



1ST JOINT HELLENIC MEDITERRANEAN UNIVERSITY & RUTGERS UNIVERSITY e-SYMPOSIUM
Information for Attendees

(Last Update: May 11, 2021)

**Combating Discrimination in Healthcare
 and Fighting Health Disparities in Greece and the U.S.**

Research from across the globe speaks to the many determinants of health disparities that disproportionately affect a range of populations, including women, individuals with low socioeconomic status, ethnic and racial minorities, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, and individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT). Health inequalities –that is, systematic and avoidable inequalities in health outcomes– can be attributed to a wide variety of factors, including

discrimination, which is the focus of our study. Discrimination has been associated, for instance, with a higher risk of cardiovascular disease among African American men compared to American men of European descent (Lockwood, Marsland, Matthews, & Gianaros 2018), a higher incidence of depression among women who identify as lesbian versus women who identify as heterosexual (Logie, Lacombe-Duncan, Poteat, & Wagner, 2017), and various psychosomatic problems among immigrant minority students in Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden (Kauf, Wölfer, & Hewstone, 2017). Both health disparities and discrimination are difficult but not intractable problems. There are many examples of policy, educational, and other types of interventions designed to eliminate them both, as well as their deleterious effects on individuals, communities, and populations (Metzl, Petty, Olowojoba 2018; Williams, & Purdie-Vaughns 2016).

In this first of a series of e-symposia co-organized by the Hellenic Mediterranean University (see also: <https://www.hmu.gr/en>)¹ and Rutgers University's Schools of Communication and Information and Health Professions, faculty will share their research regarding the abovementioned issues in Greece and the United States. In this public event, faculty members from different disciplines and professional backgrounds, including Communication, Nutrition and Dietetics, Nursing, and Social Work will give short presentations on their research. A reaction panel will kick off a Q&A session and conversation among all attendees.

Notes

¹Our collaboration is primarily with Hellenic Mediterranean University's School of Health Sciences (Departments of Nutrition & Dietetics, Nursing, and Social Work).

References

- Kauff, M, Wölfer, R., & Hewstone, M. (2017). Impact of perceived discrimination on health of adolescent minorities in Europe: The pernicious effect of biased behaviour by police officers and security guards. *Journal of Social Issues*, 73, 831–851.
- Lockwood, K. G., Marsland, A. L., Matthews, K. A., & Giannaros, P. J. (2018). Perceived discrimination and cardiovascular health disparities: A multisystem review and health neuroscience perspective. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1428(1), 170–208.
- Logie, C. H., Lacombe-Duncan, A., Poteat, T., Wagner, A. C. (2017). Systemic factors mediate the relationship between sexual stigma and depression among sexual minority women and gender minorities. *Women's Health Issues*, 27(5), 592–599.
- Metzl, J. M., Petty, J., Olowojoba, O. V. (2018). Using a structural competency framework to teach structural racism in pre-health education. *Social Science & Medicine*, 199, p.189–201.

PUBLIC EVENT AGENDA

Public Event (Open to all who register in advance; please find registration link below)

Date: Thursday, May 27, 2021

Time: 9 am – 10:30 am EDT (U.S.) / 4 pm – 5:30 pm (Greece)

Registration: To participate, please register by Monday, May 24, 2021 following the link below:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1st-joint-e-symposium-fighting-health-disparities-registration-153158903403>

- **Introductions and Presentation of the HMU-Rutgers University Partnership**
Konstantinos Petridis, Ph.D., & Kleio Koutra, Ph.D. (Hellenic Mediterranean University)
Matthew Matsaganis, Ph.D. & Riva Touger-Decker, Ph.D. (Rutgers University)
- **Research Presentations**

**Nursing Practice Environment and Employee Silence Regarding Patient Safety:
The Mediating Role of Experienced Professional Discrimination**

George Kritsotakis, Ph.D. (Hellenic Mediterranean University)

Abstract: On many occasions, nurses are directly or indirectly discouraged to voice their concerns regarding patient safety or are ignored when they do, leading to employee silence and decreasing the standard of care. Nurses' work-related determinants for silence are not clearly understood in the patient safety context. The aim of this presentation is to report on the associations between nurse work environment with nurses' silence regarding patient safety and the mediating role of experienced professional discrimination in a sample of 607 Nurses and Nursing Assistants working in 7 hospitals in Greece.

