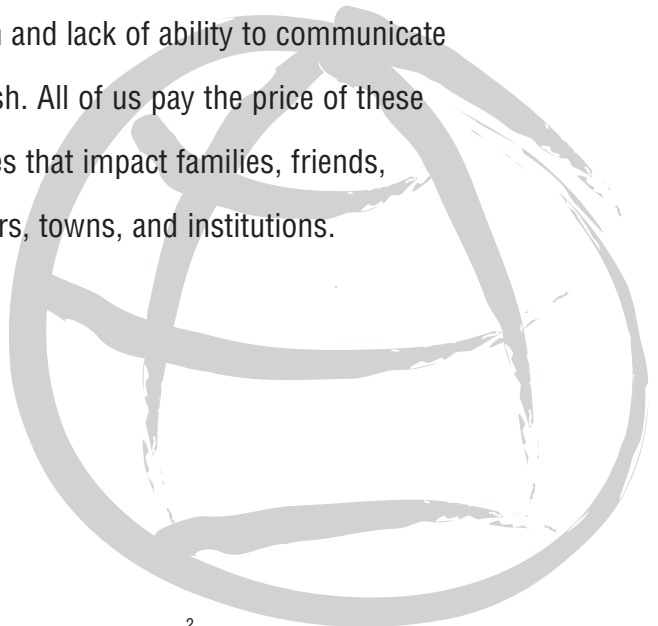


2007 Health Leadership Fellows Directory



The Connecticut Health Foundation Leadership Fellows Program

Each year in Connecticut, as in the rest of the United States, racial and ethnic health disparities result in poor health outcomes and even loss of life for large numbers of our fellow citizens. These health disparities are pervasive and exist for many groups regardless of income or access to health care. The disparities are compounded by poverty, social isolation and lack of ability to communicate in English. All of us pay the price of these inequities that impact families, friends, neighbors, towns, and institutions.



Eliminating health disparities based on race and ethnicity will require the resolve of local communities. Comprehensive strategies, creative thinking and strong leadership are essential — both to raise public awareness and develop solutions to this complex problem. This year, 19 individuals from around Connecticut have made a commitment to increase their leadership knowledge and skills in order to address racial and ethnic inequities in health. The leaders come from a wide range of fields, including health care, law, education, human services, and public policy. They represent a range of cultures, communities, ages, and ethnicities. These individuals have various degrees of experiences, skills and expertise, but they are united in their conviction that Connecticut has the potential to be the healthiest state in the nation.

In their communities, from Hartford to Trumbull, these leaders are changing public policies; establishing community-based programs; working to empower their neighborhoods to improve the health of their citizens; and conducting research to add to the public health knowledge base. They are local heroes who often work with few resources and little support, yet they are driven by their passion for this issue. They represent the best in us and carry the potential of what we, as a people, can become. These leaders are Connecticut's hope for a brighter, healthier and more prosperous tomorrow. The Connecticut Health Foundation (CHF) is pleased to honor these women and men as the second class of our Leadership Fellows Program.

Leadership Fellows Program

The Connecticut Health Foundation sponsors the Leadership Fellows Program to recognize outstanding women and men who are making significant strides to create a healthy, safe and prosperous Connecticut.

The Leadership Fellows Program is a one-year knowledge and skill-building program designed to create leaders, particularly racial and ethnic community leaders, who will pursue careers in public policy, public health practice, community advocacy, academia, or any related field. “Fellows” are selected through a competitive process, which consists of submitting an online application and, if invited, a personal interview. “Fellows” make a one-year commitment to attend: two weekend retreats, and monthly seminars. They also must participate in a project that either demonstrates, illustrates or replicates a solution to a health issue that affects “vulnerable” communities.

Benefits include the following:

- Fellows receive stipends of \$1,500 to aid in their personal or professional development.
- Fellows who are employed by nonprofit organizations will receive a \$500 gift for their employer.
- Fellows will enhance their knowledge and skills of leadership and health issues through two weekend retreats and monthly seminars.
- Fellows will meet with national and local health leaders and policymakers through monthly seminars.

