

Providence/Boston Center for AIDS Research



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY (DEIA) GROUP



Dr. Timothy Flanigan

DEIA Co-Leader, Professor of
Medicine, Professor of Health
Services, Policy and Practice,
Brown University



Dr. Martha Sanchez

DEIA Co-Leader, Assistant
Professor of Medicine, Brown
University



Dr. Kaku So-Armah

DEIA Co-Leader, Assistant
Professor of Medicine, Boston
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CFAR Learning Community Summer Research Program

Amanda Fitzpatrick, MPH, Project Coordinator

The CFAR Learning Community (CLC) is an initiative for undergraduate students historically excluded from the scientific enterprise led by Dr. Kaku So-Armah and Amanda Fitzpatrick which aims to provide research and mentorship experience at the intersection of HIV and substance use research. In the summer of 2022, three students developed a self-designed research project. This summer, three students will take part in a 10-week summer program in Boston to execute their self-designed semi-structured qualitative interview project to identify the barriers preventing linkage to HIV care following diagnosis.

The students' self designed research project is based on a major barrier to a patient's ability to attain HIV viral suppression: the inability to link to care. The study aims to identify the barriers, hypothesized to be rooted in social determinants of health, that are preventing linkage to care through conducting semi-structured patient interviews in a multi-site study at Miriam Hospital and Boston Medical Center.

In addition to research, students will work with a mentorship team, attend didactics and trainings on skills in qualitative data collection and analysis to conduct their research, attend the Research Society on Alcoholism (RSA) Conference, visit the University of Alabama at Birmingham infectious disease team and labs, participate in diversity and equity events at Boston Medical Center (BMC), and take part in additional educational opportunities as participants in BMC's CARE Student Addiction Summer Research program.

CDEIPI Manuscript- *JAIDS*

Joseph Delamercod, Research Assistant, Administrative Coordinator, Global Health Initiative

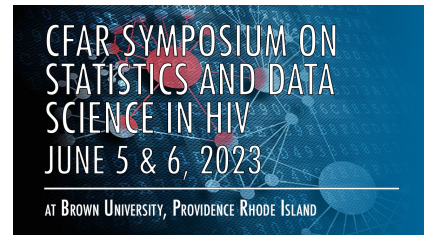
The CFAR Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Pipeline Initiative (CDEIPI) recently submitted a manuscript to JAIDS titled "Going to the Source: Focus Groups with Early and Mid-Career Faculty from Groups Underrepresented in Biomedical Research to Develop and Enhance CFAR Services." In the continued effort to include, sustain and retain HIV-focused early career faculty from groups historically excluded from biomedical research, the Providence/Boston CFAR conducted focus groups with early and mid-career faculty to discern their needs. We conducted 60 minute focus groups and interviews with participants at institutions affiliated with Providence/Boston CFAR. The discussion was guided using the following domains of an Asset Bundle Model: educational endowments, science socialization, material resources, network development and family expectations. Several opportunities for improvement emerged including within mentorship, grant instruction, networking, and resource availability.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND TRAININGS

June 5 and 6, 2023

CFAR Symposium on Statistics and Data Science in HIV

We will be live-streaming this event for those unable to attend. The events of the day will not be recorded. Please request a link and password to access the live stream by clicking the button on the right.



**Live Stream
Request**

**June 14, 2023
12pm-1pm EST**

New England AIDS Education and Training Center (NEATC) HIV & Oral Health Webinar Series Part 7: HPV, Sex, and Cancer

Speaker: [Herve Y Sroussi, DMD, PhD](#), Director for Research of the Division of Oral Medicine and Dentistry at Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute



Register Here

**July 10-21, 2023
Monday-Friday, 10am-1pm EST**

Virtual 31st Annual Principles of STI/HIV Research and Public Health Practice Course

Presented by the University of Washington Department of Global Health and the Centers for AIDS and STD



[Apply Here](#)

Accepting applications for the virtual course now.

October 5, 2023

Lifespan's Office of Research's Annual Research Day



Annual Research Day | October 5, 2023

Save the date. More information to come.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

August 4, 2023

Letters of Intent for Prov/Bos CFAR Developmental Grants-Fall Cycle

Applications due October 6, 2023

- ▶ Letters of Intent are required and due no later than 5:00pm EST on August 4th
- ▶ [Submit LOI here](#)
- ▶ For those with accepted LOIs, full applications are due by 5:00pm EST on October 6th

[More Details](#)



SCIENCE SPOTLIGHT



Sabrina Assoumou, MD, MPH

Inaugural Louis W. Sullivan, Endowed Professor of Medicine, Boston University/Boston Medical Center

Dr. Assoumou is the inaugural Louis W. Sullivan, MD, Endowed Professor of Medicine at Boston University. She is also an attending physician in infectious diseases at Boston Medical Center. She is an NIH-funded physician-scientist who focuses on improving outcomes for persons living with or at-risk for HIV and/or hepatitis C.

