



# Health, Healthcare *And...* Climate Action



Department of Population Health  
8th Annual Health *And...* Conference

# Agenda

## Health, Healthcare And...Climate Action May 6, 2024 – 9:00 am-2:30 pm

- 9:00 am**    **Welcome & Introduction**  
Lorna Thorpe, PhD, MPH
- 9:15 am**    **Keynote Speaker and Q&A**  
Majora Carter
- 10:15 am**    **Panel 1: First, Do No Harm:  
Reducing Climate Impacts of Healthcare**  
*Moderator*  
Cassandra L. Thiel, PhD  
*Panelists*  
Jenna Agins, MBA, MS  
Amy Collins, MD  
Chethan Sarabu, MD, FAMIA, FAAP
- 11:15 am**    **Break**
- 11:30 am**    **Panel 2: The Power of Partnerships:  
Tackling Climate Health Inequities in NYC**  
*Moderator*  
Andrea R. Titus, PhD  
*Panelists*  
Alexander Azan, MD  
Julia Eiferman, MPA  
Mychal Johnson
- 12:30 pm**    **Networking Lunch**
- 1:15 pm**    **Panel 3: Global Innovation on Climate Action**  
*Moderator*  
Anna Bershteyn, PhD  
*Panelists*  
Keanu Arpels-Josiah  
Sonali Shukla McDermid, PhD  
Kelly Wanser
- 2:15 pm**    **Closing Remarks**  
Lorna Thorpe, PhD, MPH
- 2:30 pm**    **Reception**  
Smilow Café, NYU Langone Health, 550 1st Avenue

# Welcome

Greetings, and welcome to our eighth annual “Health *And...*” conference, “**Health, Healthcare *And...* Climate Action,**” sponsored by the Department of Population Health at NYU Langone Health.

With 2023 documented as the hottest year on record, climate action is more urgent than ever. Worldwide efforts are underway to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and solutions for how to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change demand meaningful progress.

This year’s convening, Health, Healthcare *And...* Climate Action, brings together a diverse group of partners from different sectors to explore cutting-edge approaches to addressing climate change. Participants will examine strategies to mitigate emissions from healthcare systems, innovative policies to reduce the health impact of climate change in vulnerable communities, and other creative, scalable solutions being implemented around the globe.

Every year, the Health *And...* conference brings together industry leaders, policymakers, practitioners, and community members from the fields of medicine, public health and beyond to promote population health and advance health equity by exploring the intersection of health and its many determinants. Previous conference themes have included social connectedness, trust, childhood and opportunity, data science and public action, and racial equity and urban wellbeing.

Collaboration between diverse stakeholders is essential to achieving long-lasting improvements in population health. We hope that this conference will foster continued discussions, partnerships, and actions on these critical issues in the weeks, months, and years to come.

Sincerely,

**Lorna Thorpe, PhD, MPH**

Chair, Department of Population Health  
NYU Langone Health

# About the Department of Population Health

The Department of Population Health at NYU Langone is home to a diverse group of faculty researchers and staff working to improve the health of populations and advance health equity in New York City and around the globe by developing and testing real-world solutions in partnership with healthcare systems, communities, policymakers, and other sectors.

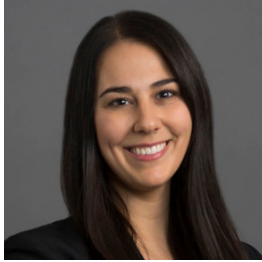
With colleagues across NYU Langone, as well as many NYC agencies, community-based organizations, and the private sector, the Department conducts applied research to improve the effectiveness of healthcare and address broader social determinants of health. Through our education programs, we train students to become leaders in healthcare delivery, health policy, and public health. We seek not only to prevent and more effectively manage disease but also to advance equitable approaches to helping people and communities stay well.

**Learn more at [med.nyu.edu/pophealth](https://med.nyu.edu/pophealth)**

Follow us on **X @pophealthNYC** throughout the day and post using the hashtag **#HealthAnd2024**.