Application to Apply

Online applications for the 2008 class of the Leadership Fellows Program will be available on CHF’s Web site — www.cthealth.org in January 2007. For more information, contact Will Crimi, vice president of program & evaluation, at 860.224.2200 or will@cthealth.org.



About the Connecticut Health Foundation

Established in July of 1999, the Connecticut Health Foundation, is the state’s largest nonprofit grantmaking foundation dedicated to improving the health of the people of Connecticut through systemic change, program innovation and public policy analysis. Since it was established, CHF has funded grants totaling over \$25 million.

After conducting focus groups with citizens and meeting with state agencies, community leaders, and health care professionals, the Foundation selected three program areas to focus its resources:

- Reduce the number of at-risk children ages 6-14 entering intensive treatment and/or the juvenile justice system due to mental health problems.
- Decrease racial and ethnic health disparities, and
- Improve the oral health of children covered by Medicaid.

Aside from directly supporting community-based and institutional grant proposals, CHF fosters discussions about public health issues by convening meetings, conferences, educational briefings, and grantee technical assistance workshops.

CHF also invests resources into conducting objective, nonpartisan policy research on issues important to the public health debate. These include Connecticut’s budget spending cap, the state’s Medicaid system and expanding oral health care for publicly insured children.

The Foundation was created when health maintenance organization ConnectiCare, Inc., converted to a for-profit entity. Under an agreement approved by the Connecticut attorney general, CHF received 100 percent of the equity in ConnectiCare, thereby, creating the Connecticut Health Foundation. CHF became officially endowed in June 2001, upon approval of the sale of its shares to private investors, which resulted in an initial endowment of \$132 million.

The Foundation’s 16-member Board of Directors made a commitment to examine the underlying causes of barriers to health care among the unserved and underserved communities in Connecticut. To support this initiative, at least 5 percent of its endowment is directed toward grantmaking operations annually. For more information about CHF, please visit www.cthealth.org, or contact Maryland Grier, public affairs officer, at 860.224.2200 or maryland@cthealth.org.

2007 Leadership Fellows

Cathy M. Adamczyk
Ansonia

Tanya L. Barrett
West Hartford

Yvette H. Bello
Glastonbury

Andrés G. Digenio, M.D., Ph.D.
Old Lyme

Marian A. Evans, M.D.
Bethany

Shanta L. Evans
Hartford

Linda Fecteau
Niantic

Donna M. Grant
Pomfret Center

Sue A. Greeno
East Hampton

Maryland M. Grier
Hartford

Kumba Adia Hinds
Trumbull

Rita L. Kornblum
Storrs

Keesha M. Mayes
Waterbury

Pamela A. Meliso
Amston

Robert Muro, Ph.D.
Unionville

Diana Pierce Murray
Waterbury

Marcia B. Proto
Wallingford

Martin Schwartzman, Ph.D.
Orange

Isabel Turmeque
Glastonbury





Cathy Adamczyk

As program director of North Star, an Ansonia agency serving families whose members have a range of behavioral health needs, as well as physical and developmental disabilities, Adamczyk began her work in this field as a community volunteer after one of her own children was diagnosed with autism. Over 140 families now belong to North Star — including hers.

In my work with North Star, leadership is being able to give parents and caregivers the guidance they need to be able to make the best decisions on behalf of their children. My goal as a leader is to recognize the leadership qualities in everyone within the group, and encourage, nurture and help develop these skills.

“I consider my son, Michael, to be truly a success story,” she says. “He received interventions and supports that ... helped to prevent the need for higher levels of care. My dream is to provide North Star families with the knowledge and tools needed to identify early interventions and preventive measures in their communities, which can help their children achieve the best possible outcomes.”

Before joining North Star, Adamczyk previously worked at several corporations including ComSim, Inc., Oriel Corporation, United State Surgical Corporation, and AMAX, Inc. Her involvement with children’s mental health includes professional positions at the Connecticut chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness and Griffin Hospital; and volunteer positions at the Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Children’s Behavioral Health Advisory Council, the North Star Parent Support Group, and the Lower Naugatuck Valley System of Care Collaborative. She earned a bachelor’s degree in management and industrial relations at the University of Bridgeport.