**Psychosocial Needs of People Living in Extreme Poverty and Introducing Brief Interventions:
The Case of Crete Region in Greece**

Maria G. Papadakaki, Ph.D. (Hellenic Mediterranean University)

Abstract: The financial crisis of the last decade has increased the number of people living in extreme poverty in Greece. Despite this fact, little evidence exists on their profile and psychosocial needs. The current study explored the socioeconomic circumstances and psychosocial profile of 798 people confronted with severe poverty. This article further reports on brief interventions introduced at individual-, group-, and community level to address the psychosocial burden of these people. A huge health and mental health burden was found among the participants. People also experienced long periods of unemployment, bad housing and living conditions, and absence of a supportive social/family network. Brief interventions increased people's self-awareness, self-expression, and self-esteem and improved their problem-solving and coping skills. Integrated and family-focused care seems necessary. Mapping the biopsychosocial needs of these people is important for health care and social welfare planning

Understanding the Impact of Engagement with Cancer (Mis)information among Latino Facebook Users

Yonaira Rivera, Ph.D., MPH (Rutgers University)

Abstract: Latinos, the largest minority in the U.S., face a high burden of cancer, making it important to deliver evidence-based cancer prevention and screening information (CPSI) to them. Social media presents an innovative platform to engage with Latinos dialogically by allowing user interaction through posts, pictures, videos, and other information sharing. This qualitatively-driven, mixed methods study explored how U.S. Latinos engage with, assess the credibility of, and act upon CPSI on Facebook. During one-on-one, in-person encounters, participants (n=20) accessed their Facebook profiles and discussed engagement with cancer-related posts with the researcher. Engagement with content prompted semi-structured, in-depth interviews discussing reasons for engagement, credibility assessments, and subsequent actions. Data were analyzed via content analysis and thematic analysis. Results demonstrate that cultural values and other cultural connectors (e.g., language and country of origin) play a salient role in how message factors and source factors influence the way Latinos engage with and assess the credibility of CPSI. Furthermore, both engagement and credibility assessments – as influenced by culture – appear to impact how some Latinos choose to act upon CPSI, both online and offline. Actions taken were sometimes informed by inaccurate credibility assessments, which may lead to potentially harmful outcomes. Findings provide important methodological, theoretical, and practical contributions to a growing area of public health research that is interested in curtailing the effects of misinformation on health outcomes.

Cancer Screening among Garifuna Women

Lois Rockson, Ph.D., MPH (Rutgers University)

Abstract: Background: Cancer screening disparities exist among immigrant groups in the United States, yet the cancer screening behaviors of ethnic Black immigrants remains relatively unknown. Low cancer screening rates among ethnic Black immigrant groups are associated with various structural, and sociocultural barriers. These barriers may be the same for all ethnic Black immigrants, but evidence is lacking. The Garifuna, an Afro-Amerindian Central American group experience structural forces in their homelands and settling communities in urbanized spaces in the US with little known of their cancer screening practices. The purpose of this study was to examine breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening practices among Garifuna women residing in the boroughs of New York City and to identify any disparities in their cancer screening practices. The study examined level of adherence to the recommended breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening guidelines and their association with demographic factors, access to healthcare services, perceptions/barriers, acculturation, identity, and level of guideline knowledge. ***Method:*** This study used a mixed method approach of interviews with eight key informants knowledgeable on the health behaviors of Garifuna women and surveying of four hundred Garifuna women, age 50 years and older residing in the New York City area. Content analysis was performed on key informant interview transcripts which confirmed survey sociocultural variable choices. Univariate analysis was used to describe the survey study sample and bivariate analysis to measure level of association between variables. Logistic regression examined the predictive nature of variables in explaining cancer screening adherence. ***Results:*** Four hundred and two Garifuna women completed surveys over a 22-month period. The results show that disparities exist in cervical cancer screening and are suggested in colorectal cancer screening. Models for colorectal cancer screening by colonoscopy and fecal occult blood testing

