

Speaker Biographies



On January 11, 2016, Governor John Bel Edwards was sworn in as the 56th Governor of Louisiana. The governor grew up in Amite, Louisiana as one of eight children who learned the importance of public service at an early age, with four Tangipahoa Parish Sheriffs in his lineage. Governor Edwards graduated in 1988 from the United States Military Academy at West Point.

The governor served eight years as an Airborne Ranger on active duty with the United States Army and commanded a rifle company in the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He went on to graduate Order of the Coif from Louisiana State University Law Center and set up a civil law practice in his home town of Amite.

In 2008, he was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives from District 72, where he served for eight years until the voters of Louisiana elected him governor in November 2015. Governor Edwards and his wife, First Lady Donna Edwards, have three children: Samantha Bel, Sarah Ellen, and John Miller.



Dr. Rebekah Gee is the Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the state's largest agency with a budget of \$14 billion. Her oversight responsibilities include public health and other direct service programs for citizens in need such as behavioral health, developmental disabilities, aging and adult services, emergency preparedness, and the Medicaid program. Under Dr. Gee's leadership, over 435,000 Louisianans are newly insured under Louisiana's Medicaid Expansion, and for the first time, many are receiving much needed primary and preventive health care.

Dr. Gee is an Obstetrician/Gynecologist and brings a caregivers' perspective to the people she serves. She is also a trained policy expert who has served in numerous state and national policy roles and in 2017 she was elected to the National Academy of Medicine. Prior to her role as Secretary, Dr. Gee served as the director for the Birth Outcomes Initiative where she led the charge to decrease infant mortality and prematurity statewide – an effort that in part led to a 25% reduction in infant mortality, an 85% drop in elective deliveries before 39 weeks and a 10% drop in NICU admissions statewide.

Dr. Gee was recently honored with an award recognizing service from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

She is the mother of five energetic children and lives in New Orleans where she continues to see patients.



Kristy Duffey, board certified geriatric nurse practitioner, is the Chief Clinical Officer of UnitedHealth Group and board member of United Health Foundation. She leads HouseCalls (HCs) and Complex Care Management (CCM) within Care Services, as the Chief Clinical Officer and recently expanded her leadership responsibilities as President, Population Health Intervention (PHIS) Services.

An accomplished clinician with a focus on the geriatric population, Kristy is a distinguished clinical leader within the UnitedHealth Group (UHG) enterprise. Kristy oversees more than 3,000 Advanced Practice Clinicians within OptumCare. Under her leadership, the Optum HouseCalls program increased the number of in-home patient visits from 263,000 in 2012 to more than one million in 2016. Kristy has been selected as the UHG clinical representative in discussions with the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC), the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), as well the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on issues relating to healthcare and Medicare offerings. Kristy's passion for the nursing profession and efforts to overcome barriers to full-practice authority are evident in her partnership with UnitedHealth Group's Center for Clinician Advancement. Kristy's respectable contribution to the Nursing industry was recognized in September, 2016 with her induction as a fellow in the American Academy of Nursing (AAN). This prestigious credential (FAAN) is an acknowledgment that Kristy's nursing career has significantly influenced health care policies and the health and well-being of all. She is living her mission of promoting holistic and patient-centered care and in doing so, is transforming the healthcare delivery system.



Dr. Blayney is a professor of Medicine at the Stanford University School of Medicine. His clinical interest is breast cancer, and his research focuses on quality improvement in cancer care systems, new drug development, improvement of the patient experience.

Dr. Blayney is past president of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), and was the founding editor-in-chief of the Journal of Oncology Practice. He was honored by the National Coalition of Cancer Survivors with the inaugural Ellen Stovall award for Innovation in Patient Centered Care and the 2018 Joseph V. Simone Award and Lecture for Excellence in Quality and Safety in the Care of Patients with Cancer by ASCO. He served on the board of directors of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network, and is a past member of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Oncology Drugs Advisory Committee. Dr. Blayney has been Medical Director at Stanford and at the University of Michigan's Comprehensive Cancer Center and was previously in community practice in southern California with Wilshire Oncology Medical

Group for seventeen years. He has authored over ninety peer reviewed publications, and co-edited one book.

Dr. Blayney was a clinical associate at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland and joined the faculty at Stanford in 2010. He lives with his wife Vicki at Stanford, and they have three grown daughters, one of whom is also a physician.



As a behavioral scientist and certified health education specialist (CHES®), Dr. Charles R. Rogers currently serves as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Family Medicine & Community Health at the University of Minnesota Medical School. He is also Program in Health Disparities Research faculty and a member of the Screening, Prevention, Etiology, & Cancer Survivorship Program of the National Cancer Institute-designated Masonic Cancer Center. Prior to his transition to faculty in April 2016, Dr. Rogers completed a 2.5-year appointment as a National Cancer Institute-funded postdoctoral fellow focused on cancer-related health disparities and community-based participatory research. Since racial inequalities in health are extensive in the U.S., Dr. Rogers is committed to serving medically underserved and minority populations. His transdisciplinary training in applied mathematics and statistics, health education, and public health administration & policy, provide a unique perspective for translating research findings into prevention methods among government agencies, policy makers, private health care organizations, and communities. As an emerging leader of the cancer health disparities workforce, Dr. Rogers has shared his knowledge across East Africa and Jamaica as well as via a number of venues including newspapers, radio stations, national conferences, minority health fairs, and television.

Dr. Rogers' research agenda contributes to translational solutions that address the complex underpinnings of inequalities in men's health, with a focus on colorectal cancer awareness and prevention among African-American men. He has also received a number of awards acknowledging his servant leadership (e.g., 100 Most Influential Black Alumni at NC State University) and has been recognized locally and nationally with scholarships and fellowships pertaining to health equity research.