Tanya L. Barrett

Good leaders make use of opportunities to ethically advance a goal and take very seriously the responsibility of understanding and accurately representing the thoughts, feelings and interests of a group.

Having worked previously in the areas of child protection and employment services at the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Mental Health Association, Barrett has been the director of the HUSKY Infoline. Since 1998, Infoline has provided information on Connecticut's health care programs for uninsured children and youth. "I am committed to helping families obtain HUSKY health insurance and learning how to navigate the Medicaid managed care system," she says. "All people deserve access to affordable and quality health care, and I want to see this become a priority for the nation."

She has served on the board of the National Association of Health Assistance Partnership, which supports consumer health assistance programs and individual advocates in striving to make sure that all Americans receive quality health care. Barrett, who earned a bachelor's degree in social work at Western Connecticut State University and a master's degree in counseling at the University of Bridgeport, also volunteers at Peter's Retreat and Literacy Volunteers of America and is an active member of her sorority, Delta Gamma Phi.



Leadership can help those of us who will work for our beliefs to have an impact on the lives of people we may never know.

Yvette H. Bello

Referring to Jim Collins' book "Good to Great," Bello quotes: "A leader ... possesses both personal humility and an intense drive to produce long-term results." As the Ryan White Title I Supportive Service program coordinator for Latino Community Services in Hartford, Bello is "passionate about developing an organization's ability ... to enhance the lives of people within its community."

She notes: "The most important lesson I learned from my parents is that no job is too big for me and that I can do anything I put my mind to. The most important lesson I learned from the Army was that no job is too small, and that the devil is in the details. From my work at the Department of Public Health (DPH), I learned that when a person is challenged they can meet that challenge when supported by a team."

Prior to working in DPH's Office of Health Communications and Office of Affirmative Action, Bello handled communications for the 141 Medical Company Ground Ambulance unit of the Connecticut Army National Guard. She served on the board of Latinos Contra Sida, Inc., and currently volunteers at ConneCT Kids tutoring students at Hartford's West Middle School. Bello earned a bachelor's and a master's degree in business management at Albertus Magnus College.



Leadership is the ability to inspire, influence and guide individuals to achieve a vision.

Andrés Digenio, M.D., Ph.D.

Describing himself as “deeply committed to helping reduce disparities in health care,” Digenio is currently the director for clinical research and development at Pfizer, Inc. He has a medical degree from the Universidad de la República in Montevideo, Uruguay, and a doctorate in exercise physiology from the University of Cape Town in South Africa. In Uruguay, he worked to provide ambulance services for low-income communities. While in Johannesburg, South Africa, he served as the medical director at Milpark Rehabilitation and Wellness Center, a private hospital, and at the Johannesburg City Health Department’s Cardiac Rehabilitation Center. At the Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Digenio helped run a health promotion clinic and an after-hours clinic for the Hispanic community.

At Pfizer, he developed a web-based cardiovascular disease prevention program designed for the Hispanic population and is leading a collaboration with local agencies to implement it in New London’s Hispanic community. Digenio says, “... Energetic and passionate leaders can become the voices of underserved populations. ...”

He has volunteered at New London’s Centro de la Comunidad and at Prohealth Rural Health Clinic in Franklin, Tenn. Currently, he serves as a mentor to Norwich Public School children through Pfizer’s Hispanic Network.



A leader has ... the courage to make tough decisions and the compassion to listen to the needs of others.

Marian A. Evans, M.D.

Born and raised in Bridgeport, Evans was appointed in 2004 as that city's director of health and social services administration. She is also an adjunct faculty member at Southern Connecticut State University, teaching a course in public health and women's studies. After earning a bachelor's degree in biology at Swarthmore College and a medical degree at the Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine, Evans completed one residency in obstetrics/gynecology at Bridgeport Hospital and another in anesthesiology at New York's St. Luke's — Roosevelt Hospital. Later she established a vascular laboratory and conducted clinical research at the Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center.

A longtime member of Prayer Tabernacle Church of Love, she serves as the director of its health ministry program, putting into action her belief that “to be a leader you must be a servant and hold your work or ... ministry up higher than your personal agenda.”

