

Spring 2022 Curtis Center Newsletter



Letter from our Associate Director, Dr. Jaclynn Hawkins



In these challenging times, it's critical for us all to revisit what motivates us to do the work we do. For me, growing up, I saw first-hand the impact poverty had on the health of my immediate and extended family. From experiencing extreme food insecurity to watching family members struggle with the effects of chronic illnesses like diabetes, only to be faced with a broken and poorly resourced health care system. I decided very early on I would focus my life's work on helping to end health disparities. I found myself at the University of Michigan 13 years ago, a first-generation Ph.D. student with no support, no guidance, and little to no resources. At that time, I was fortunate enough to be the recipient of the Vivian A. and James L. Curtis Endowed Scholarship as a Ph.D. student which made a huge difference in my life (along with some excellent mentorship and training). This award allowed me to focus on my work with Black and Latino men with type 2 diabetes, developing new and innovative ways to improve health outcomes for this population. Little did I

know, I'd have the opportunity to pay it forward today, as the Associate Director of the Curtis Center for Health Equity Research and Training. Given the pandemic, current political climate, and the challenging nature of our work, it is important now, more than ever, to remember your larger purpose.

So now, I invite you all to revisit why you do the work you do—what drives you, what motivates you, and how does the work you do align with your values?

I'm thrilled to be able to give back through my leadership position at the Curtis Center. I am excited to help make our center a leader in health equity research, education/training, and community outreach. We have many exciting things on the horizon and with a strong team of staff, students and faculty, the possibilities are endless.

Jaclynn Hawkins, MSW, PhD (she/her/hers)
Associate Director, Vivian A. and James L. Curtis Center for Health Equity Research and Training



The Second Curtis Center Health Equity Seminar

Featuring Dr. Anao Zhang, Signature Program Co-Lead and Curtis Center Faculty Affiliate, Assistant Professor of Social Work and the Clinical Research Director of the Adolescent and Young Adult Oncology Program at University of Michigan Health



"Creating an Equitable Healthcare System for Adolescents and Young Adults Living With Cancer: Overcoming Unique Bio-psycho-social-spiritual Challenges"

Thursday, April 7, 2022, 1:00-2:00 PM EST via Zoom

Offers one (1) Continuing Education credit

[Register for free here!](#)

Health Equity Seminar Series Presenter Spotlight

Watch this video to learn more about Dr. Zhang!

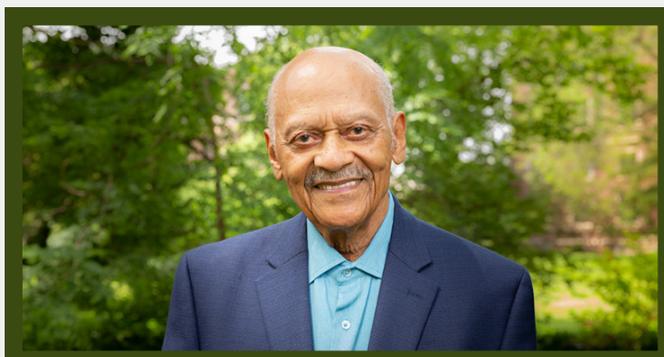


Meet Nina Jackson Levin, Curtis Center Signature Program Co-Lead



Together with Dr. Zhang, Nina Co-Leads the Curtis Center Signature Program, "A Psycho-Oncology Fellowship to Support Pre-Doctoral Health Disparity Research on Adolescent and Young Adult Sex and Gender Needs During Cancer."

In addition to her role with the Curtis Center, Nina Jackson Levin (she/her) is a National Cancer Institute T32 Predoctoral Fellow at the Rogel Cancer Center and a Doctoral Candidate in the Joint PhD Program in Social Work and Anthropology. Her research explores cancer patients' and survivors' sexual and reproductive health needs during and after treatment. She uses qualitative methodologies to explore and problem solve for health care service delivery inequities for marginalized populations including adolescents and young adults and sexual and gender minorities.



This Spring, we celebrate Dr. Curtis's 100th

Birthday!

Join us in wishing Dr. James L. Curtis, our founding donor, a very happy birthday.

We thank you, Dr. Curtis, for your generous gift in 2007 that created the Curtis Center!