were the most predictive of the cancer screening types with knowledge and health belief models having the highest predictive variability. Conclusion: Further studies on cervical and colorectal cancer screening among the Garifuna women are recommended to identify additional barriers contributing to these cancer screening disparities and to develop culturally appropriate interventions aimed to end disparities in this unique immigrant group.

▪ **Reaction Panel, Q&A, and Discussion**

A panel of Rutgers SC&I and SHP faculty named below will initiate a Q&A session, during which all audience members will be able to ask questions of the presenters. All participants will be given an opportunity to have a dialogue on the issues raised by the research projects presented and their implications, and to identify top priorities for future research, teaching, professional practice, and policymaking.

(Reaction Panel members, in alphabetical order)

George Fragkiadakis, Ph.D., Hellenic Mediterranean University
Argyroula Kalaitzaki, Ph.D., Hellenic Mediterranean University
Nikoleta Ratsika, Ph.D., Hellenic Mediterranean University
Pamela Rothpletz-Puglia, Ed.D., RD, Rutgers University
Charles Senteio, Ph.D., MBA, MSW, Rutgers University

Certificate of Participation

A *certificate of participation* will be provided to all registered participants in the public event who express interest in receiving one. Participants will be able to indicate their interest right after the event, when the organizers will follow-up with them.

A Few Words about IAPP-Greece

IAPP-Greece is an academic incubator program sponsored in 2020 by the Greek Ministry of Education, the U.S. Department of Education, the Institute of International Education, and the Fulbright Foundation, among other organizations, designed to promote international collaboration between U.S. and Greek institutions of higher education. Both the Hellenic Mediterranean University of Athens and Rutgers University are IAPP-Greece participants.

Brief Bios of Event Participants (Please find bios later in this document)

BRIEF BIOS OF EVENT PARTICIPANTS

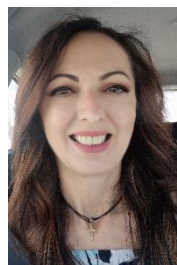
(In alphabetical order)



George Fragkiadakis, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Hellenic Mediterranean University

Bio: Dr. George Fragkiadakis (*pronouns: he, him*) is an Associate Professor of "Nutrition and Metabolism" at Hellenic Mediterranean University's School of Health Sciences, in the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics Sciences. His scientific interests focus on: "Comparative Biochemistry and Metabolism of Animal Organisms," "Microbiology and Food Hygiene/Safety in Human Nutrition," and "Nutrition of Vulnerable Population Groups, Children and the Elderly - Eating Habits and Health." He worked at the University of Thessaly, Greece (1999-2001) and at the University of Crete, Greece (2001-2002), at the rank of Assistant Professor and Lecturer, respectively. He worked under contract (1996-1999) at the National Agricultural Research Foundation (NAGREF/ETHIAGE, now ELGO-DIMITRA), as a researcher in Applied Molecular-Biology and Plant-Fungus Biochemistry. He received scholarships from the Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology of the Institute of Technology and Research, Greece (ITE-IMBB) between 1988 and 1995. Studies and titles: I). Dr. Fragkiadakis received his doctoral degree (Dr. of Science) in Biology with subject specialty "Biochemistry" (University of Crete, Department of Biology, Laboratory of Biochemistry, 1990-1996). II). Postgraduate Specialization Diploma (Master of Science) in Biology (University of Crete, 1988-1990). III). Graduate of Veterinary Medicine (Ptychion/Degree, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 9/1979-3/1985). He has published 33 complete articles in international peer-reviewed journals, of which he received (4.2021) approximately 1,000 hetero-references (h-index 15, i10-index 21). In addition, he has published 35 full articles in conference proceedings. He is a member of editorial board and reviewer of relevant scientific publications at the Brill House, The Netherlands.