Evans has received numerous awards, including the Claven Award and the 2004 Outstanding Achievement Award from the NAACP. She sits on the board of directors of several organizations, including the United Way of Fairfield County, the Witness Project, the Ralphola Taylor Community Center, and the Yale Working Group on Research Ethics. Evans notes: “I am passionate about ministry to people in untraditional and unconventional ways.”



Shanta L. Evans

Leadership is the ability to be flexible, the capacity to maintain self awareness, and the willingness to use mistakes as chances to learn. Leadership is not about a dichotomy between leading and following. It is about knowing when to create a new path, when to facilitate, when to take a calculated risk, or when to let others discover their capabilities.

“While I am trying to perfect the art of balance, I take steps each day toward my passions that extend beyond my dedication to my current career,” says Evans, who is the public affairs manager at Planned Parenthood of Connecticut, Inc. “My attachment to writing ... and dance has served as a metaphor for the way I view my life and my commitment to encouraging individuals to draw on their inner strengths. My dancing and poetry ... are as important as gaining knowledge about public health in traditionally disadvantaged communities. One may not initially see this connection between metaphors, similes or dance and serving a community’s public health needs. However, for individuals in an underserved community, a ... venue that offers these opportunities will provide an invitation to take risks, explore and stumble upon lessons they otherwise might not get a chance to discover.”

In addition to her work at Planned Parenthood, Evans also serves as a Vision Academic Mentoring/Rising Stars program consultant at Trinity College, where she graduated with a bachelor’s degree in women’s studies. She is currently studying management at the University of Hartford and will graduate with a Master of Business Administration in 2007. In her free time, Evans serves on the boards of the Connecticut Chapter of the National Organization for Women and the Rosie Fund, Inc.



A leader should ... be receptive to diverse ideas and be accountable, innovative and proactive.

Linda Fecteau

“I am deeply committed to prevention strategies and positive youth development,” says Fecteau, coordinator of the Foster Care Program at Waterford Country School, Inc. “As a family member, I volunteer in my community and at the local schools. As a professional, I collaborate with colleagues and community members to create positive opportunities for young people. I know from experience that giving young people the skills that they need to make good decisions is what keeps them healthy. While youths and families must take responsibility for the decisions that they make, they need to be empowered to make decisions about matters affecting their lives.”

Prior to joining Waterford Country School, she has served as the program development coordinator for the Stonington Institute, a residential drug and alcohol abuse treatment center; and executive director of the East Lyme Youth Services Association, Inc.; and the Boys & Girls Club of Southeastern Connecticut. Fecteau, who earned a bachelor’s degree in sociology and youth development at Norwich University in Vermont, also held positions at United Services, Inc., in Dayville, and Workforce One in Chaplin.

Her civic engagement varies from co-chair of the Southeast Mental Health System of Care and member of the New London County Youth Services Bureau, to treasurer of the Niantic Main Street Association and member of the Community Coalition for Children.



Donna M. Grant

Leadership recognizes that the most meaningful work is done “closest to the ground” and that the most efficient solutions are created within the communities they are intended to serve.

A lifelong resident of Pomfret Center, Grant is the executive director of Thompson Ecumenical Empowerment Group (TEEG) and has been involved in raising purebred sheep on a family farm as well as in organizations supporting youth and agriculture. Of her professional life she says, “I have worked in health care, education and social services, and in each setting, I have seen policy as the vehicle for change.”

Before joining TEEG, she served as an emergency medical technician and patient care technician at Day Kimball Hospital. She founded and operated a commercial kennel, Krystalyn Kennels, for more than 12 years. Grant, who earned a bachelor’s degree in independent studies at Charter Oak College, serves on the board of the Quinnebaug Valley Community College Foundation, and as the Connecticut director of the New England Rural Health Roundtable.

“Those affiliations allow me to help set priorities regarding children, education and health care ... areas of life-long interest,” Grant says. “But setting priorities is just the first step. We must then establish the policies necessary to meet them.”



Sue A. Greeno

Greeno describes herself as passionate about fighting for a wide range of human rights concerns, she also takes great pride in having raised, with her husband, four children who have learned “to love and respect people of all backgrounds.”

