

# **Then and Now: The Importance of Historically-Informed Approaches to Addressing Racial Health Inequities in Responding to COVID-19**

**April 9, 2021**

**Session 1**

## **Panelist/Moderator Bios**

### **Andrea Thoumi**

Health Equity Policy Fellow  
Duke-Margolis Center for Health Policy

Andrea Thoumi, MPP, MSc, serves as Health Equity Policy Fellow at Duke-Margolis. In this capacity, she advances the Center's aim to enhance policy analysis, research, and education in health equity, anti-racism, and health disparities through collaborations with faculty and the Center's education and research teams. Her research interests include addressing structural policies, systemic barriers, and social determinants of health that create health inequities among the Latino or Latinx community in the US and among women in accessing reproductive health prevention, screening, and treatment globally. She also serves as a course instructor on Bass Connections courses and is a research collaborator with LATIN-19, RADx-UP, and Women-Inspired Strategies for Healthcare.

Prior to joining Duke-Margolis, she was a Research Associate at the Brookings Institution and Senior Analyst at Pricewaterhouse Coopers. She has consulted for the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization, and the World Bank. She holds a MSc in Health Policy, Planning, and Financing from the London School of Economics and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, a Master in Public Policy from the McCourt School of Public Policy, Georgetown University, and a BA in Community Health and International Relations from Tufts University.

### **Lavanya Vasudevan**

Assistant Professor Department of Family Medicine and Community Health  
Global Health Institute at Duke University

Lavanya Vasudevan, PhD, MPH, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health and the Global Health Institute at Duke University. She is also a member of the Duke Human Vaccine Institute and a faculty affiliate with the Center for Health Policy and Inequalities Research and the Center for Policy Impact in Global Health. Her research focuses on studying the timeliness of vaccinations, identifying vaccination barriers, and understanding the role of misinformation in driving vaccine hesitancy. In addition, she works on developing and evaluating novel interventions, including those that leverage digital health technologies, for

health information or service delivery. In her research, Dr. Vasudevan seeks to study and alleviate the complex challenges with vaccination delivery and uptake in low resource settings and in populations experiencing health disparities. In the context of these challenges, Dr. Vasudevan is interested in the use of multidisciplinary collaborations, mixed methods and implementation science frameworks. Dr. Vasudevan has led or collaborated on studies funded by the National Institutes for Health, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Dr. Vasudevan is a recipient of the Duke Clinical and Translational Sciences KL2 Research and Career Development Award. She has received several honors including induction in the Delta Omega Honor Society in Public Health and the Triangle Global Health Consortium's Ward Cates Emerging Leader in Global Health award. Dr. Vasudevan completed her doctoral training in molecular biology and genetics at Cornell University and received her Master's degree in public health from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Dr. Vasudevan is Certified in Public Health by the National Board of Public Health Examiners.

### **Viviana Martinez-Bianchi**

Associate Professor and Director of Health Equity in Family Medicine and Community Health  
Duke University School of Medicine

Dr. Martinez-Bianchi, MD, is Associate Professor and Director of Health Equity in Family Medicine and Community Health at Duke University School of Medicine. She received her medical training at the National University of Rosario Faculty of Medicine in Argentina and trained in family medicine at the University of Iowa. At Duke, she served the Family Medicine Residency Program for 14 years, first as associate program director and then as program director. Clinically, Dr. Martinez-Bianchi practices the full spectrum of ambulatory family medicine and has special interests in women's health, dermatology, urology and mental health. She is passionate about addressing social determinants of health, population health, health disparities, caring for underserved populations, LGBT, immigrant, migrant, and trans-national communities.

Locally, Dr. Martinez-Bianchi has collaborated on various initiatives to improve health equity in Durham and across the state of North Carolina, most recently in response to COVID-19. Martinez-Bianchi is a founding member and co-director of LATIN-19 (Latinx Advocacy Team and Interdisciplinary Network for COVID-19), together with Duke pediatrician Gabriela Maradiaga Panayotti, M.D. Created in March 2020 to advocate and bring awareness of the needs of the LatinX community in North Carolina during the COVID-19 crisis, LATIN-19's work has led to multiple [media segments](#) in Spanish, PSAs and improved Spanish messaging from local public health departments and government, and most importantly, the creation of a broad coalition to improve health.

Martinez-Bianchi also serves on the North Carolina DHHS Task Force on Historically Marginalized Populations, the Durham Recovery and Renewal Task Force's Immigrant and Refugee Roundtable, and the Durham Health Department's Latino Health Roundtable. She has

served as a member of the Inclusion Council in the Duke University School of Medicine Office of Diversity & Inclusion for many years, and served on Duke's Academic Council Steering Committee Taskforce on Diversity from 2014 to 2015.

Globally, Martinez-Bianchi has been active in the [World Organization of Family Doctors \(WONCA\)](#) for several years. She served as a member of the organization's Organizational Equity Committee before being elected to the WONCA Executive Committee as a member at large in 2016, and re-elected in 2018. She was also named as a WONCA liaison to the World Health Organization, a role she has held since 2016. Later this year, Martinez-Bianchi will run for WONCA President. Nationally, she chaired the health equity team for [Family Medicine for America's Health, addressing family medicine's capacity](#) to improve health equity through collaboration, accountability and coalition-building.

**Elaine Nguyen – Session Moderator**

Student

Duke University School of Law

Elaine Nguyen is a third-year law student at Duke Law. Prior to law school, she worked in neuroscience research at Boston Children's Hospital. After graduation she will be clerking at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

**Josee Li – Session Moderator**

Student, Duke University

Co-President, Student Collaborative on Health Policy (SCOHP)

Josee Li is a Public Policy major Undergraduate Student, a 1st Year Scholar, and an aspiring physician. Li is also the co-president of Duke's Student Collaborative on Health Policy (SCOHP).

"Being involved in the Margolis Scholars Program has provided me the tools and networking needed to pursue my individual research ideas regarding accessibility to healthcare and community resources."