



Black Men In White Coats

YOUTH SUMMIT

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2025



Saint Mary's Hospital
Trinity Health





WELCOME LETTER FROM DR. OKORODUDU



Greetings!

On behalf of the entire Black Men in White Coats team, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to the Black Men in White Coats Youth Summit, hosted by Saint Mary's Hospital! We are excited that you've chosen to join us and discover the countless opportunities that a career in medicine can offer.

It's often said that a single moment can change your life. As a Pulmonary & Critical Care Doctor, I can reflect on my own childhood and clearly identify those pivotal moments—whether it was a word of encouragement from my parents, a teacher recognizing my potential, or a coach pushing me to go the extra mile. Those moments shaped my journey, and my hope is that today will become a defining moment for you. Many people have poured their time, resources, and energy into making this day special just for you!

Over the past decade, I've been asked countless times, "Why did you start Black Men in White Coats?" While I could give you a detailed explanation, the core reason is simple: we need more Black boys and girls to explore careers in medicine. We need your intellect, compassion, and creativity. And while our mission emphasizes Black children, it extends to all children—our goal is to inspire and empower the next generation of medical professionals.

Before we dive into this incredible day, let's take a moment to give a huge "THANK YOU" to Saint Mary's Hospital for their commitment to YOU! While many institutions talk about supporting their community, Saint Mary's Hospital has taken meaningful action with this event. The fact that you're reading this letter is a testament to their dedication, and we are deeply grateful for such a devoted partner.

Today promises to be an unforgettable experience. Make new connections, embrace every opportunity, and soak in every moment of the summit!

Sincerely,

Dale Okorodudu, M.D. (Dr. Dale)

Founder of Black Men in White Coats

Black Men In White Coats

YOUTH SUMMIT



SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

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CHIEF SPONSORS



**Selim and
Linda Noujaim**



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The Harold Leever Regional Cancer Center
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Lambda Rho Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.
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**Thank you to the following partners for their
gracious contributions to the event: American Heart Association,
Aroma Joe's, City of Waterbury, Palace Theater, and UConn Waterbury.**

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AGENDA

TIME	SESSION	SPEAKERS
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Registration/Check-In	
9:05 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.	Welcome & Opening Remarks	Husnain Kermalli, MD Pastor Kristopher Reese Montez Carter, PharmD, FACHE President & CEO of Trinity Health Of New England Mayor Paul Pinerewski, City of Waterbury U.S. Congresswoman Jahana Hayes
9:50 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.	Student Breakout Sessions at The Palace Theater	Students will break into color coded groups for breakout sessions. Please follow your group leaders to UConn Waterbury.
	Adult Breakout Sessions at The Palace Theater	
SESSION 1: 9:50 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.	Level Up: Building a Portfolio That Opens Doors	Charles J. Collier, Jr.
SESSION 2: 10:20 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.	Mind Over Matter: Prioritizing Mental Wellness in the Journey to Success	Shawniel Chamanlal, LCSW
SESSION 3: 10:50 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.	Behind the White Coat: A Candid Look into the Life of a Doctor	Oluwakorede T. Akele, MD Vanessa Ayafor, MD Chanta Peart, MD
SESSION 4: 11:20 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.	From Crayons to Cadavers: Parenting with Purpose to Raise Future Physicians	Jacquelyn D. Jordan, PhD, MSN, BSN, RN Karana Pierre, DPM Yvette Tucker, MEd, MSN, RN
12:00 p.m. – 12:20 p.m.	Lunch at The Palace Theater	
12:20 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Welcome Back	Robert Roose, MD Community Hospital President Kent Burgwardt, DO, PRESENTING SPONSOR
12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Keynote Fireside Chat	Linda Barry, MD, MPH, FACS MODERATOR: N. Chineye Anako, MPH, CHES
1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Black Women In White Coats Panel	Shawnette Alston, MD Iyanna Liles, MD Janelle Mallett, MD, MBA Marcia Tejeda, MD MODERATOR: Kyle Jones
1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Black Men In White Coats Panel	Adebola Adeleke, DPM, FACFAS Kwame Asante, MD, FAAPMR Roy Kellerman Jr., MD Samuel Laurencin, MD, PhD MODERATOR: Kyle Jones
2:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	Student Giveaways/Event Survey/Closing Remarks	
2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Group Photo/Event Concludes	