Leadership helps affect the policy changes needed to tackle these human right issues. I envision a future where ... people are united in solving our common problems of hunger, health care access, lack of education, and lack of opportunity.

Of her work as access to care director at Community Health Center, Inc., in Middletown, she says, “I am proud of the unique approach we have taken to improve health care access. Meeting individually with every new client, we have been able to identify needs and reduce barriers that create health disparities. However, there is much more to do in order to reduce health disparities across Connecticut and the nation. I hope to share with others around the country the access to care model that we have designed.”

In the past, she has worked in development at East Hampton Youth and Family Services and at Northern Middlesex YMCA. Greeno, who earned an associate’s degree in computer programming at Norwalk Technical School, teaches CPR, first aid and child care courses at the American Red Cross in Middletown. She also has volunteered at the East Hampton Local Prevention Council, Girl Scouts of America in Middletown and the East Hampton Youth Center.



Maryland M. Grier

Leadership is the ability to inspire individuals and groups to action. Leadership requires visionary thinking, passion, enthusiasm, teamwork, and a genuine desire to engage everyone.

Grier, who has been the public affairs officer at CHF since February of 2005, integrated her love for arts and culture, interest in health, and experience in research, administration and communications throughout her 15-year tenure at the Institute for Community Research. “I developed a keen interest in working on ‘health literacy’ since learning about some of the serious problems associated with this issue,” she says. “Some years ago, a physician shared a story concerning a young teenager’s multiple pregnancies — even though she had been prescribed birth control pills, she did not know to take them orally. That story still haunts me. I would like to use my skills, talents and compassion to help providers and communities expand and increase health literacy in underserved populations. I also love the arts and would like to see them integrated into prevention and intervention programs, so that we use all our multiple intelligences to tackle health problems.”

After earning a bachelor’s degree in marketing at the University of Maryland in College Park, Grier worked in the marketing/communications department at the National Alliance of Business in Washington, D.C. Aside from serving as a grant reviewer for the Evelyn Preston Memorial Trust Fund in Hartford, the Connecticut Commission on the Arts, the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, and the Rhode Island Foundation, Grier has volunteered to serve on numerous boards including the Connecticut Institute for Cultural Literacy and Wellness, Ryan White Title I Planning Council, Greater Hartford Festival of Jazz, Hartford Interval House, Connecticut AIDS Action Council, and the Central Area Health Education Center.



Leadership is the ... aptitude to motivate others to accomplish a goal. The CHF Leadership Fellows Program is an unprecedented opportunity to build the necessary skills.

Kumba Adia Hinds

Hinds, a research assistant at the Yale University School of Medicine, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, is also a 2006 Yale University graduate. She has a bachelor's degree in history of science and history of medicine and international studies. "Although I have always been interested in a career in medicine, I developed a fascination with the issue of health care disparities once I was exposed to some of the realities of health care in the developing world, specifically, West Africa, says Hinds."

Her college career included a semester abroad at the University of Ghana and a variety of positions at Matrix Public Health Consultants, Yale University Press, America Counts, Yale Summer Programs, and the Yale Pathology Lab. Hinds also has served as a pediatric volunteer at Yale-New Haven Hospital and Osu Children's Home in Ghana, and a mentor through the Youth Together program in New Haven.

Hinds hopes to pursue degrees in both medicine and public health and "work to close the gap in health care access both domestically and abroad."



Rita L. Kornblum

I like this definition by professor Warren Bennis of the Marshall School of Business: "Leadership is a function of knowing yourself, having a vision that is well communicated, building trust among colleagues, and taking effective action to realize your own potential."

"I have been in the public health field for over 12 years, and I am still in love with what I do," says Kornblum, a public health educator for the city of Hartford's Department of Health and Human Services. "I was born and raised in São Paulo, Brazil. I then moved to the United States after college and worked as a social worker for several years until I was recruited to become a labor organizer. When I thought about another career move, a friend encouraged me to apply for a position in public health. Although I had no prior experience, the person who took a chance on me became my mentor as she introduced me to this 'brave new world.'"

