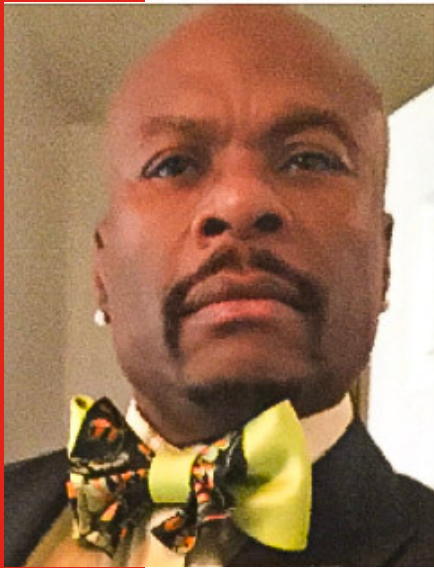
Our Keynote Speaker: Demetre C. Daskalakis, MD, MPH



Dr. Demetre C. Daskalakis, MD, MPH, is a nationally recognized physician and public health leader in infectious diseases and emergency response. He received his BA from Columbia, MD from NYU, and MPH from Harvard, followed by advanced training at Harvard's Beth Israel Deaconess and Partners Healthcare.

Dr. Daskalakis is currently serving as the Chief Medical Officer of Callen-Lorde Community Health Center in New York City, a leader in LGBTQ+ health locally and nationally. Prior to this role, he has held major leadership roles at the New York City Department of Health, overseeing HIV, TB, STD, immunization, and laboratory programs, and managing responses to measles, Legionella, and New York City's initial COVID-19 outbreak. At the CDC, he directed the Division of HIV Prevention and later led the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, where he managed strategies for influenza, COVID-19, RSV, and the transition of the U.S. COVID-19 vaccine program to commercialization. He played a critical role in national responses to respiratory virus threats and managed high-profile outbreaks including measles and avian influenza, demonstrating trauma-informed leadership during challenging events like the August 2025 CDC shooting.

As Deputy Coordinator of the White House National Mpox Response, Dr. Daskalakis's innovative approaches led to a dramatic reduction in daily cases. Throughout his career, he has championed health equity, LGBTQ+ health, and evidence-based policy, shaping national and global strategies in HIV prevention and vaccination.



Dr. Lawrence Bryant

Dr. Lawrence Bryant is a specialist in substance use disorders (SUD), HIV/AIDS prevention, nicotine addiction, vaping, and multi-perspective approaches to behavioral health issues. With a career spanning five decades, Dr. Bryant has dedicated himself to improving the well-being of older adults, the unhoused, and other underserved groups. Dr. Bryant notably led Georgia's initial response to the opioid epidemic by developing a statewide strategic plan and surveillance data for the Georgia Department of Public Health.

Dr Bryant's extensive expertise includes more than 20 peer-reviewed publications on critical topics such as HIV/AIDS, homophobia, and tobacco control. Additionally, with over 50 years as a registered respiratory therapist, he played a significant role during the COVID-19 pandemic, exemplifying his commitment to health and safety during challenging times. Currently, Dr. Bryant serves as a part-time assistant professor at Capella University and Kennesaw State University, where he mentors student dissertations and teaches courses in behavioral health, policy, health promotion, and research strategies. As the Founder and CEO of Passion & Purpose Behavioral Health Consulting Services, LLC, he brings 34 years of personal experience in long-term recovery, guiding others with passion and purpose.



Leah Daly

Leah Daly is the Senior Manager, Education Programs and Services at AFA. She received her MPH from Columbia University and her Bachelors of Science in Environmental Public Health from the University of Michigan. She's been featured on numerous television, radio, and online news platforms discussing Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. She's passionate about creating educational programming that is informative and compelling to any audience, no matter the topic. She's worked in education, community capacity building, and public health for over a decade. She formerly worked in teen sex education and HIV programming. She especially enjoys creating and facilitating trainings for the community.