Black Men In White Coats

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MEET OUR EVENT SPEAKERS

OPENING REMARKS:

Pastor Kristopher Reese **MASTER OF CEREMONIES**



Pastor Kristopher Reese has served as Senior Pastor of Grace Baptist Church since 2015, leading impactful ministries that uplift the Waterbury community. He partners with local businesses to support families in need and organizes annual initiatives like the Adopt-A-Family Christmas Drive and free weekend meals for seniors. Under his leadership, Grace Baptist Church has adopted Brass City Charter School and Walsh Elementary School, offering student recognition programs and teacher appreciation events. He also provides resume and interview workshops and hosts career fairs. Pastor Reese serves on numerous boards, including the Interfaith Action Fellowship and Waterbury's Diversity Committee. He holds multiple degrees, including an honorary Doctorate in Strategic Leadership, and in 2025, was named one of Connecticut's 100 Men of Color.

Mayor Paul K. Pernerewski, Jr. **City of Waterbury**



Mayor Paul Pernerewski, Jr. was born and raised in Waterbury, where he and his wife Kim continue to live and raise their three sons. A graduate of Holy Cross High School, UConn, and Georgetown Law, the Mayor practiced law for 37 years, including roles as Assistant Attorney General for the State of Connecticut and General Counsel for the Connecticut Airport Authority. He also taught Business Law at Naugatuck Valley Community College. Serving the community has always been a priority for him. In 2001 he felt passionate that his law background would help Waterbury overcome mismanagement, fiscal irresponsibility, and corruption. Appointed to the Board of Aldermen in 2001, he became President in 2009 and was elected Mayor of Waterbury in 2023. Mayor Pernerewski led efforts to improve Waterbury's bond rating and city management. As Mayor, he focuses on economic growth, education, and public safety. His collaborative leadership reflects his lifelong commitment to community and integrity.

Congresswoman **Jahana Hayes**



Congresswoman Jahana Hayes represents Connecticut's 5th District in the United States House of Representatives. The district spans northwest and central Connecticut, including her hometown of Waterbury. Elected in 2018, she is the first African-American woman to ever represent Connecticut in Congress. Congresswoman Hayes serves on the House Committees on Education and Workforce, and Agriculture, where she is Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Nutrition and Foreign Agriculture. Her legislative focus includes equitable access to quality education, health care, labor, agriculture and veterans. During her Congressional tenure, the Congresswoman has had 11 bills signed into law. To date she has introduced 80 bills and cosponsored over 2,100 pieces of legislation across a broad range topics. Hayes holds degrees from Naugatuck Valley Community College, Southern Connecticut State University, University of Saint Joseph, and University of Bridgeport.



MEET OUR MODERATORS & PANELISTS

ADULT BREAKOUT SESSION PANELISTS:

Level Up: Building a Portfolio That Opens Doors

Charles N. Collier, Jr.



Charles N. Collier, Jr., is Assistant Dean for the Office of Inclusive Excellence at Quinnipiac University's Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine and Director of Health Career Pathways, supporting students from elementary to undergraduate levels. He is also a part of the admissions team for the school of medicine. Prior to Quinnipiac, he was Director of Health Profession Advising at Emory University for 12 years. He currently serves as Board Treasurer for the CT Violence Intervention Program in New Haven, CT. The program is a non-profit dedicated to serving youth and their families in the greater New Haven and Hamden communities. Originally from Savannah, GA, he comes from a family of health care professionals and is deeply committed to community service.

Mind Over Matter: Prioritizing Mental Wellness in the Journey to Success

Shawniel Chamanlal, LCSW



Shawniel Chamanlal, LCSW, is the Founder and CEO of Healing Springs Wellness Center in Plantsville, Connecticut. A Fordham University graduate, she blends evidence-based mental health practices with holistic healing to support mind, body, and spirit.

Passionate about creating inclusive spaces, especially for communities of color, Shawniel's mission is to make mental wellness accessible and culturally responsive. She's a sought-after speaker and trainer, leading workshops nationwide for schools, corporations, and nonprofits. Her talks focus on emotional wellness, leadership, and mindset—empowerment. At her core, Shawniel believes healing is about more than survival; it's about building a life of wholeness, purpose, and abundance.