Argyroula Kalaitzaki, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Hellenic Mediterranean University

Bio: Dr. Argyroula Kalaitzaki (BA, MSc, Ph.D., CPsychol) (*pronouns: she, her*) is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology at the Department of Social Work and Head of the Laboratory of Interdisciplinary Approaches for the Enhancement of Quality of Life (Quality of Life Lab; QoL), affiliated at the School of Health Sciences at the Hellenic Mediterranean University. She has received her Bachelor degree in Psychology (1992), her M.Sc degree in Clinical Psychology (1996), and her Ph.D. degree in Clinical Psychology (2000) from the Department of Psychology at the University of Crete, Greece. She has received a second Ph.D. degree in Psychology (2005) from the University of Sunderland, U.K. and she has also been appointed the European Diploma in the Psychological Therapies from the European Institute of Psychotherapy. She has rich clinical and professional experience and over 20 years of educational experience in higher education. She has abundant research experience, either leading or participating in many research projects and studies and supervising undergraduate, postgraduate and Ph.D. theses. She has published many peer-reviewed papers, chapters in books, presentations in national and international conferences and co-authored a book in English. She has participated in many funded national and international research project. Her research interests include, among others, interpersonal relationships, social networks/capital, violence, abuse and aggression, parenting/discipline methods, PP technologies and mental health apps, Aging, Dementia and Alzheimer's disease, and recently Positive Psychology.



Kleio Koutra, Ph.D., MPH

Assistant Professor, Hellenic Mediterranean University

Bio: Dr Kleio Koutra (*pronouns:* she, her) is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Social Work, Faculty of Health Sciences at the Hellenic Mediterranean University. She obtained a first degree in Social Work, holds an MPH and a Ph.D. from the Faculty of Medicine, at the University of Crete. Her Ph.D. dissertation investigates the effect of social capital on health behaviors in high school students in Crete. Her main research interest is promoting health and social services from the user services person-centered, social capital and community development approach. She is a member of the research laboratory of *Social Research and Social Work* and also of the educational laboratory of *Local Community Development*. She has been teaching to the undergraduate and postgraduate program of Social Work and she is a guest speaker to the Master of Public Health, Medical Department, the University of Crete and the University of Western Attica. She has worked for various European funded research projects under Erasmus KA2, Erasmus Sport, LLL Grundvigh, Small collaborative projects as: “Gender-Based Violence Trauma Recovery” “DIGITISED EDUCATION OF PARENTS FOR CHILDREN PROTECTION”(DEPCIP PROJECT); “ISSA - Improving Solutions for Student Absenteeism”; “Social Work in Crisis Situations in Primary Social Welfare”; “Innovations in Mature Adult Learning”; “SDOP Anti-doping strategies of young athletes; “EDUEVAL” ‘Evaluation for the Professional Development of Adult education Staff, ‘Active ageing & Pre-retirement counselling’; “The transition from youth to adulthood, a study for the young people of Crete”; “Social Capital and other social and environmental factors as predictors of health behaviour change in young adults: a 36-month cohort study”; “Epidemiologic profiling, health needs assessment and health education intervention in the rural population of Crete, Greece,” ‘Motivate Children from below EU average GDP countries to love swimming. Finally, she participates in the Intercultural Training Program of the Public Employees Uniform decentralized administrative units dealing with third-country nationals legally residing in Greece and Cyprus. She has the permission to translate and culturally adapt the Social Capital Assessment Tool (SO.C.A.T.) of the Social Department of World Bank.



