

MEHAF

MAINE HEALTH ACCESS FOUNDATION

Community-Based Initiatives Learning Community Meeting

July 26, 2017

Speaker Biographies

Karen Minyard, Ph.D.

Executive Director, Department of Public Management & Policy, Georgia Health Policy Center

Karen Minyard, Ph.D., has been director of the Georgia Health Policy Center (GHPC) since 2001 and is also a research professor with the Department of Public Management and Policy. Karen connects the research, policy, and programmatic work of the center across issue areas including population health, health philanthropy, public and private health coverage, and the uninsured.

Karen has experience with the state Medicaid program, both with the design of program reforms and external evaluation. Her research interests include financing and evaluation of health-related social policy programs; strategic alignment of public and private health policy through collective impact; the role of local health initiatives in access and health improvement; the role of targeted technical assistance in improving the sustainability, efficiency, and programmatic effectiveness of nonprofit health collaboratives; and health and health care financing.

In addition to overseeing the center's overall strategic vision, Karen plays a leadership role in several center projects that weave together the key learnings, skillsets, and areas of expertise of the GHPC, including evaluation, technical assistance, policy and economic analysis, backbone and organizational support, health and health care financing, health system transformation, Health in All Policies, and rural health. She is currently co-principal investigator and spearheading evaluation efforts for the GHPC's national coordinating center, Bridging for Health: Improving Community Health through Innovations in Financing, sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. She also serves on the executive trio of the Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement, along with the Atlanta Regional Commission and the United Way of Greater Atlanta.

Risa Wilkerson, MA

Executive Director, Active Living by Design

Risa Wilkerson is the Executive Director of Active Living By Design (ALBD). She provides overarching leadership and strategic vision to fulfill the organization's mission of creating community-led change by working with local, state, and national partners to build a culture of active living and healthy eating. Risa has been connected to ALBD since 2002, when she was a grantee of the organization. She joined the team in 2008 as a Senior Project Officer, and provided coaching, technical assistance, and grant oversight to multidisciplinary community-based partnerships across the country, with a focus on improving health through policy, systems, and environmental change strategies. From 2014-2015, she also served as ALBD's Marketing and Communications Director and, subsequently, Associate Executive Director.

Risa brings wide-ranging experience in coalition building, community assessment, public health program planning and implementation, grant writing, and nonprofit management. She provides leadership to the field by serving as the Safe Routes to School National Partnership's Board Chair, as a sector chair to the National Physical Activity Plan, and as a member of the Prescription for Activity Task Force.

Before moving to North Carolina, Risa was the Vice President of Active Communities for the Michigan Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports, where she led project teams in a statewide effort to create active communities. Risa holds an M.A. in Communication from Michigan State University. She is also an alumna of the University of South Carolina's Physical Activity and Public Health Course, a training program sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

At home, Risa loves to spend time with her husband, Doug, go for runs, kayak North Carolina's beautiful rivers and lakes, read, write, and hang out with her children and grandchild.