

THE PHLS LEADERSHIP SERIES

Making the Case for Population Health: A Leader's Guide to Addressing the Root Causes of Health

Call #3: Unnatural Alliances to Cure Unnatural Causes

Speaker Biographies

James S. Marks, MD, MPH

Senior Vice President, Health Group
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

James S. Marks, M.D., M.P.H., senior vice president, directs all program and administrative activities of the RWJF Health Group. This includes the Foundation's work in childhood obesity, public health and vulnerable populations.

Prior to joining RWJF in December 2004, Marks retired as assistant surgeon general after serving as director of the Centers for Disease Control's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion for almost a decade. Throughout his tenure at CDC, Marks developed and advanced systematic ways to prevent and detect diseases such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes, reduce tobacco use and address the nation's growing epidemic of obesity.

A national leader in public health who has been an advocate of strengthening public health systems and services for more than 25 years, Marks has received numerous federal, state, and private awards, including the U.S. Public Health Service Distinguished Service Award, the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists' Pump Handle Award, the Association of State and Territorial Chronic Disease Directors' Award for Excellence, the American Cancer Society's Distinguished Service Award, and the National Arthritis Foundation's Special Award of Appreciation. In 2004, he was elected as a member of the Institute of Medicine and currently serves on its Membership Committee. He is also vice chair of the board of directors of C-Change, whose members are the nation's key cancer leaders from government, business, and nonprofit sectors. He has published extensively in the areas of maternal and child health, health promotion and chronic disease prevention, and has served on many government and nonprofit committees devoted to improving the public's health.

Born in Buffalo, New York, he received an M.D. from the State University of New York at Buffalo. He trained as a pediatrician at the University of California at San Francisco, and was a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar at Yale University, where he received his M.P.H. He and his wife, Judi, a retired high school guidance counselor, live in Princeton and have two children, both pursuing careers in medicine.

Public Health Leadership Society

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Speaker Biographies, Page Two

Anthony B. Iton, MD, JD, MPH

Director & Health Officer
Alameda County Public Health Department

Dr. Iton's primary interest is the health of disadvantaged populations and the contributions of race, class, wealth, education, geography, and employment to health status. He has asserted that in every public health area of endeavor, be it immunizations, chronic disease, HIV/AIDS, STDs, obesity, or even disaster preparedness, local public health departments must recognize that they are confronted with the enduring consequences of structural poverty, institutional racism and other forms of systemic injustice. He further asserts that the only sustainable approach to eliminating health inequities is through the design of intensive, multi-sectoral, place-based interventions that are specifically designed to identify existing assets and build social, political and economic power among a critical mass of community residents in historically under-resourced communities.

Dr. Iton received his medical degree at Johns Hopkins Medical School and subsequently trained in internal medicine and preventive medicine at New York Hospital, Yale, and Berkeley and is board certified in both specialties. Dr. Iton has also received a law degree and a Master's of Public Health from the University of California, Berkeley and is a member of the California Bar.

In 2006, he was awarded the prestigious Milton and Ruth Roemer Prize for Creative Public Health Work, awarded by the American Public Health Association to a US local health official in recognition of outstanding creative and innovative public health work.

Karen DeSalvo, MD, MPH, MSc

Vice Dean for Community Affairs and Health Policy
Tulane School of Medicine

Karen DeSalvo, MD, MPH, MSc is Professor of Medicine at the Tulane School of Medicine and with a joint appointment in the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. She is Vice Dean for Community Affairs and Health Policy at Tulane University School of Medicine and has responsibility for implementing the Medical School's mission to build better communities through health initiatives. She has served as the Section Chief of General Internal Medicine and Geriatrics since 2000 and holds the C. Thorpe Ray Chair in Internal Medicine.

Dr. DeSalvo has been an active leader in health sector recovery and reform efforts in Louisiana since Hurricane Katrina. She led the development of a replicable model of a neighborhood based medical home for the medically underserved where she continues to serve as the Executive Director. She was selected as a founding member of the Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum Board and chairs its Medical Home Committee. She is currently serving on the Louisiana Medicaid Technical Advisory Committee advising on Medicaid reform to implement a medical home system of care. She is also an appointed member of the Louisiana Health Care Commission. Dr. DeSalvo was recognized the Woman of Excellence in Health Care by the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus for her health care efforts in 2008.

Dr. DeSalvo's research and policy interests focus on advancing policy and practice aimed at improving care quality and effectiveness with a particular focus on vulnerable populations. She has 40 peer-reviewed publications in this area. Her research has demonstrated the value of patients' perceptions of health as risk stratification and prediction tools. Dr. DeSalvo was a Robert Wood Johnson Generalist Physician Faculty Scholar and a recipient of the NIH sponsored, institutional K12 faculty development award. She is completing a mentored research award funded by the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

She received her Bachelor of Arts from Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts in Biology and Political Science. She matriculated to Tulane University Health Sciences Center where she simultaneously received her Medical Doctorate and Masters of Public Health. She remained at Tulane as a resident, Chief Resident and Fellow in Internal Medicine. She participated as a fellow in the Program in Clinical Effectiveness at Harvard University where she received a Masters in Clinical Epidemiology from the Harvard School of Public Health in May of 2002.

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