

## COHORT 15

**Rosemarie Almonte, RN, PMP, CPHIMS**

**Principal**

**Clinical Quality and Informatics**

**The MITRE Corporation**

**McLean, VA**

Rose is a Public Health/Healthcare Principal with the Clinical Informatics Group at the MITRE Corporation. With a background in clinical nursing and health information technology, Rose has served in roles to manage and support the balanced use of technology to support patient care and health care quality. Rose is registered nurse who started her career in acute and critical care nursing. After graduate study in nursing informatics, Rose spent fifteen years cultivating expertise and leadership in workflow analysis, change management, EHR implementation, and administration to support clinical quality and process improvement initiatives. Rose gained this experience in private and military health care settings, and in her work with federal health agencies. In her current role, Rose applies her knowledge and expertise to support the organization's objective to implement innovative ideas to solve our nation's toughest health problems. She is supporting the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services in their initiative to reduce the burden associated with the development, implementation, and reporting of electronic clinical quality measures.

Rose received her BSN with a Minor in Health Care Management from the University of Pennsylvania and her MSN Informatics from the University of Maryland at Baltimore. Rose and her husband live in Leesburg, Virginia with their three teenage daughters. The family enjoys spending time with extended family and friends; travelling; and cheering the girls on at their various sporting games and school performances.

**Malaika Brewer, MA**

**Director, Office of Health Equity Promotion**

**Columbus Public Health**

**Columbus, OH**

Malaika is the Director of the Office of Health Equity Promotion, at Columbus Public Health (CPH). She has over 15 years of experience working in the public health field and has extensive knowledge in program development and management. She has led implementation of the Department's Health Equity Plan since it was first approved by the CPH Board of Health in 2013. Across the years, she gained valuable experience on how to initiate programing and training that supports staff in identifying opportunities to address social determinants of health through advocacy and public policy. She has acquired extensive experience in effectively institutionalizing processes that address health inequities in the communities served; working to create systems to monitor and report how programs are doing in addressing health equity related objectives; and training a large workforce on the role and importance of cultural competence in engaging with the community and communicating public health messages.

An Ohio native, Malaika has ties to North Carolina as well, and she earned her BA and MA in Sociology at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She and her husband Scott live in Lewis Center, Ohio, along with their three children, Aaron, Alysa, and Riley. She values her faith deeply, and in her free time, she enjoys working out, running races (especially alongside her daughter), attending her son's taekwondo classes, and attending group workout classes. She and her husband also like to take in new restaurants and try out different cuisines when they have a night to themselves.

**Karla Buru, MPH, MSW, PMP**  
**Director, Project Management Office**  
**South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control**  
**Columbia, SC**

Karla is the Director of the Enterprise Project Management Office at the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. After serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Romania for 27 months, Karla returned to the University of South Carolina to complete her Master in Social Work and Master in Public Health degrees. During that time, she received a Fulbright grant to return to Romania to conduct research on cross-cultural collaborations. She has worked in Quality Improvement at the University of South Carolina Student Health Services and the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). Karla has a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt and has completed the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) Breakthrough Series College. In her current role, she helps manage the Agency's strategic priority projects, such as pursuing national Public Health Accreditation and procuring and implementing a state-wide electronic health record system. Karla is a certified ScrumMaster and a certified Project Management Professional.

Karla lives in Columbia, SC with her husband and two children. She enjoys traveling, especially going back to Romania as often as possible.

**John D. Catalano, MPA**  
**President, Catalano Consulting**  
**Professor of Healthcare Management, Molloy College**  
**Locust Valley, NY**

John is the president of Catalano Consulting, a healthcare and educational consulting organization based in New York. He has spent the past 30-years as a healthcare executive, consultant, professor and trustee. John began his healthcare career at Hospital for Joint Diseases Orthopaedic Institute and progressed to increasingly senior positions within the hospital industry. He then became a senior executive within the health insurance industry at US Healthcare and Aetna, ultimately presiding over Aetna's largest US market serving over 1 million members. During this period, he held a faculty appointment at the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at NYU as an Adjunct Assistant Professor. John was later recruited to establish an Office of Managed Care for NYU Health System. As Senior Vice President he oversaw contracting initiatives for all NYU Health System hospitals and physician practices. While at NYU he held a faculty appointment as Vice Dean for the NYU School of Medicine. After leaving NYU, he established Catalano Consulting and recently received a faculty appointment as Professor of Healthcare Management at Molloy College.

