

## Summer 2011 Project L/EARN Mentor Bios

**Dr. Ayse Akincigil** (Ph.D., Rutgers University) is an economist and assistant professor at Rutgers University's School of Social Work, and Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research. Her research seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the problems that lead to inadequate access to care and inappropriate medical care. Dr. Akincigil's research examines care provided for conditions such as heart attack, tobacco addiction, depression and HIV/AIDS, which contribute the largest burden of disease and societal costs. With funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation she is examining utilization of interventions to address tobacco addiction. Another interest concerns the needs of vulnerable and at-risk groups, such as people living with severe mental illnesses, geriatric populations living in the community and nursing homes, and people living in poverty. In that line of research, Dr. Akincigil focuses on the structure of the health care and social service delivery systems, and the ways in which those structures affect patient well-being, their physical and mental health outcomes, and their experiences in interacting with the health care system. Related projects investigate the quality of mental health care provided by private insurance plans, and patterns of antidepressant use for geriatric depression.

**Dr. Susan Brownlee** (Ph.D., Rutgers University) is a Survey Research Analyst at the Center for State Health Policy at Rutgers University. Dr. Brownlee coordinates survey design and data collection efforts at the Center and is involved in statistical analysis of survey data. Recent projects include the 2009 New Jersey Family Health Survey, the Childhood Obesity Survey, the Nursing Faculty Survey, and the New Jersey Health Care Reform Opinion Poll. She was the Principal Investigator for the NJ Health Care Reform Opinion Poll and for a study assessing physician workforce supply in New Jersey. She was the Co-Principal Investigator for a survey study evaluating the Medicaid managed care enrollment experiences of developmentally disabled NJ residents. Prior to coming to CSHP, Dr. Brownlee was an assistant research professor in health psychology at the Center for Research on Health and Behavior, where she was project manager of a 10-year longitudinal study that examined emotional factors in the health of older adults.

**Dr. Gretchen Chapman** (Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania) is a Professor of Psychology who studies medical decision making. Her work focuses on how findings from decision psychology can be harnessed to encourage healthier behavior. In her current work, she is conducting a series of experiments to examine how to make the healthier option the easier option to choose, looking specifically at the behaviors of getting flu shots, pharmacy refills, exercise walking with pedometers, and dietary choices.

**Dr. Antoinette Y. Farmer** (Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh) is Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the School of Social Work. Her current research examines the effects of religion/spirituality and parenting practices on adolescent high risk behaviors, such as delinquency, sexual activity, and substance use. She is also interested in looking at how parenting stress and maternal mental health affect parenting practices. Currently, she is undertaking research looking at the effects of parenting stress on parenting behavior, mothers and fathers' parenting practices on adolescent high risk behaviors, and parenting stress and depression on fathers' disciplinary strategies.

**Dr. Dorothy Gaboda** (Ph.D., Rutgers University) is Associate Director for Data Analysis at the Center for State Health Policy. She studies healthcare policy issues, including health insurance coverage and health care for poor children, healthcare for the elderly in the community and in nursing homes, and policy to support community living for people with disabilities. She is also interested in how health data is gathered and used by state and local governments, particularly in the areas of racial and ethnic identification. Current projects include state policy to support individuals with autism, insurance coverage for poor children and their parents in New Jersey families, and barriers to receiving health care for people who are vulnerable because of poverty, race/ethnicity, age or illness.

**Dr. Sarah Hertzog** (Ph.D., Cornell University) is a developmental psychologist and post-doctoral fellow in Mental Health Services Research at the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research at Rutgers University. She is interested in the relationship between stress and health in both children and adults. In recent work, Dr. Hertzog explored how marital stress (e.g. conflict, disagreements, divorce) influence long-term mental and physical health in adult men and women. Her current research focuses on stress during pregnancy and parenthood, looking at how maternal factors such as race, drug use, and low socioeconomic status during pregnancy may influence the health and well-being of her child. To answer these questions, she is using a dataset of "high-risk" mothers from Trenton and Philadelphia that has followed both the mothers and their children from the early 1990's through the past seventeen years to assess the children's physical and mental development.

**Dr. Shawna Hudson** (Ph.D., Rutgers University), a medical sociologist, is an Assistant Professor of Family Medicine at the UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and the Director of Community Research for The Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ). Dr. Hudson is a member of the population science program at CINJ. She is a mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) researcher. Her qualitative research studies have focused on exploring cancer disparities in treatment and screening settings. Her quantitative research examines determinants of preventive cancer screening in primary care settings and organizational factors in primary care practices that facilitate increased use of evidence based guidelines. She is currently conducting a study funded by the National Cancer Institute that explores new and long-term cancer survivors' follow-up cancer care seeking patterns and their decision making regarding use of oncologists versus primary care physicians.

**Dr. Shalonda Kelly** (Ph.D., Michigan State University) is an Associate Professor of Clinical Psychology at Rutgers University's Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (GSAPP). Dr. Kelly's research focuses on couples and racial and cultural issues, which she investigates in the contexts of normal families, therapy, and substance abuse settings. She studies couples prevention, assessment, and therapy. She is involved in the understanding and measurement of racial constructs, such as Afrocentricity, racial identity, and biculturalism. Dr. Kelly seeks to understand how people of color are affected by experiences of racism and how racial and cultural perspectives affect individual, couple, and family adjustment. She has a background in urban studies, and is interested in programs designed to have a positive impact on minority communities and families.