Yolanda Diaz

Yolanda Diaz presently works at Iris House, Inc., an organization for women, children and families living and affected by HIV/AIDS. Presently she is a non-medical case manager for the Ryan White SAFE Program. In the past she worked as a health educator providing DEBI intervention for women living with HIV/AIDS, Ms. Diaz sat on the Advisory Committee at the Manhattan HIV Care Network, NYS/NYC PWA Leadership Consumer Advisory Board (CAB) at Cicatelli Associates; she was a voting steering committee member at the United States Caucus of People Living With HIV/AIDS. She is currently working with Latino X + voting steering committee member, she is a member of PWN -NYC, she also is a founding member of The U.S. Positive Women Network. Co-founder of Ladies First for the Frontlines for Justice. As of 11/3/2023 Yolanda Diaz was voted to join the National Community Action Board (NCAB) for (ROC4Aging+). Ms. Diaz has worked in the field of HIV/AIDS for over 35 years leading with lived experience.

In 2003, Ms. Diaz received the Katrina Haslip Award for Empowerment and Leadership at the HIV Law Project: The Center for Women's Organizing and in 2004 she received the Women Leadership Award Certificate of Completion of the Women's Leadership Institute. For her outstanding work in AIDS Awareness in November 2006 she received the Karen Sofield award from the New Jersey Women and AIDS Network. In August 2008, Ms. Diaz was rewarded for her outstanding efforts, time and extraordinary dedication in assisting with the coordination of the United Hispanic Construction Workers UHCW 25th annual celebration. In 2010 she was induct to Sisterlove .

Yolanda Diaz aspires to continue to advocate and help women in the struggle and the fight of HIV/AIDS.



Alftan Dyson

Alftan Dyson, PharmD, AAHIVP, FNPhA, Head, Strategic Medical Partnerships at ViiV Healthcare, is responsible for leading and managing ViiV's strategic alliances and partnerships with health professional associations, medical institutions, and other key stakeholders in the healthcare ecosystem. In this role, she drives collaboration, innovation, and the development of new therapeutic solutions that align with ViiV's mission and business objectives. Previously, she served as Regional Medical Lead (Rukobia) and US Health Equity Medical Engagement Lead, where she led the Rukobia medical plan in the US by aligning internal and external scientific communications and across a range of external and internal stakeholders. She was responsible for brand medical planning, medical information resources, communication, medical and stakeholder training, and ISS management. Additionally, in her role as US DEI Medical Engagement Lead, Alftan fostered partnerships and collaborated with HPAs to increase disease awareness, develop new HIV providers and clinical trial investigators to benefit those underserved and disproportionately impacted by HIV, and foster cross-matrix collaborations to help optimize external engagements and make a positive social impact. Alftan joined ViiV in 2019 as a MSL for the US Southeast, completed a secondment as Acting Director- Global Public Health and Innovation on the Implementation Science team from March 2021- September 2021, and then became US Medical Director for Rukobia in October 2021. Prior to joining ViiV, Alftan served as the Director of Pharmacy Services with Medical Advocacy and Outreach (formerly Medical AIDS Outreach of Alabama) located in Montgomery, AL where she had oversight of all pharmacy services available to patients and assisted in overseeing the Medical Advocacy and Outreach 340B operations to ensure compliance with contract and in-house pharmacy operations. . Prior to joining ViiV, Alftan served as the Director of Pharmacy Services with Medical Advocacy and Outreach (formerly Medical AIDS Outreach of Alabama) located in Montgomery, AL where she had oversight of all pharmacy services available to patients and assisted in overseeing the Medical Advocacy and Outreach 340B operations to ensure compliance with contract and in-house pharmacy operations. Dr. Dyson completed her Doctor of Pharmacy in 2013 from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center and completed a community pharmacy residency with the University of Missouri- Kansas City College of Pharmacy in 2014. Dr. Dyson is a proud life member of the National Pharmaceutical Association (NPhA) and newly appointed NPhA Foundation Board Member. She serves as the Chair of the American Academy of HIV Medicine's Council on Racial Equity. In her spare time, Dr. Dyson enjoys traveling the world with her partner, Dorian, to learn about and experience different cultures.



Joshua Elmore

Joshua Elmore (he/him) joined The Legal Aid Society in May 2023 as the Supervising Attorney for the HIV/AIDS Representation Project (H/ARP). In his role as Supervising Attorney for H/ARP he oversees a citywide practice addressing the myriad legal needs of low-income New Yorkers living with HIV. He also regularly speaks and presents issues impacting New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS. He has over a decade of litigation experience including work at Legal Services NYC's housing and LGBTQ/HIV practices and in private practice. He graduated from The University of Pennsylvania School of Law.