An active member of the community, John proudly serves on the Board of Directors at NYU Winthrop Hospital, a 591-bed academic medical center, where he is a member of the Finance Committee, Medical Education and Research Committee as well as the Audit and Corporate Compliance Committee. He also serves on the Advisory Board of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, a world-class research institution located in Cold Spring Harbor, NY. His previous Board appointments include South Nassau Communities Hospital, Make-a-Wish of Metro New York, Grenville Baker Boys and Girls Club and The Heart Council of Long Island.

John received his MPA from New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service with a dual concentration in Healthcare Financial Management and Healthcare Management. He graduated first in his class and earned the prestigious Lepesqueur Award for highest academic standing.

John and his wife, Nancy, have 2 sons who each plan to pursue their own doctoral degrees; one in Medicine and the other in Education.

**Robert (Marty) Cooney MPH, ME, BSN, RN, CIC**

**Infection Control Officer**

**UNC REX Healthcare**

**Raleigh, NC.**

Marty is an Infection Preventionist and the Infection Control Officer for UNC REX Healthcare in Raleigh, North Carolina. He has served on the Board of Directors for the North Carolina Association for Professionals in Infection Control, where he was awarded the 2018 APIC Practitioner of the Year. He currently serves as a Director on the international Certification Board of Infection Control and Epidemiology (CBIC).

Marty has published research to help prevent healthcare associated infections with the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA) and the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC). He has served as a keynote speaker for The North Carolina Academy of Medical Surgical Nurses, The North Carolina American Association of Critical Care Nursing, and at various scientific conferences providing subject matter expertise in infection prevention and control.

Marty received his Master's in Public Health from the University of New England, a business Masters in Entrepreneurship from Western Carolina University, and his Bachelors in Nursing from the University of Central Florida. He is a Registered Nurse and board certified in Infection Prevention and Control. Marty is passionate about public health and preventing adverse health outcomes. He enjoys taking trips with his family, playing guitar and piano, and snorkeling over coral reefs and shipwrecks.

**Emilee Coulter-Thompson, LMSW**

**Department Strategist, Department of Learning Health Sciences**

**University of Michigan Medical School**

**Ann Arbor, MI**

Emilee is the Department Strategist for the University of Michigan Medical School's Department of Learning Health Sciences, a basic science department focused on revolutionizing learning and transforming health. She has promoted health equity and advocated for underrepresented populations in community settings, state government public health and academic medicine for more than two decades. In her current role she oversees strategy, communications and development and coordinates learning health system initiatives, including a local learning community to increase survival from out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. Emilee previously served as deputy to the director of the Oregon Health Authority Transformation Center, the hub of innovation and quality improvement for Oregon's health system transformation, where she led learning collaboratives with Medicaid Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs), Medicaid Community Advisory Council members, clinicians, payers and health equity leaders. She also designed and directed an interprofessional leadership development program, the Oregon Clinical Innovation Fellows program. With the State of Oregon from 2006-2016, she worked to improve the public's health in various areas, including women's health, violence prevention, family planning, HIV, and performance management.

A social worker and yoga teacher by training, during the first half of her career Emilee advocated for survivors of sexual and domestic violence with state and local nonprofit organizations in Ohio, Michigan and Oregon. She co-wrote and facilitated provider trainings and contributed to state and national publications on sexual violence prevention and sexual health promotion. She completed her BA in

Psychology and Women's Studies at Miami University (Oxford, Ohio), MSW from the University of Michigan and 200-hour yoga teacher training at Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health. Emilee enjoys dancing, year-round bike commuting (even in Michigan) and visiting the Oregon coast with her wife and two young children.

**Julie Farmer, MHA, CSSBB**  
**Associate Chair for Urology**  
**Associate Chief for Administration**  
**Division of Hematology-Oncology**  
**Department of Medicine**  
**University of North Carolina**  
**Chapel Hill, NC**

Julie currently serves as the Associate Chief for Administration of Hematology-Oncology at the University of Chapel Hill and is soon to assume the role as Associate Chair for Urology. In her Hematology-Oncology role, she is the administrative partner to the Division Chief; together the Division Chief and Associate Chief are responsible for the strategic, financial, and operational management of a Division that is home to more than 55 faculty members and 30 advanced practice providers. Responsibilities cross all missions: patient care, research, and education. The division is primarily based at the Chapel Hill medical center, but faculty and adjunct faculty are also at multiple UNC Health Care hospitals across the state.

Prior to joining Hematology-Oncology, Julie served as Business Manager for the Neurosciences Service Line. There, she was instrumental in integrating Neurosurgery, Neurology, Neurophysiology, and Spine for both Adult and Pediatric populations. Julie has over 15 years of leadership experience in the healthcare setting, providing strategic, financial, and operational direction, in an academic medical center. Julie's known for her interpersonal style. She is amiable and calm even under the greatest of pressures. Her trademark laugh is contagious and lightens the mood of challenging conversations. She has led efforts in diversity and inclusivity by using her calm and persuasive manner, and tremendous social capital with colleagues.

