

CHSAC Member Descriptions 2020

Regina Rippel

Regina worked for the MN AIDS project for 15 years as case and program manager. After receiving her nursing degree, she went on to work in a long-term facility. She is currently working at an assisted living facility and also does a lot of wellness events as a private contractor.

Tom Kottke

Tom practices cardiology with HealthPartners Medical Group and serves as Medical Director for Population Health at HealthPartners health plan. He focuses his efforts on creating physical and social environments that support and enable healthy lifestyles for all residents of St. Paul Ramsey County and other communities.

Eugene Nichols

Gene is a retired 3M Health Care Division Manager. Originally from Yonkers, NY, Gene moved to the Twin Cities and has been involved in numerous health and political related issues since moving to Minnesota. He is currently Board Chairman at Open Cities Health Center, and chairs the African American Leadership Forum-Health & Wellness Group. He is also serves on Shoreview's Human Rights Commission.

Kerri-Elizabeth Sawyer

Kerri-Elizabeth is a Research Scientist with the State of Minnesota. She works to improve the performance of Minnesota's state and local public health system. Kerri-Elizabeth joined the Committee in 2008.

David Muhovich

David is a long-time St. Paul resident who wants to more actively connect with the positive work done in public health in his own community. He teaches Community Health Nursing and Cultural Diversity at Bethel University.

Joseph Adamji

Joseph is the director for the Kitty Andersen Youth Science Center, a workforce development program at the Science Museum of Minnesota serving youth ages 8-25. The KAYSC approach to workforce development connects STEM learning to social justice and careers. Throughout his professional career, he has addressed issues related to public health through building up and engaging youth leadership to address critical issues today, for a healthier future. In his personal time, Joseph enjoys cooking, eating, staying healthy, music, outdoor adventures, and building community.

Hanna Getachew-Kreusser

Hanna has over 20 years of experience in managing social services and directing programs in the Non-Profit sector. She has worked in diverse programs providing health and social services across the life span. She has had several years of experience managing programs geared towards serving those who are in crisis due to various life changes including health and stability, homelessness, domestic violence, grief and loss. Her passion, personality, training and experience make her an effective leader for directing work around the social determinants of health. She currently serves as the Director of Programs at Face to Face Health and Counseling in Saint Paul. She is interested in working towards getting to the root cause of health and wellness issues more than putting on band aids. Hanna describes her current passion as involving a focus on participating in policy change conversations with policy makers to bring changes to the lives of people impacted.

Sarah Osman

Sarah is a registered nurse at Hennepin County Medical Center and long-time Saint Paul resident. She is passionate about health promotion, education and prevention. She is also interested in the socioeconomic and public health issues affecting low-income, minority, and immigrant/refugee populations.

Richard Ragan

Richard retired from Saint Paul - Ramsey County Public Health after a 35-year career. He served as Environmental Health Manager, Assistant to the Director and Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator. He and his wife live in Shoreview and are enjoying retirement with their children and three granddaughters who live in South Minneapolis and Breckenridge, Colorado. Richard enjoys volunteering, especially at the Cedar Cultural Center and has a strong desire to stay involved with public health.

José Tori

José is a Hispanic community leader and business owner who works with most minority communities in Ramsey County and across Minnesota providing language services in the healthcare field. He has doctorates in healthcare and education, recently graduated from MEDA's Mini MBA minority program, and is a board member of the Latino Youth Development Collaborative. His passion is empowering minority populations, especially youth, to advocate for themselves in healthcare and other related areas.

Carol Thunstrom

Carol has over 25 years of nursing experience, including 10 years with the Hennepin County Homeless Project working as a PHN where she focused on pregnant women, children and families. Equally important was her work to reach the homeless who sleep outside, assisting with medical care and housing. She currently works for HealthPartners in nurse triage. Her MSN degree with FNP focus along with her ANCC certifications in the topics of Ambulatory Care nursing, Psychiatric nursing and Holistic nursing provide her a well-rounded view of her patient base. Her passion is public health and her goal is to use her knowledge and experience to work toward improving overall public health issues within Ramsey County.

Aisha Ellis

Aisha is a Research Analyst for the State of Minnesota, working to improve the performance and outcomes of Minnesota's state and local public health systems that serve maternal and child health clients. She applies techniques related to data management, analysis, project management, training and reporting to improve the implementation of public health programs while promoting health equity and reducing disparities. Aisha has a passion for healthy communities and ensuring health in all policies.

Amina Abdullahi

Amina recently graduated from the University of Minnesota with an undergraduate degree in public health, and she feels that only through public service can she really understand and take on the role of serving people. Amina has lived in Saint Paul for almost 6 years and believes that public health should be something we constantly promote and improve in our daily lives one way or another. By serving on this committee she hopes to better help the communities around her, especially being from an underserved immigrant community like her own. Amina is honored to be a part of a committee that plays a vital role in advising on issues surrounding public health, so that we can further investigate, research, implement, and recognize the needs of all people.

Amina's background education in public health and her experience with community health at the Metropolitan Council has allowed her to define, assess, and research a wide variety of public health issues including health equity, chronic disease, mental health, and maternal and child health. She is able to use her bilingualism to bridge the gap among community members around the Twin Cities. She believes that if we approach and add value to the work we do we are guaranteed to put in all our efforts and leave all ideas on the table to better promote healthy lives.

Pa Vang

Pa is an LPN and wishes to serve on this committee in order to use her experiences to make a positive impact for the community. Pa is a member of the Hmong Health Care Professional Coalition, Community Dental Care Board, Headwater Foundation for Justice, Planned Parenthood and Hmong Community Advisory Council.

Alyssa Fritz

Eliminating health disparities is Alyssa's life goal. As a public health dietitian, she has worked with diverse communities in Arizona, Colorado, and Minnesota and has witnessed firsthand the health impacts of inequitable access to healthy food, health care, quality education, and many other social determinants of health. Her three years of experience working with children and families in the WIC Program convinced her that the most effective way to make lasting change is to act on a policy, systems, and environmental level. Alyssa is currently the Committee Legislative Assistant to the Health and Human Services Policy Committee at the Minnesota House of Representatives. She has lived in two different Saint Paul neighborhoods and two Ramsey County suburbs. Alyssa was recently awarded membership into the Delta Omega Honor Society in Public Health.

Ayah Mohammed

What began with helping her parents navigate the complex healthcare system as new immigrants in the U.S ended up shaping Ayah's understanding of how race and ethnicity complicates and intersects with health and the healthcare system. This understanding was the catalyst that inspired her passion for public health. Ayah is dedicated to improving the health of the community. She has focused on serving underserved and underprivileged populations, such as minorities, immigrants, refugees, and homeless individuals. Ayah completed her undergraduate education at the University of Minnesota where she studied Public Health, Global Studies and Arabic. She is an African Lay Health Advisor in her community and a member of MDH's Institutional Racism Cohort and the Violence Prevention Action Team. She is employed at Family Tree Clinic as a Community Engagement Liaison. Ayah has immersed herself into the communities which she serves in order to intimately understand their needs and the barriers they face that negatively impact their health.

Jennifer Arnold

Jennifer wants to improve the services that are offered to those who are living and working in Ramsey County; to apply her knowledge and skills as a pharmacist working in the community setting to improve the health and well-being of all individuals. She is the mother of a child with special needs. She is interested in law school possibly in the near future, and is a volunteer for NAMI Minnesota.