Lauren Elizabeth Groetch

Lauren Elizabeth Groetch, Esq. is the Director of Legal Services for The Legal Wellness Institute at The Family Center. Lauren first joined The Family Center as a post-graduate law fellow in 2014, and she has since served clients in Assistant Director, Staff Attorney, and Senior Staff Attorney roles at The Family Center. She received her BA in English with distinction from the University of Virginia, and her JD from NYU School of Law, where she was named a Hermann Biggs Health Policy Scholar and a Robert McKay Scholar.



Michelle Lopez

Michelle Lopez is a tireless advocate when it comes to Public Health among Black and Latinx communities. Michelle has worked in the arena of HIV and AIDS prevention and Health Care navigation, substance use services, and Peer initiatives. Michelle has over thirty years of experience being an educator, linkage to care, and treatments for immigrant women and men migrating to New York who are diagnosed with HIV and are in need of care and services. Michelle has served on the Board of Directors and Policy Development that impacts the lives of marginalized communities. Michelle is now focusing on Research, looking at developing models and methods to have meaningful involvement of community individuals partnering with researchers to create better research designs that impact community needs.



Dr. Jasmine Manalel

Jasmine Manalel is a developmental psychologist who studies close relationships and health across the lifespan, with a focus on adult development and aging. She is a Senior Research Associate at the Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging at Hunter College, CUNY. Prior to joining Brookdale, Dr. Manalel completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the National Human Genome Research Institute of NIH. Dr. Manalel obtained her BA in biology and psychology from the University of Virginia, and her MS and PhD in developmental psychology from the University of Michigan. Dr. Manalel has received multiple awards in recognition of her scientific contributions, including the 2020 NHGRI Intramural Research Award and the 2018 Student Research Award from the Gerontological Society of America. Most recently, she was awarded a K01 career development award from the National Institute on Aging to conduct mixed methods research on the informal care and support networks of older women with HIV.



Ana Martinez

Ana Martinez is a public health professional and Certified Clinical Medical Assistant dedicated to advancing health equity and sexual health education within communities of color. She currently serves as a Program Coordinator at Bedford-Stuyvesant Family Health Center, where she leads community outreach and programming focused on HIV/STI prevention, PrEP education, women's health, and linkage to care.

Through her work, Ana engages women across generations in conversations surrounding sexual health, stigma, healthcare access, and culturally responsive prevention strategies. Prior to her current role, she worked with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene supporting harm reduction and overdose prevention initiatives throughout New York City. Ana is passionate about creating safe, empowering spaces for women of color to openly discuss health, wellness, and prevention.



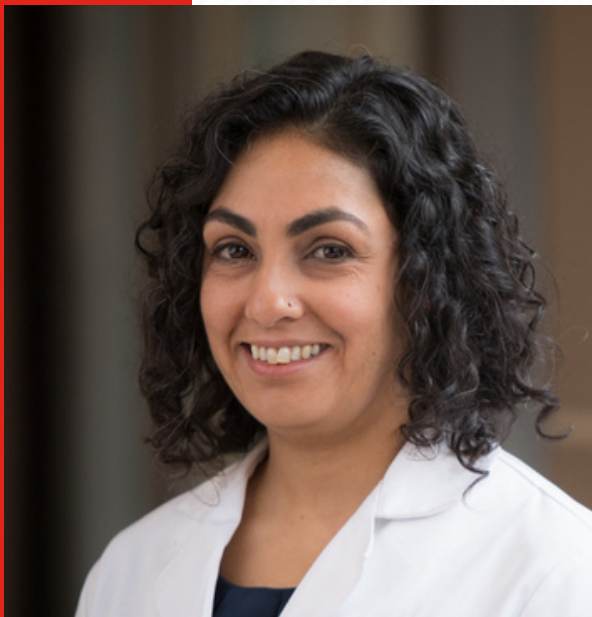
Colleen McCormack-Maitland

Colleen leads LAC's direct legal services and education/know-your-rights work for New Yorkers with arrest or conviction records or who are living with HIV. She also provides technical assistance and training to community members, health and social service providers, lawyers, and others working in the reentry, HIV, and substance use fields.