Prior to her recent position, Kornblum worked at other state agencies including DCF and the Commission on Children. She also directed a statewide pediatric AIDS program at the Connecticut Primary Care Association. Kornblum, who earned a bachelor's degree in educational psychology at the Universidade de Mogi das Cruzes in São Paulo, currently sits on the city of Hartford's Advisory Commission on the Environment. She also has volunteered at the Brazilian Alliance in the United States and the Community Renewal Team.

"A theme in my professional life has been the joy that I experience when individuals realize their power to transform reality," she says. "Anyone can become an agent of change if given the proper tools and information."



Keesha M. Mayes

Leadership is using experiences, skills, education and God-given abilities as tools to create relationships that will inspire sharing, cooperation, health, well-being and positive change for the whole of humanity.

“I am generally a happy person who finds life interesting and hopeful,” says Mayes, the community program coordinator for Griffin Hospital’s Women’s Health Coordination Center in Derby. “What’s important to me is using my experience, strength and wild optimism to support myself and others in removing blocks that prevent health and well-being.”

Before joining Griffin, Mayes provided personal life and wellness coaching through her Waterbury-based company, CSOLUTIONS Coaching Services. She also worked with the Ansonia Housing Authority/Curtisey Corporation providing job placement counseling. Mayes, who earned a bachelor’s degree in communications at Charter Oak State College, spends her free time serving on the community health advisory committee at Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center.

“I believe that loving-kindness, respect, inclusiveness, and practical life skills are the roots that nourish the flowers of well-being and health,” she says. “I am committed to learning more about living from these ‘roots,’ and sharing what I learn to free myself and others from self-loathing and fear, and step into greater awareness and empowerment.”



Pamela A. Meliso

Meliso, senior attorney at the Center for Medicare Advocacy, is also the lead trainer for Connecticut's Health Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program. She began her legal career at the Legal Aid Society of Hartford, representing indigent clients in housing, child support, social security disability, and family law cases.

I hope to become a passionate leader around distributive justice — the idea that benefits and burdens ought to be distributed equitably and resources ought to be allocated fairly.

“I’ve experienced the discrimination and obstacles my clients faced as they tried to obtain the most basic necessities,” she says. “I’m proof that the cycle of poverty can be broken ... if we give people a chance to help themselves. I was raised by a single mother who was forced to rely on public assistance at times. I attended college on federal financial assistance and was the first person in my family to graduate from college. The UConn School of Law took a chance on me, as did Legal Aid. Our society ... has a moral duty to provide necessities such as food, shelter, and health care to its poorest members ... as well as provide meaningful opportunities to escape poverty.”

Meliso earned a bachelor's degree in English literature from Rhode Island College and both a law degree and master's degree in public health from the University of Connecticut. She currently serves on the board of the Mansfield Discovery Depot and has provided her legal expertise to the Hebron Commission on Aging and the town of Hebron.



Robert Muro, Ph.D.

A leader ignites creative thought, inspires conviction, compels commitment to action, and instills confidence that anything can be accomplished with hard work and perseverance. A leader holds high expectations of self and others, is consistent in words and actions, and foremost, leads by example.

“In my work as a psychologist at New Britain General Hospital, I see the suffering of humanity at its fullest,” he says. “I see how people struggle to find meaning, purpose and peace in a chaotic world. I see selfishness, abuses of power, the consequences of poverty, and misguided allocation of resources. But I also get the opportunity to see the goodness in the world by sharing deeply in the lives of my patients. I get to help them put the pieces together again, discover in themselves strengths they did not previously know and encourage them to pursue their dreams.”

Before joining New Britain General Hospital, he was the coordinator of juvenile justice programs at the Wheeler Clinic. Muro, who earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology at the University of Bridgeport, a master’s degree in counseling at Southern Connecticut State University and a doctorate in counseling psychology at Indiana State University, completed a predoctoral internship at Danbury Hospital’s Center for Child & Adolescent Treatment and a postdoctoral residency at its Community Center for Behavioral Health. Currently, he serves as the chair of the Psychologically Healthy Workplace Committee of the Connecticut Psychological Association.