Julie holds a bachelor's degree in Graphic Design from the NC State – College of Design. She completed her MHA from the Seton Hall University. Julie and her husband Franklin, live in Chapel Hill, NC and have 3 children – Landan (15), Brennen (9) and Emerson (2). Julie enjoys the outdoors, hot yoga, happy hour, and generally spending quality time with her husband, children and friends---taking in all the Chapel Hill area has to offer.

**David Joyce, JD**  
**Narcotics Chief**  
**Assistant United States Attorney**  
**Portland, ME**

David Joyce is the narcotics chief at the United States Attorney's Office in Portland, Maine. He is responsible for investigating and prosecuting federal criminal offenses with particular emphasis on fentanyl trafficking and overdose deaths. He serves as the opioid and anti-gang coordinator within the USAO. David's work also includes prosecution of violent crimes and firearm offenses. David joined the Department of Justice (DOJ) in 2005 through the Attorney General's Honors Program. He served three years in the Environmental Crimes Section in Washington, D.C., before returning home to Maine in 2008. Prior to joining DOJ, David served as a law clerk for United States District Judge Gene Carter.

David received his BA from Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts. He earned a MA in Marine Affairs and Policy and a JD from the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. A New England native, David enjoys all things outdoors with particular passions for sailing and hiking.

**Thea Runyan, MPH**

**Co-Founder and Head of Science and Programs**

**Kurbo Inc.**

**San Francisco, CA**

Thea is the co-founder of Kurbo, a scalable, evidence-based digital health solution for childhood obesity. She has worked in public health for over 15 years, with a focus on childhood obesity and community health education. Thea relied on her 15 years of experience working with hundreds of children, teens and parents at the Pediatric Weight Control Program at Stanford Children's Hospital to design and build a 3-month behavior modification program that incorporates a mobile app, food and exercise tracking, and online video coaching sessions. Kurbo has been recognized by the NIH as one of the only health apps that includes all 8 evidenced-based strategies for weight management.

Thea's current role is to manage the day-to-day operations of Kurbo. She oversees all product development and customer support for Kurbo's tens of thousands of international customers, including government agencies and insurance companies. She is also responsible for the coaching team that supports Kurbo's staff of over 100 coaches currently based in the US and Singapore. Just prior to starting Kurbo, Thea served as Wellness Director for a San Francisco Bay Area school district where she and her team worked closely with administrators, teachers, parents and students to develop and implement cost-effective sustainable programs that addressed the priority health and wellness needs of the entire community.

Thea completed her MPH degree from San Jose State University and her BA from UC Berkeley. She was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area and, after a short time in NYC, she returned to the Bay Area to live with her husband and raise their 3 daughters, now teenagers. Thea loves teaching yoga, running, hanging out with her girls or hiking with her husband near Lake Tahoe when she isn't reading or working.

**Nick Schaad, MPH**

**Epidemiology, Informatics, Surveillance and Laboratory Branch**

**Division of Global Health Protection, Center for Global Health**

**Centers for Disease Control and Protection**

**Atlanta, Georgia**

Nick is currently an epidemiologist in the Epidemiology, Informatics, Surveillance and Laboratory Branch (EISLB) within the Division of Global Health Protection (DGHP) in the Center for Global Health (CGH) at CDC. He has a well-established record of service in global health. He has lived and worked in 4 continents and completed over 50 international temporary duty assignments (TDYs) with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

In his current role, he provides technical assistance in the realms of surveillance and epidemiologic studies to CDC Country Offices and host-country governments around the globe. Since he joined EISLB, a large portion of his work has focused on the implementation of acute febrile illness (AFI) surveillance. From May-July, 2017, he served as the Team Lead for the International Task Force in the Emergency Operations Center for the CDC Zika response. Most recently, he was in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a part of the response to the Ebola outbreak that has been ongoing since August 2018.

Immediately prior to joining EISLB, he was the Surveillance Team Lead for CDC Mozambique, a position which he held for two years. He was responsible for overseeing all survey and disease surveillance activities funded through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). He worked closely with governmental and non-governmental partners, to carry out a wide array of activities, ranging from the design of national disease surveillance systems, the implementation of large, nationally representative population-based surveys and outbreak investigations. Earlier on in his CDC career, he spent four years working in Haiti, providing technical assistance to the Haitian Ministry of Public Health and Population, particularly with regards to strengthening national disease surveillance systems in the wake of the 2010 earthquake and 2010 cholera epidemic. Over the years, his work with CDC has also taken him to, Cambodia, Egypt, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Thailand as well as Guinea, in support of the public health response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

He holds a MPH from Emory University with a concentration in Global Health and a certificate in Complex Humanitarian Emergencies. He also graduated from the University of Miami with a BA in International Studies and Anthropology. He grew up in several African countries and speaks fluent French, Spanish and Portuguese. He is happily married to a North Carolina native with whom he is raising two-year-old twins.