George Kritsotakis, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Hellenic Mediterranean University

Bio: George Kritsotakis is an Assistant Professor in Public Health Nursing – Social Epidemiology at the Department of Business Administration and Tourism, Hellenic Mediterranean University (HMU). He is also faculty at the MSc Program in Health Services Administration at the Hellenic Open University, and he lectures regularly as Visiting Professor in Master courses in multiple universities in Greece and abroad. He holds an M.A. in Health Education and Health Promotion, UCL Institute of Education, University of London, and a Ph.D. from the Department of Social Medicine, Medical School, University of Crete. In 2012, he attended the Harvard School of Public Health: Session for Public Health Studies-Course: Society and Health. He has worked as Principal Investigator in research teams for various funded research projects, as well as a member of research teams. Dr. Kritsotakis is currently co-supervising two Ph.D. dissertations and he has supervised more than 18 postgraduate theses. He has presented at major international conferences and has been widely invited in national conferences and seminars. He has published more than 35 papers in international and national peer-reviewed journals mainly on health services research, social epidemiology, and lifestyle behavioral risk factors.



Matthew Matsaganis, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Rutgers University

Bio: Dr. Matthew Matsaganis (*pronouns:* he, him) is an Associate Professor at Rutgers University's School of Communication & Information. His research focuses on the role of communication as a determinant of health disparities in urban communities, but also on how the well-being of neighborhoods can be transformed through communication-centered interventions. In this context, he also investigates how ethnic media can serve critical information needs—including health needs—of immigrant and ethnic communities in the digital age. He is co-author and co-editor of four books, including *Understanding Ethnic Media: Producers, Consumers, and Societies* (SAGE, 2011), *The Communication Ecology of 21st Century Urban Communities* (Peter Lang, 2018), and *Ethnic Media in the Digital Age* (Routledge, 2019). His work has been published in a number of peer-reviewed journals and edited volumes, and funded by U.S. federal agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), but also private foundations. Matthew was a Fulbright Foundation Scholar to Greece in 2018, during which time he investigated strategies employed by individuals and families in disadvantaged communities of Athens to weather the ongoing economic crisis and its health-related effects. He has continued to conduct research in Greece since then. His most recent research in Athens has focused on (a) solidarity outpatient clinics («κοινωνικά ιατρεία», in Greek) as critical community-based healthcare resources, as well as (b) a pilot intervention project to improve communication between residents and local social services of a municipality in Western Attica. At Rutgers University, Matthew currently serves as Ph.D. Program Coordinator for the Department of Communication. He is a Core Member of Rutgers' Global Health Institute and serves as a member of the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum's Working Group charged with assessing organizational effectiveness.



Maria G. Papadakaki, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, School of Health Sciences, Department of Social Work, Hellenic Mediterranean University

Bio: Dr. Maria Papadakaki (BSW, MPH) (*pronouns:* she, her) is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Social Work, Faculty of Health Sciences and Welfare, at the Hellenic Mediterranean University. She obtained a first degree in Social Work, holds an MPH and a Ph.D. from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Crete. She has been elected at the position of the Director of Laboratory of Health and Road Safety (LaHeRS) since 2016 and serves the position of the President of Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion of the European Association of Public Health (EUPHA) since 2020. She has been teaching in three Master Degree Courses (MSc) offered by the Faculty of Medicine, University of Crete since 2005; a) "Public Health and Health Care Management," b) "General Practice and Primary Health Care" and c) "child and adolescent intensive care". She is accustomed to working at an international level and has project management expertise due to her involvement in several research projects on an EU and national level (e.g. COST "TU1101," FP6 project "HAPPY AUDIT" (SP5A-CT-2007-044154); FP7 project "RESTORE" (FP7-RESTORE-257258), FP7 project "OTC SOCIOMED" (FP7-OTC SOCIOMED-223654); Health Programme "Y-SAV" – Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC) (DG SANCO – Youth Sexual Violence – 2009 12 22), CHAFAE – EUropean Refugees-HUMAN Movement and Advisory Network "EUR-HUMAN," LDV project (LLP-LdV-TOI-2007-TR-008), DG MOVE programme "REHABIL-AID" (MOVE/C4/SUB/2011-294/SI2.628846/REHABIL-AID), DAPHNE III programme "COMMUN-AID" (JUST/2011-2012/DAP/AG/3272), "WOM-POWER" (JUST/2011-2012/DAP/AG/3008). She has co-authored a number of research papers in well-established peer-

reviewed journals in Greece and abroad, primarily on primary health care, sexual health and intimate relationships and migrant health (see more in ISI/PubMed).



