ONP Summit: Achieving More Together

Speaker Bios

Amy Brown: MSN, RN, NE-BC

Amy Brown has been a registered nurse for more than 20 years and is a board-certified nurse executive. She received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Grand Valley State University and her Master of Science in Nursing from Ferris State University. Brown joined the Michigan Health & Hospital Association (MHA) in 2024 as the organization's first chief nursing officer. Prior to joining the MHA, she spent most of her career at a 500+ bed acute care Level 1 Trauma Center. Brown started her chief nursing officer career in March 2020, just a couple weeks into a global pandemic, and served in that role for more than three years. She is an authentic leader, focused on transparent, ethical behavior, leading with her head and her heart. Her role at MHA is to convene nurse leaders, seek input, disseminate best practices and drive positive change with a unified voice to influence health care transformation – ensuring the perspective and needs of nurse leaders are heard and addressed in public policy issues related to nursing and patient care.

Brown also co-leads the MHA Keystone Center providing clinical counsel for the ever-critical work of quality and safety. She serves on the board of the Michigan Organization for Nursing Leadership and has been a member of the American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL) for more than 10 years. Brown also completed AONL's Nurse Executive Fellowship in April of 2021. She currently serves on the board for Lawrence Technological University's Healthcare Violence Reduction Center and on the Advisory Board for the Gift of Life Michigan.

Wanda Chukwu: DNP, MSN, MA, CNEcl, RN

Dr. Wanda Chukwu is a dedicated registered nurse who passionately advocates for strategies to enhance nurses' well-being and foster a culture of respect for the vital work they perform in today's increasingly complex health care environment. With over three decades of professional nursing experience, Dr. Chukwu has spent the last 19 years specializing in nursing education and leadership, shaping the next generation of nursing professionals.

Born and raised in the Detroit, Dr. Chukwu is a proud graduate of the Detroit Public School System and a first-generation college student. Her impressive educational background includes an Associate Degree in Nursing, a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Organizational Management, a Master of Science in Nursing and a Doctorate in Nursing Practice.

Beyond her work in nursing education, Dr. Chukwu is deeply committed to community health. She finds her greatest fulfillment in conducting health awareness programs aimed at reducing health disparities and empowering individuals with knowledge to improve their well-being. Her extensive career includes roles as a clinical nursing director, nursing supervisor, marketing director, health care consultant for assisted living facilities and nurse educator. Dr. Chukwu's lifelong dedication to nursing, education and community engagement continues to inspire and impact the lives of many.

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Sarah Jennings: DNP, MPA, RN, NEA-BC

Sarah Jennings is the Senior Nurse Advisor in the Office of Nursing Programs, within the Policy and Planning Bureau at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. She has been a nurse for more than 25 years, working in a variety of clinical settings ranging from rural to inner city communities, office to OR, and from small community hospitals to large teaching facilities until she began teaching nursing in 2018. She received a Bachelors degree in Nursing from Bloomsburg University of PA, a Masters degree in Public Administration from Northern Michigan University, and a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from Rush University.

With nearly 20 years of bedside and supervisory experience, she brings expertise in transformational leadership and systems management. As an associate professor at Northern Michigan University, she has taught in LPN, BSN, RN-to-BSN, and DNP programs, covering topics such as nursing fundamentals, OB, pediatrics, population health and leadership. Her research focuses on diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging in health care. Sarah also actively serves on multiple committees and advocates for patients' rights, nursing education, and safe working conditions for nurses. In her role as the senior nurse advisor, Sarah applies her experience and nursing community feedback to advise on new and existing programs, develop auxiliary materials to support efforts, promote incorporation of feedback and maintain productive relationships within the nursing community and beyond.

Casey Klein, BS

Casey Klein earned her bachelor's degree in biology from Aquinas College and worked in direct care during school. Casey began working in the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Policy and Planning Bureau Healthcare Workforce Division Office of Nursing Programs (ONP) in 2022 as a Departmental Analyst and currently serves as the section manager. In this role, Casey provides administration and advisement in the development of programs that support nursing workforce development through education, licensure, and training, promote safety in practice environments to ensure safe patient care, and advance professional practice through health equity principles throughout the state. Casey also manages the office's staff and overall operations.

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Dr. Barbara R. Medvec: DNP, RN, NEA-BC

Dr. Barbara R. Medvec is a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Michigan School of Nursing and prior senior health care executive and system chief nursing executive. She has a history of success in leading and coaching teams for transformational organizational success in both large multi-hospital, ambulatory care practices and moderate sized health care and nursing organizations. Dr. Medvec received her Undergraduate BSN from the University of Michigan School of Nursing, Ann Arbor, her Master of Science in Nursing, Master of Science in Business Administration and a Doctor of Nursing Practice from Madonna University School of Nursing in Livonia, MI. Dr. Medvec serves as the Faculty Program Lead for the fully digital Masters of Science in Nursing for Leadership, Administration and Innovation (LAI) at the University, a fully digital program. Dr. Medvec's scholarship and practice focuses on nursing workforce, practice environments and innovation. She with UM colleagues led the 2020 and 2022 Study of Michigan Nurses Workforce publishing and presenting on *Patterns and correlates of nurse departures from the health care workforce: Results from a statewide survey* as well *Nurses' perceptions of licensure compact legislation to facilitate interstate practice: Results from the 2022 Michigan nurses' study* and *Registered Nurses' Well Being, Michigan 2022*.

In addition, Dr. Medvec has completed several grant funded programs to offer learning via extended and virtual reality simulation via a variety of methods. She is the co-director for an online learning course has just launched on the Coursera platform for international leaders. This three-part series is on Leadership for Healthcare Professionals. She has served on a variety of national, state, and local organizations and currently is the Secretary for the Coalition of Michigan Organizations for Nursing COMON and is the current President for the ANA-Michigan Nursing Association.

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Larissa Miller: PhD, RN

Larissa Miller is an assistant professor and coordinator of Professional Development for the College of Nursing at Michigan State University. Larissa has been a nurse educator for over 20 years, serving as a clinical hospital educator, lead professor, campus curriculum chairperson and simulation program coordinator. She is ANCC Board Certified in Nursing Professional Development and is an NLN Certified Nurse Educator. Larissa completed both her Bachelors and Masters degrees in nursing at Michigan State University, a post-master's in nursing education at Northern Michigan University and her PhD at Concordia University in Chicago with her research focusing on compassion fatigue and secondary traumatic stress in nursing. Larissa was appointed to the Michigan Board of Nursing in 2021 and currently serves on its Administrative Rules and Nursing Education subcommittees. She was appointed to the state's steering committee for Michigan Professional Nursing Development [MIPND] and also as co-chair for the Michigan Health Council/ Michigan Nursing Action Coalition and is the current Chairperson of COMON, the Coalition of Michigan Organizations of Nursing. In 2022 Larissa was named as a MSU STEAMPower Arts Fellow and continues to work to embed the arts throughout her nursing education initiatives.

Hope Mwemba: MSN-Ed, RN

Hope Mwemba has been a nurse for just over 20 years. Her experience includes medical surgical nursing, oncology, home care, allied health, transcultural nursing, health system project management and nursing education. When asked why she chose nursing, Hope notes: "Nursing is a ministry for me, to be allowed to care for someone at their most vulnerable time, is a privilege and an opportunity I don't take for granted." Hope continues to be excited about nursing, even with the trials and tribulations of the last few years. She is a staunch advocate for mentorship in nursing for both new and seasoned nurses because she has experienced firsthand how impactful a mentor can be to a new graduate. Hope is a graduate of Michigan State University, a proud "Spartan Nurse," with unequivocal "Spartan Will!"

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