# Speaker Profiles



**Jenna Agins, MBA, MS**

*Assistant Director, Energy & Sustainability, NYU Langone Health*

Jenna Agins is the assistant director of energy and sustainability at NYU Langone Health, where she manages the organization's environmental sustainability program. She sets the program's strategic direction and leads projects to reduce the health system's environmental footprint across a growing building portfolio of more than 13 million square feet, with a goal to reach carbon neutrality goal by 2050. Agins also works to build a culture of sustainability among the organization's more than 45,000 employees. She encourages NYU Langone's participation in various local and national energy and environmental programs.



## **Keanu Arpels-Josiah**

*Policy Co-Lead & Organizer, Fridays For Future NYC*

Keanu Arpels-Josiah (he/him), 18, is a youth organizer and advocate for climate justice. He is based in New York City, which is the unseated land of the Munsee Lenape. Arpels-Josiah is a lead organizer and the policy co-lead with Fridays For Future NYC. He advocates for action on local, state, federal, and international legislation. In 2023, he was one of the lead organizers of the March To End Fossil Fuels, where he worked with a multigenerational and intersectional coalition to plan and mobilize a 75,000-person march in NYC. The march called on President Biden to stop expanding and phase out the use of fossil fuels. After the march, he attended conferences including COP28 in Dubai and the United Nations Climate Ambition Summit, where he continued to push the Biden Administration on the same issues. In New York, as the Fridays For Future NYC Policy co-lead and as a member of the Electoral and Legislative teams of Sunrise Movement NYC, he coordinates local policy campaigns, organizes actions, and advocates for legislation.



**Alexander Azan, MD**

*Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Department of Population Health, and Clinical Assistant Professor, Division of General Internal Medicine and Clinical Innovation, NYU Langone Health*

Dr. Alex Azan is a clinical assistant professor and T32 postdoctoral scholar in the Department of Population Health and the Division of General Internal Medicine and Clinical Innovation at NYU Langone Health. As a primary care physician, Dr. Azan is a site champion for the clinical integration of community-based social care at the Flatbush Family Health Center in East Flatbush, Brooklyn. He also leads research that aims to understand and improve the impact of social services on health quality across the Family Health Center network. As a T32 fellow, Dr. Azan's research focuses on the impacts of climate-driven extreme weather on urban health and health equity related to structural and intermediary determinants of health. He is interested in policy-oriented, translational research and contributes to health outcome evaluations of various land use and traffic-related climate resiliency policies in urban environments.



**Anna Bershteyn, PhD**

*Associate Professor, Department of Population Health,  
NYU Langone Health*

Dr. Anna Bershteyn is an associate professor of Population Health at NYU Langone Health. Her lab uses simulation science to inform public health decision-making at the interface of high-burden health conditions, as well as large-scale threats to human health such as pandemics and climate. She collaborates with local public health agencies, health authorities in multiple African countries, and international agencies, such as the World Health Organization. Prior to joining NYU Langone Health, Dr. Bershteyn founded and led the HIV/Tuberculosis modeling team at the Institute for Disease Modeling, now part of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.





## **Majora Carter**

*Real Estate Developer, Urban Revitalization Strategy Consultant, MacArthur Fellow and Peabody Award Winning Broadcaster*

Majora Carter is a real estate developer, urban revitalization strategy consultant, MacArthur Fellow and Peabody Award winning broadcaster. She's responsible for the creation of numerous economic development, technology inclusion and green-infrastructure projects, policies and job training and placement systems. She is also a lecturer at Princeton University's Keller Center. Carter applies corporate talent-retention consulting practice to reduce Brain Drain in American low-status communities. She has firsthand experience pioneering sustainable economic development in one of America's most storied low-status communities: the South Bronx, as well as cities across North America and abroad. She and her teams develop vision, strategies and the type of development that transforms low-status communities into thriving mixed-use local economies. In 2017, she launched the Boogie Down Grind, a Hip Hop themed specialty coffee & craft beer spot in the South Bronx. She currently serves on the board of directors for STREB and Solar One, and has served on the boards of the US Green Building Council, Ceres, The Wilderness Society, and the Andrew Goodman Foundation.