“My experiences have formed my strong belief in standing up for what is right, protecting and caring for those who are weak, investing myself in just causes, and creating positive change in the lives of those around me,” he notes.



Diana Pierce Murray

“Although I grew up in a ‘children are seen and not heard’ environment,” says Murray, project coordinator and program director for the Family Focus Partnership and Waterbury Youth Service System, Inc., “I did not know my ‘place’ very well and would frequently get into trouble defending someone or something.”

Leadership means awakening the spirit of “doing.” Good leaders also have good management skills and a sense of humor — sometimes you need to be able to laugh your way to the other side of the problem. If I can influence people to stand up, take notice, take action, and pass that spirit on, then maybe we can have “justice for all.” I have high hopes!

Murray, who earned a bachelor’s degree in general studies from the University of Connecticut, worked at Waterbury’s YWCA as a training coordinator and child advocate/counselor for the Sexual Assault Crisis Service. She began her career in the private sector at the Bank of Boston Connecticut, where she started as an entry-level bank teller and was promoted into a management position within six years.

“I continue to be passionate about ‘doing right’ for all. That means access to medical care; children growing up in safe, loving, encouraging homes; no abuse; and valuing people for who they are — not their color, religion or gender,” she says. “Throughout my life and work I have tried to put people first and sometimes that’s gotten me in trouble. But I continue to listen, learn and teach.”



A leader focuses on providing others with the information and tools they need to do their jobs well while creating a culture where people share information and decision-making responsibilities.

Marcia B. Proto

As the executive director for the Connecticut League for Nursing (CLN), Proto is dedicated to educating the public about the impact the nursing shortage will have on state residents, schools, nursing programs, and the entire health care system. “We cannot continue to ‘waste’ our state dollars, we need to put this money to better use,” she says. “Connecticut must focus on keeping our health care system viable and able to provide health care to our residents.”

In addition to her duties at CLN, Proto also serves as a consultant to organizations that want to create successful teams by developing interventions designed to improve teamwork and workflow processes. Before joining CLN, she worked in development at the MidState Medical Center, served as a management trainer at Flath & Associates in New Haven and coordinated educational programs at the Connecticut Hospital Association.

Proto, who earned a bachelor’s degree in math and education at Providence College and a master’s degree in education at Springfield College, also has volunteered at The Jewish Home for the Aged and Connecticut Women in Healthcare Management.



Marty Schwartzman, Ph.D.

Schwartzman has been involved in the field of children's mental health for nearly three decades, currently serving as the director of Family and Children Services for Bridges, A Community Support System, Inc., in Milford, as well as maintaining a private therapy practice.

Leadership is a combination of personal and administrative skills that facilitate change -- mobilizing, educating, inspiring, and coordinating others in the service of a common purpose.

“My professional life has been carefully coordinated with my family life,” he says. “All our children are now in college or graduate school, young adults on their way to independent living. This experience has been the laboratory from which I’ve learned the realities of working parenthood. My position as the director of family and children services in a community-based mental health clinic has led me to view community supports as a potential extension of family resources when considering family needs.”

Schwartzman earned a bachelor's degree in psychology at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, a master's degree in school psychology at Southern Connecticut State University and a doctorate in psychology at the University of South Carolina. Over the years, he has volunteered his time at the Orange Soccer Association, the Orange Recreation Department and Kids Count in Milford.



*Leadership means helping
to reach a positive goal.*

Isabel Turmeque

Turmeque has worked in the human services field since her arrival in Connecticut from her native Colombia 18 years ago. “Every time I have a chance, I advocate for someone or help gather information to obtain resources that don’t seem available,” she says. “I don’t stop until I get results.”

Currently, she holds the position of quality improvement social work supervisor at DCF, where she has worked for nearly 12 years.

Turmeque, who earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Incca University in Bogota, Columbia, says the lack of bilingual mental health services for children and their families is a problem in Connecticut. “Most residential services don’t have bilingual psychotherapists or child care staff ... and many parents lack the language skills to participate in their child’s treatment,” she says. “If the child has special needs, there are not enough bilingual providers to serve the family.”

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