Welcome to Keith F. Miller, Jr., Curtis Center Program Manager



Keith F. Miller, Jr. is an award-winning community educator, cultural organizer, and artist-researcher specializing in the development of healing literacies in the lives of boys and young men of color in an effort to support their healing, growth, and thriving through trauma. He is also the founder of Healing By Any Means, LLC, a company that powers people, projects, and healing-centered research at the heart of systems and narrative change to optimize individual and community healing potential.

The Curtis Center is Hiring!

We are seeking a Community Engagement Manager for an 18-month project funded by the Michigan Health Endowment Fund and in partnership with Packard Health.



[Click here to see this position on M-Careers!](#)

Announcements and Congratulations!



Congratulations, Dr. Anyiwo!

Curtis Center Faculty Affiliate, Dr. [Nkemka Anyiwo](#), has accepted a position as Assistant Professor at Columbia University, starting in July. Best wishes on your new role!

The Curtis Center is one of four organizations (and the only university partner) contracted by the [National Network of Public Health Institutes](#) (NNPHI) and partnering with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to review evidence-based practices to address upstream social and structural determinants of health related to COVID-19. The main deliverable for this project will be a resource database that will be translated and

disseminated through various methods (e.g., training, tools, practice briefs and other publications, and a centralized, web-based repository).

Dr. **Anao Zhang** and **Nina Jackson Levin** received a discovery grant from the Rogel Cancer Center to evaluate the feasibility and acceptability of a speech-based and artificial intelligence-enabled distress screening and monitoring app for adolescents and young adults diagnosed with cancer.

A new paper, co-authored by **Nina Jackson Levin**, has just been published in *Women*, titled, [Laboring to Conceive: Reducing Barriers to Fertility Care for Same-Sex Mothers Pursuing Parenthood](#) (2022).

The Curtis Center Signature Program, **Young Black Men, Masculinities, and Mental Health (YBMen)** project, has received funding from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund, in collaboration with Packard Health, to plan, identify and develop a network of community organizations committed to services and coordinated care models that address the behavioral health needs of young Black men and boys in Washtenaw County. The Network will bolster the efforts of community leaders and organizations to develop forward-thinking strategic action plans that will impact their behavioral health education, practice, and policy efforts for young Black men and boys.

Curtis Center Faculty Affiliate, Professor **James Smith**, began a new role at Flinders University as the Deputy Dean of Rural and Remote Health – Northern Territory; and Professor of Health and Social Equity. We also share his recent editorial, [Advancing Health Promotion in Rural and Remote Australia: Strategies for Change](#) (*HPJA*, 2022).

Drs. **Lenette M. Jones**, **Jamie Mitchell**, & **Jaclynn Hawkins** recently co-authored a publication in *Evidence-Based Nursing*, titled, [Challenges to Dietary Hypertension Self-Management as Described by a Sample of African American Older Adults](#) (2022).

Curtis Center Faculty Affiliate, Dr. **Jade C. Burns**, received two awards: The University of Michigan School of Nursing Early Career Investigator Award and the Institute for Healthcare Policy & Innovation Elizabeth Caroline Crosby Research Award. Drs. **Burns** and **Watkins** also recently co-authored, [Engaging Young Black Males in Sexual and Reproductive Health Care: A Review of the Literature](#) (*AJMH*, 2021), and Dr. **Burns** co-authored [Black Nurse Scholars' Experiences in an Interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Fellowship](#) (*OJIN*, 2022).

YBMen Research Associate, Dr. **Janelle Goodwill**, recently published a paper co-authored by Dr. **Watkins**, titled, [“I didn’t know who to talk to”: Black College Men’s Sources and Descriptions of Social Support](#) (*PMM*, 2022).

Postdoctoral Research Associate, Dr. **Ed-Dee Williams**, is co-author on a recent publication in *Children*, [The Mental Health of Black Youth Affected by Community Violence: Family and School Context as Pathways to Resilience](#) (2022).



What are you doing today to advance health equity?

Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that The University of Michigan, named for Michigami, the world's largest freshwater system and located in the Huron River watershed, was formed and has grown through connections with the land stewarded by Niswi Ishkodewan Anishinaabeg: The Three Fires People who are the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi along with their neighbors the Seneca, Delaware, Shawnee and Wyandot nations.

Connect with us!

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