MEET OUR MODERATORS & PANELISTS

ADULT BREAKOUT SESSION PANELISTS:

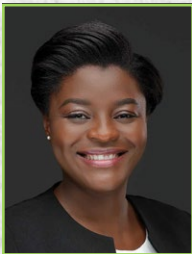
Behind the White Coat: A Candid Look into the Life of a Doctor

Oluwakorede T. Akele, MD



Dr. Oluwakorede Akele is a Nigerian American, born and raised in Jersey City, New Jersey. He is a first-generation medical graduate. Dr. Akele is currently a resident in Internal Medicine at the University of Connecticut. He is passionate about addressing social determinants of health and health disparities. His passion has led him to develop a deep love and interest in cardiology and clinical research. Outside of the hospital, Dr. Akele loves to work out, run, play the piano, and spend time with family and friends.

Vanessa Ayafor, MD



Dr. Vanessa Ayafor is a resident physician in internal medicine at Saint Mary's Hospital. Born and raised in Cameroon, she earned a medical degree at the University of Yaoundé. Committed to her passion for health equity and women's health, she coordinated research activities to improve care for Black women with HIV in the United States. During that time, she earned an MPH in Epidemiology and Public Health Informatics and technology at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. During her residency training she developed an interest in the care of patients with cancer, where she aspires to mitigate the gaps in access to advanced cancer care in lower socioeconomic countries.

Chanta Peart, MD



Dr. Chanta Peart, originally from Jamaica, earned her medical degree from the University of the West Indies, Jamaica. She is currently a medical resident in the Saint Mary's Hospital Internal Medicine program. Her passion for internal medicine is driven by her commitment to providing high quality health care to underserved areas. She values building therapeutic relationships with patients and care givers. Her academic interests include Hematology/Oncology.

FACILITATOR

Cheryl Hilton



*Regional Manager,
Community Health & Well Being
Trinity Health Of New England*

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ADULT BREAKOUT SESSION PANELISTS:

From Crayons to Cadavers: Parenting with Purpose to Raise Future Physicians

Jacquelyn D. Jordan, PhD, MSN, BSN, RN



Dr. Jacquelyn Jordan is a Waterbury native and Vietnam-era Army veteran. She rose from public housing to become a leader in nursing education. Her doctoral research examined how racial identity affects Black nursing students in majority institutions, a topic she's presented nationwide. She holds degrees from Adelphi University, Yale University, Western Connecticut State University (WCSU), and MCC, and completed leadership education at Wellesley College. Dr. Jordan served as Dean at Howard and Towson Universities, and launched Westfield State University's first nursing program. She's taught at WCSU, MCC, and Yale University, and held clinical and leadership roles at several Connecticut hospitals. Now an independent consultant, she's received numerous honors for academic and community service. Dr. Jordan continues to mentor emerging nurse leaders and advocates for equity in health care education.

Karana M. Pierre, DPM



Dr. Karana Pierre is a podiatrist with 23 years of experience, originally from Loreauville, Louisiana. She earned her bachelor's degree from Xavier University and her Doctorate in Podiatric Medicine from New York College of Podiatric Medicine. After residency at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, she relocated to Connecticut, serving as Podiatrist/Clinical Coordinator and Infection Control Chair at Optimus Healthcare for 13 years. Dr. Pierre consulted for 11 years with the

Connecticut Department of Developmental Services. She currently serves as a Physician Surveyor with The Joint Commission. She sits on multiple national boards and committees focused on podiatry and health equity. When Dr. Pierre is not practicing podiatry, she continues to partner with educational organizations in STEM, medical, and health care programs for students.

Yvette Tucker, MEd, MSN, RN



Yvette Tucker is a Registered Nurse at the Albert J. Solnit Children's Center—South Campus, a secure behavioral health hospital in Middletown, CT. There she provides psychiatric care to adolescents. With over 15 years in higher education and leadership at Naugatuck Valley Community College, she is also a certified doula and former NAACP chapter president. A proud Connecticut native and mother of three college graduates—including a doctor—Yvette brings a deeply personal perspective to the panel as she reflects on the journey of raising excellence through intentional parenting, academic empowerment, and cultural pride.