**Amy Collins, MD**

*Medical Director, Health Care Without Harm & Practice Greenhealth*

Dr. Amy Collins is an emergency physician in the Boston suburbs and a sustainable health care professional. In 2007, she founded the sustainability committee at MetroWest Medical Center and led the hospital's sustainability efforts for seven years. Under her leadership, MetroWest Medical Center received numerous Environmental Excellence Awards from Practice Greenhealth, including the Environmental Leadership Circle Award, the most prestigious award offered. She also served as a sustainable health care consultant for Vanguard Health Systems, where she implemented sustainability programs at all 26 of the company's hospitals nationwide. Currently, Dr. Collins is the Medical Director at Health Care Without Harm and Practice Greenhealth where she leads their health professional engagement work. She also heads the Health Care Without Harm Physician Network, a national network of physicians, medical students, and other health professionals who are committed to promoting environmentally responsible, climate-smart healthcare. Dr. Collins is a sought-after speaker who frequently discusses the intersection between climate change, health, and healthcare. She is particularly interested in the healthcare sector's role in advancing climate solutions.



**Julia Eiferman, MPA**

*Senior Policy Advisor, NYC Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice*

Julia Eiferman is a senior policy advisor at the NYC Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice (MOCEJ), where she uses science-based analysis, policy and program development, and capacity building to ensure that New York City is ready to withstand and emerge stronger from the multiple impacts of climate change. Her portfolio includes addressing extreme heat through behavioral adaptations and physical interventions to mitigate the Urban Heat Island Effect. Prior to joining (MOCEJ), Eiferman worked at the Earth Institute as an Analyst at Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory and with the Urban Climate Change Research Network. There, she coordinated an interdisciplinary assessment on change mitigation and adaptation at the city scale. Before moving to New York City, Julia spent five years in Washington, DC, working at the non-profit National Parks Conservation Association, providing management consulting assistance to the National Park Service.



## **Mychal Johnson**

*Co-founder, South Bronx Unite*

Mychal Johnson is a community-based advocate for environmental, economic and social justice in the South Bronx. He is a co-founder of South Bronx Unite and a founding member of the Mott Haven-Port Morris Community Land Stewards, where he is also a board member. Additionally, Johnson serves on the board of directors of the NYC Community Land Initiative (NYCCLI), the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality, and the Community Advisory Board of Columbia University's NIEHS Center for Environmental Health in Northern Manhattan. He was also appointed as a civil society voting member of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Open Space Committee. He has been a Bronx Community Board 1 and was notably selected by the United Nations to serve as one of 38 global civil society appointees to the historic United Nations Climate Summit in 2014. Johnson has dedicated his activism to fighting for greater access to open green space, affordable housing, a healthier quality of life, and community-focused development that supports rather than displaces neighborhood residents.



**Sonali Shukla McDermid, PhD**

*Chair and Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Studies, NYU*

Dr. Sonali Shukla McDermid is a climate scientist, associate professor and chair of the NYU Department of Environmental Studies. Her research investigates climate change's impact on agriculture and food security, and the impacts of land management on the environment. She is a climate co-lead for the Agricultural Intercomparison Project, evaluating regional climate change impacts on food security, and is also a NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies affiliate, where she develops Earth system models to understand the impacts of land use and management on the climate system. McDermid is an Andrew Carnegie Fellow (2021) and Fulbright-Kalam Fellow awardee (2020), which supports her work on climate mitigation and adaptation in agriculture. Prior to NYU, she was a NASA Postdoctoral Fellow at NASA GISS in NYC.



