

Panelists for September 10 “Leading In a Time of Crisis”



Jacqueline Dow, DrPH, MSPH,
Planning & Partnership Director at
Cobb & Douglas Public Health

Dr. Jacqueline Dow currently serves as the Strategic Planning & Partnership Director at Cobb & Douglas Public Health. In this role, she leads the Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan process for the Cobb & Douglas County district. Dr. Dow oversees cross-sector partners for two steering committees and 12 workgroups. She also manages the Health Equity Committee and coordinates required employee trainings, program planning, and policy development.

Prior to joining Cobb & Douglas Public Health, she served as Research Scientist in the Battelle Corporation’s Public Health Research and Translational Science Resource Group. In this role, she was responsible for conducting extensive literature reviews, qualitative and quantitative data collection, and statistical analyses regarding health communication, health behavior and maternal & child health.

Prior to joining Battelle, Dr. Dow served as the Maternal Child Health Director for March of Dimes Houston. While there, she established a strategic plan for programs and activities designed to reduce the preterm birth rate in the greater Houston metro area. She also served as Program Evaluator with the United States Army Institute of Public Health. In this position, she served as the evaluation lead for multiple health education and promotion initiatives for Soldiers, Retirees, and Family Members Army-wide.

A native of Chicago, she holds a Bachelor of Applied Health Sciences from the University of Illinois, a Master of Science from Meharry Medical College, an Executive Certificate in Health Policy from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Doctor of Public Health degree from Morgan State University. Her dissertation research is entitled, “Maternal Body Mass Index Prior to Pregnancy and Risk of Preterm Birth among African American women of Reproductive Age.”



Nicole Lawson,
Northwest Regional Director, United Way of Greater
Atlanta

In her role as a regional director for United Way of Greater Atlanta, Nicole leads the planning and implementation of the Child Well-Being agenda to address and drive local priorities and drive improvement in the index through engaging, connecting, convening, and aligning stakeholders and resources.

She is responsible for expanding the donor base and growing revenue through annual fund development by supervising local development staff operations.

Prior to joining United Way in September, 2019, Nicole worked with the YMCA of Greater Atlanta for over 14 years. As the Associate Executive Director of the Alpharetta location, she managed the day to day operations of the full facility branch serving 3,700 member units including the oversight of after school, membership, wellness, sports, aquatics, and day camp departments, as well as facility and property management.

Nicole is a graduate of Kennesaw State University where she majored in Nonprofit Management. Additionally, she holds a Masters in Public Administration from KSU. She resides in Cherokee County with her family.



Mitch Rhoden, President and
CEO of Futren Hospitality

Stephen M. Rhoden (Mitch) is the President and CEO of Futren Hospitality. In this role, he is responsible for the management and ongoing operations for Futren Hospitality, several private clubs, as well as other corporate interests. From 1997 until May 2001, Mitch was an Engineer Officer in the United States Marine Corps. He holds a B.A. in Business Administration from the University of Mississippi and an M.B.A. from Kennesaw State University. Mitch is a licensed Georgia real estate broker.

Mitch served as the 2019 Chairman of the Cobb Chamber of Commerce and is also active with the Atlanta Area Council for the Boy Scouts of America and Shepherd's Men, a local non-profit which provides financial assistance to the SHARE Military

Initiative for post 911 Veterans suffering from PTSD and TBI. Mitch is the past President of the Rotary Club of Marietta, past Chair of Leadership Cobb, and served on the Board of MUST Ministries. He previously served as the Cubmaster for Cub Scout Pack 83, Marietta GA.

Mitch and his family are members of Trinity Presbyterian Church. He is married to Lane Rhoden, of Tallahassee, Florida. Mitch and Lane have 3 sons and live in Marietta, GA.



Representative Mary Frances Williams,
Georgia House District 37

Born and raised in the heart of Marietta, Rep. Mary Frances attended Marietta City Schools and graduated from Marietta High School.

Her passion for advocacy and public service were instilled at an early age by her late father, L. Howard “Red” Atherton, who owned Atherton's Drug Store on the Square, and served as mayor of Marietta and later as a state representative in the 1960s. She is a lifelong member of the First United Methodist Church of Marietta.

Prior to her election in 2018 as the Representative for Georgia House District 37,. Mary Frances spent 34 years as a public policy advocate for nonprofits serving women, children and families. As an advocate, she helped restore millions of dollars to state school nutrition programs and successfully fought for passage of the Family Care Act, which allows Georgians to use sick leave to care for ailing family members.

Rep. Mary Frances has received numerous awards for her work, including the Annette Bowling Advocate of the Year Award in 2017 from Easter Seals of Southern Georgia, the Carolyn Wetzel Advocacy Award in 2009 from Health Mothers, Healthy Babies of Georgia, and the Maternal and Child Health Community Service Award in 2004 from the Georgia Public Health Association. She is a member of the Leadership Georgia, class of 1993 and the Leadership Cobb, class of 1989.