FACILITATOR

Cheryl Hilton

*Regional Manager,
Community Health & Well Being
Trinity Health Of New England*





MEET OUR MODERATORS & PANELISTS

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Linda Barry, MD, MPH, FACS



Dr. Linda Barry is a board-certified liver and pancreas surgeon with a background in clinical and basic science research. As Professor of Surgery and Public Health Sciences at UConn School of Medicine, she is also Associate Dean of Multicultural & Community Affairs and Associate Director of the UConn Health Disparities Institute. Her work centers on health equity, mentoring underrepresented students, and community engagement. She has received awards for promoting educational opportunities for underrepresented students and women in STEM. Her most recent honor was the 2025 National Science Foundation Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring from President Joseph Biden. Dr. Barry is currently chair-elect of the Group on Women in Medicine and Science (GWIMS) and co-chair of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Disability Task Force.



MODERATOR

N. Chineye Anako, MPH, CHES

*Vice President,
Health Equity and Human Impact
Trinity Health*

Black Men In White Coats

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MEET OUR MODERATORS & PANELISTS

BLACK WOMEN IN WHITE COATS PANEL: PANEL SPEAKERS

Shawnette Alston, MD



Dr. Shawnette Alston is the Program Director of the Internal Medicine Residency Program at Saint Mary's Hospital. She completed her undergraduate studies at New York University and earned her medical degree from Albert Einstein College of

Medicine. Following her residency in Internal Medicine, with a focus on Primary Care at Yale New Haven Hospital, Dr. Alston has dedicated her career to medical education and patient care. With a passion for mentoring future physicians, Dr. Alston leads the residency program, fostering a dynamic and supportive learning environment at Saint Mary's Hospital. She has guided many students in their various careers, sharing her insights and experiences. A dedicated community advocate, Dr. Alston enjoys participating in local events and initiatives and serving her community.

Iyanna Liles, MD



Dr. Iyanna Liles received her bachelor's degree from Duke University in 2010, earned her medical degree from Emory University in 2014 and completed her OB/GYN residency at UConn in 2018. She specializes in gynecologic care and minimally invasive surgery at Comprehensive Gynecology of CT and is an OB Hospitalist at Saint Francis Hospital and The Hospital of Central Connecticut. She is vice chair for the Connecticut American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and co-chair for the Connecticut Maternal Mortality Review Committee. She enjoys regularly advocating for patients and medicine at the state and federal levels and volunteers with her sorority Sigma Gamma Rho.

Janelle Mallett, MD, MBA

Dr. Janelle Mallett is currently an Assistant Professor of Dermatology at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. She received her bachelor's degree in biology from Harvard, her graduate medical and business degrees from UConn, and graduated from the UConn dermatology residency program. She specializes in general



medical dermatology, psoriasis, eczema, acne, hidradenitis, and alopecia. Dr. Mallett is the Director of the Skin of Color clinic. She precepts medical students and residents, serves on the Residency Selection Committee, mentors students interested in becoming dermatologists, publishes in major dermatology journals, and is a manuscript reviewer for the International Journal of Women's Dermatology.

Marcia Tejeda, MD



Dr. Marcia Tejeda, a Harlem native, earned degrees in Biology and Psychology from Boston University. She completed her medical training in New York. She began her career at Saint Mary's Hospital in Waterbury and later became a founding member of Physicians for Women's Health. The organization is now a network of over 250+ doctors across Connecticut and Massachusetts. A respected leader, she chaired Waterbury Hospital's OB/GYN Department and received recognition from the Connecticut Hospital Association. Passionate about education and advocacy, she lectures widely and supports informed health care decisions for women. She serves on several boards and advises Bridge to Success, which promotes better outcomes for Black and Brown birthers and infants. Dr. Tejeda has dedicated over 35 years to compassionate, expert care for women in the Waterbury area.



MEET OUR MODERATORS & PANELISTS

BLACK MEN IN WHITE COATS PANEL: PANEL SPEAKERS

Adebola Adeleke, DPM, FACFAS



Dr. Adebola Adeleke is a fellowship-trained, double board-certified foot and ankle surgeon specializing in both non-surgical and surgical treatment of conditions such as plantar fasciitis, tendonitis, fractures, bunions, flat foot, and diabetic foot care. He performs advanced procedures, including total ankle replacements and complex reconstructions. Born in Canada and raised in New Orleans, he earned his B.S. at the University of Jamestown and his medical degree from Des Moines University. He completed residency at The Western Pennsylvania Hospital and a prestigious fellowship in New Mexico, gaining expertise in trauma, arthroscopy, and joint replacement.