**Chethan Sarabu, MD, FAMIA, FAAP**

*Co-Founder, Climate Health Innovation & Learning Lab (CHILL), and Clinical Assistant Professor, Pediatrics, Stanford Medicine*

Dr. Chethan Sarabu is a clinical assistant professor at Stanford Medicine who is trained in landscape architecture, pediatrics, and clinical informatics. He designs healthier environments and systems by using his skills across these fields to build connections. Dr. Sarabu is also a practicing pediatrician at the Gardner Packard Federally Qualified Health Center. He has worked in the health tech industry for the past five years, including positions at doc.ai and Sharecare. His work focuses on designing and implementing a wide array of innovations ranging from patient portals, EHR transformation, and virtual clinical trials to health information policy initiatives, all through a health-equity lens. He is also an AI and Informatics strategist at OpenNotes Lab, where he explores the intersection between generative AI, patients, and notes. Dr. Sarabu uses his background in landscape architecture to research and implement nature-based health solutions in collaboration with the Stanford Natural Capital Project. Additionally, he co-founded the Climate Health Innovation & Learning Lab (CHILL), to connect the dots between climate, health, and the tech innovation community. Dr. Sarabu led the first survey of health informaticians' views on the topic in the *JAMIA* special issue on biomedical informatics and climate change. He is the vice-chair of the AMIA Climate, Health, Informatics Working Group.



**Cassandra L. Thiel, PhD**

*Assistant Professor, Departments of Population Health and Ophthalmology, NYU Langone Health*

Dr. Cassandra Thiel is an assistant professor in the Departments of Population Health and Ophthalmology at NYU Langone Health and the Department of Civil and Urban Engineering at NYU Tandon School of Engineering. She is also the president and CEO of Clinically Sustainable Consulting LLC. Her research utilizes life cycle assessment and principles of industrial ecology to analyze and improve the environmental performance of medical systems, hospital design, healthcare practice, and medical technologies. As a 2014-2015 Fulbright-Nehru Academic and Professional Excellence fellow, Dr. Thiel calculated the environmental footprint of cataract surgery at Aravind Eye Care System in southern India, finding that Aravind's carbon footprint for phacoemulsification was 5 percent of the same surgery done in the United Kingdom.



**Lorna Thorpe, PhD, MPH**

*Chair, Department of Population Health, NYU Langone Health*

Dr. Lorna Thorpe is the chair of the Department of Population Health. Reflecting her career trajectory working in both public health practice and academic settings, she is a national leader in applying epidemiologic research to inform public policy and practice. Dr. Thorpe's research involves studying how social conditions and policies impact health, including evaluating the impact of policies on health, investigating the drivers of disease at the neighborhood level, modernizing population health surveillance, and leading multi-institutional studies. She has worked in both academic and public health leadership settings. She began her research career as a Centers for Disease Control Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) Officer and later served as Deputy Commissioner for the NYC Health Department, where she oversaw Epidemiology.





**Andrea R. Titus, PhD**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Population Health,  
NYU Langone Health*

As a social epidemiologist, Dr. Andrea Titus examines the role of neighborhood and policy environments in shaping patterns of chronic disease risk. Her current research is focused on two substantive areas: investigating the impacts of tobacco control policies on indoor air quality and exploring disparities in health outcomes attributable to ambient air pollution exposure. Her NIH-funded Career Development Award focuses on integrating fine-scale PM2.5 data with electronic health record information to examine associations between air pollution and cardiovascular disease disparities among a cohort of U.S. Veterans. Other projects include exploring the impacts of smoke-free housing and traffic alleviation policies on patterns of air quality-sensitive health outcomes. She co-directs the Translational Research Core for NYU's Collaborative Center in Children's Environmental Health Research and Translation (CEHRT).



**Kelly Wanser**

*Executive Director, SilverLining*

Kelly Wanser is the executive director of SilverLining, where she leads the organization's efforts to promote equitable and effective research, policy, and engagement on responding to near-term climate risk. She is also a senior advisor to the University of Washington's Marine Cloud Brightening Program, which she co-founded. Previously, Wanser served on the boards of the Dendra Systems, an ecosystem restoration company, and Ocean Conservancy. She was also an advisor to Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's fusion energy program. Prior to her work in climate and environmental issues, she worked as an executive in the technology sector, founding companies in IT infrastructure, security, and networking.



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