**Dr. Naa Oyo A. Kwate** (Ph.D., St. John's University) is a clinical psychologist and an Associate Professor in the departments of Human Ecology and Africana Studies at Rutgers University. Her work focuses on the psychological and social factors that affect African American health. She has conducted studies on African American neighborhoods and their disproportionate exposure to alcohol advertising and fast food, and on racial identity and experiences with racism. Her two main research projects are: 1) a study on how racism affects African American health (from general well-being all the way down to immune cell function); and 2) a study on whether the idea that America is a meritocratic society actually harms African American health.

**Dr. Howard Leventhal** (Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) is a Professor of Health Psychology at the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research. His current research builds upon the Common-Sense Model of Self-Regulation and focuses on how patients process information involved in self-management of chronic illnesses, including heart disease (congestive heart failure, myocardial infarction, and hypertension), diabetes, asthma, and end of life planning. The Common-Sense model describes the psychological mechanisms involved both in the management of these conditions and the content and process of communication among patients and practitioners. A goal of future work is linking these psychological mechanisms to mechanisms that have been identified in cognitive science and cognitive neuroscience. His interests also involve models of mental illness, particularly depression and its treatments, and how depression is elicited by and affects the management of physical illness. He is the Director of the Network for the Study of Health Beliefs and Behavior, a group of faculty and students from psychology, sociology, medicine, nursing, and public health who conduct theoretically grounded research in clinical settings examining how cognitive-affective factors affect communication among patients, practitioners and families, and how effective sharing of illness models affects communication, treatment adherence, and health outcomes.

**Dr. Judith A. Lucas** (Ed.D., Rutgers University; APN) is an advance practice nurse and Assistant Research Professor at Rutgers University in the Division on Aging, and the Mental Health Center for Education and Research on Therapeutics (CERTS) at the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy & Aging Research. Her research has focused on quality of care and quality improvement in community-based and residential long-term care settings. Recent research has included: studies of the effects of treatment for mental illness among frail elders; and studies that aim to understand patterns of use, guideline consistency, and behavioral symptoms and functional outcomes of antipsychotic drug use in the nursing home setting. She is particularly interested in understanding drug and non-drug treatments for behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia, associations with staffing, caregiver and care practices in long-term care, and state policies that affect facility patterns of care practices. Dr. Lucas has a special focus on the most vulnerable elderly in long-term care.

**Dr. Jane E. Miller** (Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania) is a Research Professor at the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research and the Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, where she teaches in the public health major. Dr. Miller's research interests include relationships between poverty, child health, health insurance, and access to health care. Collaborating with colleagues at the Center for State Health Policy and New Jersey's Department of Human Services, she has conducted several studies of New Jersey's State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP; which covers children from low- to moderate-income families) on issues related to children's and parents' enrollment, and continuity and adequacy of insurance coverage. She is currently studying the time, cost, and hassle factors for parents of children with chronic health conditions, and how they relate to type of health insurance, usual source of health care, and family socioeconomic and demographic characteristics. A related project examines reasons for unmet need for health care among children with chronic health conditions.

**Dr. Dawne M. Mouzon** (Ph.D., Rutgers University) is a sociologist and postdoctoral fellow in Mental Health Services Research at the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research at Rutgers University. With an overarching focus on race differences in mental health status, she is currently working on two projects. In one project, she uses data from the National Midlife Development in the U.S. to examine how race and gender jointly moderate the association between marital status and mental health, extending past research that assumes that marriage is universally positive for mental health. In another project, she is using data from the National Survey of American Life to explore causal mechanisms to explain the race paradox in mental health. She specifically focuses on whether the quantity and quality of three different social relationships (families, friends, and church members) can explain the unexpected finding that African Americans have better mental health outcomes than Whites. Dr. Mouzon plans to extend this research by focusing on whether these patterns vary across the SES gradient and different stages of the life course.

**Dr. Julie Phillips** (Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania) is a sociologist and demographer. She is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research. Her research interests include the causes and consequences of various forms of social inequality in the United States, focusing on outcomes such as violent crime, suicide, marital disruption, migration, and health-related outcomes. In collaboration with colleagues, Dr. Phillips is embarking on a new project exploring suicide - a major mental health problem within the U.S. population. Among the research questions being explored are how and why patterns of suicide rates vary across place and time, and explanations for differing rates of suicide across age, sex and race groups. One recent study, for example, aims to understand the surge since the late 1990s in suicide rates among Baby Boomers. She is also conducting a study exploring racial and ethnic differences in suicidal behavior among young adults.

**Dr. Kristen W. Springer** (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin; M.P.H., Emory University) is Assistant Professor of Sociology at Rutgers University. Her research strives to document and understand how gender and family dynamics affect adult health, and how these patterns differ depending on other individual characteristics (e.g., education, occupation, marital status, body size). One of her current research projects explores how beliefs in stereotypical masculinity affect men's health outcomes including stroke, heart attack, and depression, as well as men's risk health behaviors including heavy drinking and avoiding health care. Another research area examines how experiencing different aspects of childhood abuse influences self-reported and measured health outcomes during adulthood including high blood pressure, obesity, low bone density, and diagnosed health conditions.

Example only - 2012 books available for sale