Kostas Petridis, Ph.D.

*Associate Professor and Director of the International Relations Office,
Hellenic Mediterranean University*

Bio: Dr. Konstantinos Petridis (*pronouns:* he, him) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Electronic Engineering at the Hellenic Mediterranean University (HMU) and the director of the HMU International Relations Office. He obtained his Ph.D. in physics from the University of St. Andrews (UK) in 2002. His research focuses on applications of lasers on materials processing and their applications in third generation solar cells and gas sensing. He demonstrates a high expertise and extended laboratory experience in laser technology and physics, in the ultrafast laser processing techniques of graphene and graphene-based optoelectronic devices and laser induced decoration of 2D materials with nanomaterials. He is the coordinator of the European University ATHENA (athena.uni.eu) from the HMU site and he has coordinated 11 Erasmus and Erasmus Plus projects and he actively participated as a teacher, manager, sub-coordinator in another 6 Erasmus projects. In 2015 he was awarded as an Academic Erasmus Ambassador by the Erasmus Coordinator Association for his services along Internationalization of Higher Education He has participated as a researcher in 12 national & international research programs. His google scholar profile can be found here: https://scholar.google.com/citations?hl=el&user=kXdc560AAAAJ&view_op=list_works&sortby=pubdate



Nikoleta Ratsika, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Hellenic Mediterranean University

Bio: Dr. Nikoleta Ratsika (*pronouns:* she, her) is an Assistant Professor of Community Social Work at the Department of Social Work, Hellenic Mediterranean University and Director of the Laboratory of Applied Social Research and Social Work. He holds a Ph.D. in Social Work from Umeå University in Sweden. He has a rich academic background and research work in national and international programs and published articles in recognized journals, as well as chapters in books. Her main research interests are in the fields of Gender Based Violence, Youth, Local Communities Development.



Pamela Rothpletz-Puglia's, Ed.D.

Associate Professor, Rutgers University

Bio: Dr. Pamela Rothpletz-Puglia's (*pronouns:* she, her) 20 years of nutrition and research practice in pediatric HIV shaped her commitment toward building resilience and reducing health disparities. Since equity-oriented health care provision includes patient-centeredness with a trauma-informed care (TIC) approach and an attitude of cultural humility, Pamela actively promotes this at Rutgers University Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) schools. She champions the incorporation of TIC in the education of all health care professionals, provides TIC education to community agencies, conducts research to address adverse childhood and community experiences and co-leads the SHP Equity Task Force. Pamela's role at the Rutgers School of Health Professions (SHP) includes mentoring students, faculty, and outside agencies to incorporate the patient voice in solving health issues by conducting qualitative and mixed methods research. To advance these skills even further, Pamela recently completed a 15-credit graduate

certificate in mixed methods research. Pamela is a registered dietitian nutritionist and holds a Doctor of Education from Columbia University. Much of Pamela's work is aimed at understanding "How can We Shore up Resilience?"



Yonaira Rivera, Ph.D., MPH
Assistant Professor, Rutgers University

Bio: Yonaira M. Rivera (Ph.D., Johns Hopkins School of Public Health & MPH, Emory University) (*pronouns:* she, her) is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication at Rutgers University's School of Communication & Information. Originally from Puerto Rico (PR), Dr. Rivera's scholarship focuses on reducing health inequities and improving the well-being of Latinx and underserved communities through health communication initiatives. Her work uses qualitatively-driven, mixed methods and community-based participatory research to study social media health misinformation, cancer control and prevention, and disaster relief. She specifically studies how engagement with health (mis)information on social media can impact health decisions, as well as how social media can be used to communicate with and mobilize communities before, during and after disasters.