**John Strapp, MBA**  
**Managing Director**  
**The Kinetix Group**  
**Cranbury, NJ**

John is the managing director of The Kinetix Group, a healthcare consultancy. He is responsible for developing strategies to reshape healthcare delivery, drawing on over fifteen years of experience in healthcare innovation. John helps align the Kinetix strategic problem-solving approach to the pillars of the Quadruple Aim: Improve Population Health, Enhance Patient Experience, Reduce Costs, and Improve Work Life for Providers. His specific areas of expertise include clinical redesign, population health management, transitions of care, and alternative payment models.

John has applied his healthcare expertise to help lead a number of key initiatives. He has developed many resources and programs that address gaps in patient care, particularly care coordination and patient-centricity throughout the care continuum. Additionally, John leads numerous collaborations among key healthcare stakeholders with a consistent emphasis on improved patient care. Finally, he analyzes the various aspects of the changing healthcare landscape, including new legislation, alternative care models, and emerging health information technology.

John has an MBA from the New York University Stern School of Business. He lives in Cranbury, New Jersey with his wife and two daughters. When he isn't spending quality time with the family, John enjoys virtually all outdoor activities.

**Kelcey Stricker, MS**  
**Environmental Director**  
**Pechanga Tribal Government**  
**Temecula, CA**

Kelcey has served as the environmental director for the Pechanga Tribal Government since 2013. On behalf of the tribe, she manages and directs programs on air quality, water quality, hazardous and solid waste, natural resources, and federal and tribal compliance for the Pechanga Reservation. She has been

working as an environmental scientist in southern California for the past 15 years. Her interests in public health started with her involvement in opposing the proposed Liberty Quarry in her town, Temecula in 2005. Over the course of 7 years, she worked with grassroots organizations, San Diego State University, the City of Temecula, and the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians in opposition to a project that would have had a significant negative impact on air quality and quality of life in the Temecula Valley. Ultimately, Pechanga struck a deal with the mining company, shutting down the project and protecting their sacred mountain. In addition, she's spent the last 10 years working on research related to wildland firefighter health and safety, first with San Diego State University and now with Cal State San Marcos through their Wildfire Research Institute. Kelcey loves sharing her passion for environmental health and its connection to human health and well-being.

Kelcey has a BS in Biology, with an emphasis in Marine Biology from San Diego State University and an MS in Biology from California State University San Marcos. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her husband and daughter, hiking, traveling, and reading. She also volunteers and sits on the boards of a few local organizations including the Temecula Valley Museum and the Temecula Valley Conservatory for the Arts.

**Jamine (Jami) Weiss, MPH**  
**Epidemiologist**  
**Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion**  
**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  
**Atlanta, Georgia**

Jami currently works as an epidemiologist on the International Infection Control Program in the Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion (DHQP) at CDC. In this role she assists ministries of health establish national infection prevention and control (IPC) programs and implement healthcare-associated infection and antimicrobial resistance surveillance systems, primarily in Sierra Leone, Georgia and Cambodia. In addition to country implementation activities, Jami also supports cross cutting projects such as investigating neonatal IPC risk factors and responding to public health emergencies including Ebola and natural disasters. Before joining DHQP, Jami was a Health Scientist in the Division of Viral Hepatitis where she was responsible for coordinating viral hepatitis trainings in Egypt and assisting Georgia's Hepatitis C Elimination program.

Prior to joining CDC, Jami spent seven years working abroad in South Africa, India and South Sudan. In 2007, Jami joined the Peace Corps in South Africa as a community health volunteer providing assistance to home-based care organizations serving people affected by HIV/AIDS. After completing the Peace Corps, Jami moved to New Delhi where she worked primarily with John Snow Inc. to support PEPFAR projects aimed at the most at risk populations for acquiring HIV. In 2011, Jami joined The Carter Center as a Technical Advisor to the South Sudan Guinea Worm Eradication Program. During this time she manually winched Land Cruisers out of the mud, rode motorbikes through the bush, and waded through swamps all in the name of Guinea worm eradication.

Jami received her BS in Cognitive Studies and Child Development from Vanderbilt University and her MPH from Emory University. She resides in Atlanta, GA with her husband and two children.