Kwame O. Asante, MD



Dr. Kwame Asante is Chairman of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Director of Mount Sinai Rehabilitation Hospital. Previously, he served as Chief of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at New England Baptist Hospital in Boston. Board-certified, Dr. Asante earned his medical degree with honors from Meharry Medical College and was inducted into Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society. He completed an internal medicine internship at the University of Chicago, dermatology training at Penn State Hershey, and a Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation residency at Temple University/Moss Rehabilitation Hospital, where he served as chief resident. Dr. Asante has been recognized by CT Magazine as a Top Doctor in Connecticut for 2024 and 2025. He currently serves as the President of the Board of Directors of Brain Injury Alliance of Connecticut.

Roy Kellerman Jr., MD

Dr. Roy Kellerman, Jr. attended Amherst College, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts, and went on to attend Howard University College of Medicine, where he graduated in 2011. He completed his Internal Medicine residency at UConn Medical Center and now serves as a Hospitalist with Trinity Health Of New England at Saint Francis Hospital and Johnson Memorial Hospital. He has received honors, including the Emerging Leader Award and Provider of the Year. Currently, he is President of the Medical Staff at Johnson Memorial. Dr. Kellerman has volunteered on medical missions to Haiti and Honduras and remains passionate about mentoring young people of color pursuing careers in medicine.



Samuel Laurencin, MD, PhD



Dr. Samuel Laurencin is a fellowship-trained orthopaedic surgeon and joint replacement specialist with Neurosurgery, Orthopaedics & Spine Specialists. Dr. Laurencin performs a specific and innovative total joint replacement, not commonly practiced, an anterior approach to hip arthroplasty, which is a highly effective and efficient procedure. He completed his orthopedic surgery residency at the University of Connecticut Health Center, serving as chief resident during his final year of training. Dr. Laurencin then completed an adult reconstruction fellowship through Harvard University, with appointment as an assistant in orthopedic surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH). The Harvard-MGH adult reconstruction fellowship is the oldest continuous arthroplasty training program in the United States.



MEET OUR MODERATORS & PANELISTS

BLACK WOMEN IN WHITE COATS PANEL AND BLACK MEN IN WHITE COATS PANEL:

MODERATOR

Kyle Jones



Kyle Jones anchors NBC Connecticut's weekend evening newscasts and reports during the week from New Haven. Born in New Haven and raised near Washington, D.C., she's thrilled to be reporting impactful local stories in Connecticut. Kyle has reported across the East Coast, including at WMDT (MD), WMTW (ME), and WJCL (GA), covering stories that sparked change—like the removal of a corrupt official and a nationally recognized piece on a woman seeking a kidney donor. Before journalism, she spent eight years in public relations. Kyle enjoys trivia nights, craft breweries, local restaurants, and Connecticut's beaches. She's a half marathon finisher and completed Maine's "Tri For a Cure" in memory of her grandmother and aunts. She is a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.



Let's Get Social



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Student Giveaway

MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN!

At the end of the summit, directly after closing remarks,
one student from each grade (3rd through college)
will be randomly selected to win one of these exciting prizes:

**APPLE IPAD 11-INCH (A16)
SILVER, 128GB, WI-FI**



**SKULLCANDY RAIL
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**SKULLCANDY RIFF WIRELESS
2 HEADPHONES, TRUE BLACK**



**SKULLCANDY TERRAIN
WIRELESS SPEAKER, NAVY**



Saint Mary's Hospital Medical Staff Proudly Supports Black Men In White Coats and their commitment to our community!



Thank you to the Saint Mary's Hospital Medical Staff for your support with the Black Men In White Coats mission! We are grateful for your commitment to providing a personalized patient experience centered around our patients.

To find an expert primary care provider near you, please schedule by calling us at 833-C-YOU-NOW (833-296-8669) or by scanning our QR code.



56 Franklin Street, Waterbury, Connecticut 06706



**We admire and congratulate,
The Staff of Saint Mary's Hospital,
Waterbury Connecticut.**

**Respectfully
Selim and Linda Noujaim**

Black Men In White Coats

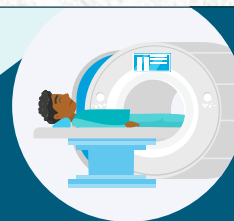
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LOCATIONS

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