She loves mentoring and one of the highlights of her time as a physician-scientist is celebrating mentees' publications, especially first publications. The enthusiasm of young investigators always reminds her why she joined the field.

Fun fact: She speaks 3 languages and by age 16 she had lived on three different continents.

Joseph Cusi Delamerced is a research assistant and administrative coordinator for the Global Health Initiative (GHI) at Brown University. He works with the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) Initiative.



**Joseph Cusi
Delamerced**

Research Assistant,
Administrative
Coordinator, Global
Health Initiative

His CFAR project explores supporting early and mid-career faculty from groups underrepresented in biomedical research in order to develop and enhance CFAR services. Recently, the DEIA Initiative submitted a manuscript to JAIDS on this topic.

Outside of work, Joseph serves in his church and loves to go rock climbing.



**Martha Sanchez,
MD**

Assistant Professor of
Medicine, Brown
University

Dr. Sanchez is an Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases (ID) at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, Clinical Educator.

She is the Program Director of the Brown-Dominican Republic Exchange Program, the Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) for the Adult ID Division and co-Leader of the Providence-Boston CFAR DEIA Initiative. Her clinical and research interest include the HIV Care Continuum in the US and Dominican Republic.

In 2019 she was awarded a CFAR Developmental grant to evaluate HIV transmitted drug resistance and transmission networks on newly diagnosed HIV persons in the Dominican Republic.

C-CERC CORNER

Importance of Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR)

Centered around trust, communication and collaboration, community based participatory research (CBPR), focuses on the needs, expectations, and desires of community members for engaging in HIV research. Community participation in HIV research culminated with the early vaccine trials for HIV prevention. Researchers truly embraced the community and partnered with their CABs to identify potential study problems, inform recruitment practices, monitor research and ultimately disseminate study findings. It is widely perceived that without community involvement, participant recruitment and the overall quality of the research would have been compromised. This experience demonstrated the power of advocacy and the importance of transparent and effective communication between



Paul Goulet

Chair, Prov/Bos CFAR
Community Engaged
Research Council (C-
CERC)

researchers, participants and the community.

In order for CBPR to be successful, it must be understood that investment in meaningful and effective academic and community partnerships take time, financial resources, training in community engagement, cultural competency and unwavering institutional support must be front and center and a priority for all research efforts within all CFARs. CBPR is not to be viewed as a tokenistic process and it should not be just checking the box. CBPR should always be considered as a best practice to engagement in successful research practices.

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FEATURED WORK



Dr. Amy Nunn has led several health promotion programs with black pastors to promote HIV and COVID testing in the Deep South; this program is entitled [Faith in Action](#) has been recognized and highlighted by NIH. In April, Dr. Nunn, faith leaders from across Jackson, Mississippi, experts from the Brown University School of Public Health, the Rhode Island Public Health Institute, and the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) joined to announce a new citywide initiative to end the HIV epidemic in Mississippi.



Left to right: Pastor Tony Yarber, Bishop Ronnie Crudup, Pastor Reginald Buckley, and Pastor Joe May

[Click Here to Watch the Symposium](#)

The Providence/Boston CFAR Cores are available to help you with your research. Please click the link to request services.

[Request Core Services](#)

ACKNOWLEDGE CFAR (P30AI042853)

Funding from NIH for the CFAR is dependent on evidence that the CFAR is providing value added in the conduct of HIV/AIDS research. One way this support is documented is through



the acknowledgement of the Providence/Boston CFAR in publications, abstracts and presentations. If you have received funding, consultation, mentorship, research support services, materials, training, access to shared equipment and/or space from one of the CFAR Cores, please acknowledge the CFAR by using the following statement:

This work was facilitated by the Providence/Boston Center for AIDS Research (P30AI042853).

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The Providence/Boston Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) is a joint research effort between Brown University/Lifespan and Boston University/Boston Medical Center. The Providence/Boston Center for AIDS research is devoted to the pursuit of translational research to reduce the burden of HIV infection worldwide, with special focus on substance users, women, MSM, justice-involved persons, and at-risk youth. To achieve this goal, we are committed to fostering emerging HIV investigators both domestically and within resource-limited settings.

