

The Mount Sinai Health System celebrates Black History



Recognizing our Leaders



Andrew Alexis, MD, MPH

Site Chair, Department of Dermatology and Director of the Skin of Color Center, Mount Sinai St. Luke's and Mount Sinai West

Associate Professor, Dermatology

As a physician of color, Dr. Andrew Alexis believes that to be diverse and inclusive is to foster an environment that “embraces the broad range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds of our community.” Dr. Alexis’ mixed ethnic background contributes to his passion for delivering culturally sensitive care and treating dermatologic conditions that are more prevalent in patients of color. In support of the System’s mission to provide compassionate patient care to diverse communities, Dr. Alexis regularly encourages students, residents, and faculty of underrepresented groups in medicine to utilize valuable insights from their backgrounds and experiences to improve the patient experience.



Emma K. T. Benn, MPH, DrPH

Director of Academic Programs, Center for Biostatistics

Co-Director of the MS in Biostatistics Program and MPH in Biostatistics Track, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

Assistant Professor, Population Health Science and Policy

Growing up on the “Main Line” in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, Dr. Emma Benn describes her upbringing as “infused with a strong sense of culture and history, with a pride rooted in a unique blend of race and place.” This background, paired with her belief that we achieve inclusion when we value and successfully draw upon our heterogeneity, has motivated Dr. Benn to create opportunities for underrepresented groups in the clinical investigator workforce. As a biostatistician, she applies her statistical expertise to reduce health disparities while simultaneously striving to foster a diverse and equitable environment at all levels. As a result, the System is uniquely equipped with the innovative ideas necessary to optimally serve our patient populations.



Gary C. Butts, MD

Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Mount Sinai Health System

Dean, Diversity Programs, Policy and Community Affairs, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

Professor, Departments of Medical Education, Pediatrics and Preventive Medicine

As MSHS Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and the first African American male full Dean at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, Dr. Gary Butts has an unwavering commitment to improving health equity and advancing representation and inclusion for students, trainees, faculty, and staff from racial, ethnic, and gender minority groups, as well as other underrepresented groups. His life experiences and current roles as the Director of the Health System’s Office for Diversity and Inclusion and the School’s Center for Multicultural and Community Affairs, motivate Dr. Butts to continue working to ensure individuals from underserved communities have regular access to health care, educational resources, and career development opportunities.

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Garfield A. D. Clunie, MD
Director, Ambulatory Maternal-Fetal
Medicine Services
Assistant Professor, Division of
Maternal-Fetal Medicine

Dr. Garfield Clunie is currently the Director of Ambulatory Maternal-Fetal Medicine Services at the OB/GYN Ambulatory Practice and participates in the Faculty Practice Associates. As a Caribbean-American from the island of Jamaica, he identifies with and fosters an inclusive environment for patients of diverse backgrounds. Dr. Clunie explains that his role within the Mount Sinai Health System is to “treat every patient as an individual, regardless of background or access to resources, and help them to understand that we at Mount Sinai are here to give the best care possible, in a safe and comfortable environment, that is also culturally sensitive.”



Sharon M. Edwards, MD
Director, Mount Sinai Pediatric
School-Based Clinics
Associate Professor, Pediatrics and
Medical Education

An advocate for families living in poverty, Dr. Sharon Edwards has dedicated her career to caring for individuals in underrepresented communities. As an African American female of Panamanian descent, Dr. Edwards is motivated by the challenges her mother faced in coming to the U.S. and therefore, encourages individuals “to see the brilliance in themselves and challenge systems that discriminate against them because they are poor and a minority.” She strives to recruit talented underrepresented minority applicants at the faculty, resident, and medical student level through her role as Vice Chair for Diversity Initiatives for the Department of Pediatrics. She believes that diversity—inviting new perspectives that dare us to think differently—makes the department and organization stronger.



Ugo A. Ezenkwele, MD, MPH
Chief
Department of Emergency Medicine
Mount Sinai Queens Hospital
Associate Professor
Emergency Medicine

Born and raised in New York City to Nigerian parents, Dr. Ugo Ezenkwele constantly applies his background and his diverse surroundings to his practice of medicine. Providing care in the most ethnically diversity city in the world, he recognizes the need for an employee base that is equally diverse. “Understanding that patients are unique brings a keen understanding to their care. No one method is the cure-all, rather each person has to be approached individually.” Dr. Ezenkwele’s deep appreciation of diversity inspired him to create a forum called “Creative Thursdays” open to all staff to share ideas on problem solving and improving patient care. Engaged staff, various perspectives, and continuing to provide quality health care, “that is the power of diversity and inclusion.”

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Yasmin Hurd, PhD

Director, Center for Addictive Disorders
Ward-Coleman Chair of Translational Neuroscience

Professor, Departments of Psychiatry, Neuroscience and Pharmacology and Systems Therapeutics

Born in Jamaica and having spent a large portion of her career in Sweden, Dr. Yasmin Hurd appreciates the value of diversity and inclusion in strengthening an organization. In coming to the U.S. first as a young teen and later as an adult, Dr. Hurd faced challenges as a woman of color and “foreigner.” This taught her that “promoting respect and opening minds while reducing implicit biases is difficult to achieve without including everyone at the table.”

As such, Dr. Hurd is dedicated to ensuring future generations have diverse role models so they learn to value different perspectives and are motivated to achieve their full potential.



Malcolm D. Reid, MD, MPP

Site Chair, Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, Mount Sinai St. Luke's and Mount Sinai West

Assistant Professor, Rehabilitation Medicine

As a native New Yorker with African-American and Caribbean roots, Dr. Malcolm Reid believes that his cultural heritage has heightened his sensitivity to the needs of the diverse populations we serve. Since joining the organization in 1998 as Vice Chairman of the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center (now Mount Sinai St. Luke's and Mount Sinai West), Dr. Reid has upheld the golden rule in his interactions with staff and patients: treating each person as you would want your family member to be treated, with respect and compassion, regardless of their socioeconomic status, race, culture, religion, or sexual orientation. He believes diversity and inclusion add to the quality care provided to our patients and to overall staff satisfaction.



Michelle L. Sainte

Associate Dean for Academic Administration, Department of Medical Education

For Michelle Sainte, diversity and inclusion means “recognizing differences, embracing the new space those differences create, identifying shared experiences, and advancing the dialogue of how differences can improve and enhance the environment.” Raised in the South with African American and Afro Caribbean heritage and ancestry, Ms. Sainte's multicultural background informs her work. She is dedicated to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where all faculty, staff, and students feel respected and valued, allowing education, health care delivery, and research at Mount Sinai to thrive.