Lois Rockson, Ph.D., MPH
Assistant Professor, Rutgers University

Bio: Dr. Lois Rockson (*pronouns:* she, her) is the Program Director of the Rutgers School of Health Professions' Masters in Diagnostic Cytopathology Program. Dr. Rockson completed a BS in Biology from Rutgers Newark College of Arts and Sciences and a certificate in Cytotechnology from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ)-School of Health-Related Professions in 1993. She a MS in Health Professions Education from Seton Hall University and UMDNJ-School of Health Professions and a MS in Public Health, Epidemiology concentration from the UMDNJ School of Public Health. Dr. Rockson completed her Ph.D. in Urban Systems with an Urban Health concentration, a joint degree with the Rutgers School of Nursing, New Jersey Institute of Technology School of Architecture and Rutgers Graduate School, Newark. Her research interest is in cancer health disparities among immigrant groups from the Caribbean and Central America. Her dissertation research examined cancer screening among immigrant women from Central America residing in urbanized spaces. Dr. Rockson has published research on cancer screening among New Jerseyans with mental disorders and has several scholarly activities related to cytopathology education and practice. She is a member of the Cancer Institute of New Jersey's Center for Cancer Health Equity and various cytopathology organizations. In her spare time, she enjoys fishing, gardening, knitting and beekeeping.



Charles Senteio, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Rutgers University

Bio: Dr. Charles Senteio (*pronouns:* he, him) is a health informatics researcher focused on improving chronic disease outcomes for underserved populations. His is an Assistant Professor at the Rutgers School of Communication and Information in the Department of Library and Information Science. He is a [MIT MLK Visiting Scholar](#) for the 2020-2021 academic year. His community-based research endeavors to address persistent healthcare disparities. His funded investigations of several chronic conditions include: HIV/STIs, diabetes, hypertension, chronic kidney disease, and breast and prostate cancer. He has led

research projects based in Flint, Ypsilanti, Detroit, Dallas, and central New Jersey. He is particularly interested in using both existing technology (i.e., smartphones, tablets) and emerging technology (i.e. machine learning) to support underserved patients, which include formerly incarcerated, underrepresented in research, and low-SES urban populations. He received a Ph.D. in health informatics from the School of Information at the University of Michigan where he also completed a Master's in Social Work (MSW). He began his IT strategy consulting career in the high-tech industry with Booz Allen Hamilton, then Accenture, after receiving an MBA from the Ross School of Business at Michigan. He started a consulting practice in 2002 in Dallas to concentrate exclusively on healthcare. During that time, he supervised and trained Community Health Workers in his work with Project Access in Dallas and with Baylor University Hospital in Dallas. He is a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW), certified health education specialist (CHES) and certified community health worker instructor (CHW-I #115).



Riva Touger-Decker, Ph.D., RD, CDN, FADA

Professor, Rutgers University

Associate Dean of Global Affairs, Rutgers School of Health Professions

Bio: Dr. Touger-Decker (pronouns: she, her) is Rutgers' School of Health Professions Associate Dean of Global Affairs, Professor and Chair of the Department of Clinical and Preventive Nutrition Sciences as well as the Director of the Nutrition Division in the Rutgers School of Dental Medicine. She is a registered dietitian, internationally

recognized for her expertise and leadership in nutrition and oral health/dental education, and dietetics education and serves on the Rutgers Global Health Institute Executive Committee. Her research has explored diet/nutrition and orofacial pain, tooth loss, and head and neck cancers, worksite wellness, and nutrition focused physical exam practices of dietitians. She has authored multiple peer reviewed publications and has been awarded the American Dietetic Association Medallion and Excellence in Dietetic Education Awards and the American Society for Clinical Nutrition Dannon Institute Award for Excellence in Medical/Dental Nutrition Education. She is a Fellow, New York Academy of Medicine. Previously she has worked with academic institutions in Greece (serving as an expert reviewer for Harokopio University's nutrition and dietetics program), Japan, Israel, Malaysia, and Tanzania to review/develop academic programs and training courses for faculty and students.