Dr. Kerry Murphy

Dr. Kerry Murphy is an Associate Professor of Medicine (Infectious Diseases), Microbiology and Immunology at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine/Montefiore Medical Center in Bronx, NY. She is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts Medical School and received her training in Internal Medicine at NY-Presbyterian Hospital-Columbia University Medical Center. She completed her Infectious Disease fellowship at Montefiore Medical Center/Albert Einstein College of Medicine and was recruited to the Einstein faculty in 2014. She is a practicing HIV provider at the Center for Positive Living in Bronx, NY and attends on the Infectious Disease consultation service at Montefiore's Weiler Hospital. She is an active member of the Health and Human Services (HHS) Panel on Antiretroviral Guidelines for Adults and Adolescents, a working group of the NIH Office of AIDS Research Advisory Council (OARAC). Dr. Murphy's NIH funded clinical translational research program is focused on the impact of reproductive aging during menopause on vaginal health including the vaginal microbiome in women living with HIV. As part of this research, she recently completed a clinical trial of vaginal estradiol treatment for menopausal vaginal symptoms in women living with HIV which demonstrated that vaginal estradiol significantly reduces vaginal symptoms and is safe and well tolerated.



Dr. Anjali Sharma

Dr. Sharma is Professor of Medicine in the divisions of General Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases of Albert Einstein College of Medicine. She is Principal Investigator of the Bronx/Manhattan New York site of the MACS-WIHS Combined Cohort Study and co-chair of its Metabolic Working Group and menopause task force. Dr. Sharma's research focuses on metabolic complications and non-AIDS comorbidities related to HIV disease and aging, including falls, fracture, and frailty and functional and cognitive impairment. She co-chairs the Einstein-Rockefeller-CUNY Centers for AIDS Research (ERC-CFAR) HIV and Mental Health Scientific Working Group. Dr. Sharma was selected as a Tideswell University of California San Francisco-American Geriatrics Society Emerging Leaders in Aging Scholar and has been funded to develop a tailored model of integrated geriatric-HIV care delivery adapted to the specific needs of older persons with HIV. She has received funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Gilead Sciences, and the National Institutes of Health for her research.



Dr. Tonya Taylor

Dr. Tonya Taylor is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases, at SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University. A medical and linguistic anthropologist, her work focuses on HIV and aging, social determinants of health, health communication, comparative health systems in Africa, sexual and reproductive health, and health-seeking behaviors.

She has over 25 years of experience designing and implementing ethnographic and survey research in the United States and Southern and Eastern Africa. Dr. Taylor is an investigator in the MACS/WIHS Combined Cohort Study and co-directs Community Engagement and Outreach for the Brooklyn Initiative to Develop Geriatric Education (BRIDGE). She was named a Butler-Williams Scholar at the National Institute on Aging in 2013.

As a public health practitioner, she advances culturally grounded, community-based interventions to address racial and ethnic health disparities, particularly among older adults with and without HIV in the U.S. and Africa



Kiara Whittle

Kiara Whittle is a public health and scientific professional with a multidisciplinary background in chemistry, biotechnology, infectious disease prevention, and community health leadership. With experience spanning laboratory science, public health research, program operations, and health equity initiatives, she has built a career centered on improving health outcomes for underserved communities, particularly within Black communities disproportionately impacted by chronic conditions and infectious diseases.

Currently serving in a leadership role as the Director of Wellness within the Wellness Department at Bedford Stuyvesant Family Health Center, Kiara oversees HIV prevention and support programming, sexual health initiatives, community outreach, and multidisciplinary wellness operations. Her work includes program development, staff leadership, grant management, quality improvement, compliance oversight, and the integration of evidence-based public health strategies into clinical and community settings. She also contributes to organizational growth through strategic planning, data-driven program evaluation, and operational restructuring efforts.

In addition to her professional leadership, Kiara is pursuing a Doctor of Health Science degree with research focused on medical mistrust, HIV prevention, and healthcare decision-making among Black women. Her work bridges science and advocacy, combining research, implementation science, and community engagement to address longstanding health inequities. Through both her career and scholarship, she remains committed to advancing culturally responsive healthcare, strengthening public trust in science and medicine, and expanding equitable access to prevention and care services.