Addressing Health Disparities Leadership Program

2020 Faculty Profiles

The Addressing Health Disparities Leadership Program is led by National Council staff and expert consultants who are nationally-recognized leadership development and health disparity experts. Below is additional information about the faculty for this year’s cohort:

Suganya Sockalingam, Ph.D.
Partner & Managing Member, Change Matrix, LLC

Dr. Suganya Sockalingam is a Partner and Managing Member of Change Matrix, LLC a small minority and women owned disadvantaged business that works to motivate, manage and measure systems change. Change Matrix supports agencies to address diversity, cultural and linguistic competence, cross-cultural communication, as well as leadership, collaboration, and conflict management.

Currently, Dr. Sockalingam serves as a training and technical assistance liaison and provider for several technical assistance centers, including: the Now is The Time TA Center, and the Center for Integrated Health Services funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) and the Home Visiting Improvement Action Team (HV-ImpACT) funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

Mohini Venkatesh, MPH
Vice President of Business Strategy, National Council for Behavioral Health

Mohini Venkatesh is the Vice President of Business & Strategy at the National Council for Behavioral Health. A passionate advocate for systems-level change, Ms. Venkatesh fosters partnerships across sectors and stakeholders with the goal of improving the behavioral health of this country. Prior to this, Ms. Venkatesh served as the National Council’s VP of Practice Improvement and led some of the industry’s strongest practice improvement and leadership programs designed to transform clinical, business, and workforce strategies to prepare the behavioral health field to succeed. Ms. Venkatesh particularly champions mid-level and rising-star leaders as the future of behavioral health and is the catalyst behind national programs such as the Middle Management Academy, Young Leaders Program, and the Addressing Health Disparities Leadership Program.

Prior to joining the Council, Ms. Venkatesh worked in the field in a hospital-based psychiatric unit, several social service non-profit organizations, and a state association advocating for community behavioral services. Ms. Venkatesh sits on the board of directors of a behavioral health organization in Washington, D.C. and completed a fellowship with the Non-Profit Roundtable’s Future Executive Directors Program. She received a Masters in Public Health from Yale University and a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.
Ayla Colella, LMHC
Director of Practice Improvement, National Council for Behavioral Health

Ayla Colella is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor with expertise in digital therapy for people living with serious mental illness, personality disorders, post-traumatic stress, substance use disorders, and other disorders. She utilizes clinical skills to access diverse and underserved populations both in rural communities and abroad. With a track record of comprehensive services across cultures, mindfulness of cultural competence, societal norms, schemas, and stigmas, she employs her background in mental health counseling to minority populations to bring demographic-relevant insight. She has managed small- and large-scale projects for federal, state, and local funders which included overseeing operations of several social services initiatives encompassing supportive housing, foster care prevention, forensic case management, and other supportive services.

Dana Lange, BA
Project Manager of Practice Improvement, National Council for Behavioral Health

Dana Lange serves as a Project Manager of Practice Improvement at the National Council for Behavioral Health. In her role, she manages technical assistance and continuing education initiatives related to public health, service delivery, and issues of access and equity across the continuum of care. Prior to joining the National Council, Dana held positions in state government, public affairs and the non-profit field in Madison, WI and Washington, DC. Dana holds a Bachelor of Arts dual degree in Political Science and Sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and is currently a part-time student pursuing a Master of Science degree in Health Care Management from Johns Hopkins University.