



NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE Month

The campuses of Rowan University are located on the occupied traditional lands of the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation, and we acknowledge the history of colonization, resistance, and endurance of the living and present Indigenous peoples of this region.

In Spring 2022, the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) co-sponsored a workshop on Land Acknowledgments for Rowan community members. During the event, we received vital feedback on our former statement from several citizens of the Nation. In listening to the important feedback we received, we have committed to revising our Land Acknowledgment in the coming year in collaboration with local Indigenous students, staff, faculty, and community members.

While we revisit our Land Acknowledgment, we recognize and honor the words and spirit of the [Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation's standard land acknowledgment](#). We pledge to continue our learning and dedication to sustaining a relationship of mutuality and respect with the Indigenous people we serve and on whose land we live and work.

🔍 [HTTPS://SITES.ROWAN.EDU/DIVERSITY-EQUITY-INCLUSION/LAND-ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.HTML](https://sites.rowan.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion/land-acknowledgement.html)
[NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY](#)
[NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH](#)

NATIVE AMERICANS'

CONTRIBUTION TO MEDICINE



"Native Americans chewed willow bark (shown above) to soothe aches and pains. The active ingredient in the bark is salicin, a chemical that in 1897 formed the basis of the discovery of aspirin, the most commonly used drug in the world. (Salicin is also a precursor to salicylic acid, the active ingredient in many over-the-counter acne treatments and dandruff-fighting shampoos.)"

"In one example from the 1980s, a pediatrician from India conducted research with the White Mountain Apache Tribe that showed oral rehydration treatments prevented diarrhea-related deaths in children, according to Hopkins Bloomberg Public Health Magazine. The landmark research and subsequent studies led to the creation of Pedialyte, a popular treatment for diarrhea."



"More recently, scientists developed the three U.S. COVID-19 vaccines with participation from indigenous communities in clinical trials, said Wilson. To help end the pandemic, the U.S. is donating millions of doses of these vaccines to other countries."

SOURCE: NATIVE AMERICANS' MANY CONTRIBUTIONS TO MEDICINE

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT



Cooper
University Health Care

73 Questions with Dr. Justin Schweitzer

[WATCH HERE!](#)

Justin Schweitzer, DO ('08) is a family medicine physician with Cooper University Healthcare and serves as Medical Director of the Center for LGBTQ+ Health and Primary Care at Cooper Care Alliance in Cherry Hill, NJ. Dr. Schweitzer is a New Jersey native, growing up in Wood-Ridge, NJ. He completed his undergraduate studies at The College of New Jersey before enrolling at SOM. Dr. Schweitzer provides comprehensive care for all patients but places a special focus on addressing the unique healthcare needs of LGBTQ+ identifying patients in South Jersey. When he is not working, Dr. Schweitzer enjoys spending time with his husband and retired greyhounds as well as traveling, cooking foods from the local Farmer's Market, and practicing yoga.

DOCUMENTARY REVIEW: AFTERSHOCK

Aftershock is a documentary that centers its focus on the maternal health crisis in the United States. In the film, we are introduced to Omari Maynard and Bruce McIntyre who lost the mother of their children due to preventable complications following childbirth. Omari and Bruce utilize their grief to become activists fighting for systematic change and medical accountability in order to seek justice for Shamony Gibson and Amber Rose Isaac. There are two words highlighted in the film that stood out to me, preventable and epidemic. Epidemic and preventable capture the maternal health crisis perfectly since U.S. women have the highest rate of avoidable deaths, according to a study done by the Commonwealth Fund. As medical students, we learn to listen to our patients, be empathetic, and advocate for our community and our patients. However, Aftershock emphasizes that in a clinical setting, attentiveness, empathy, and advocacy are not offered to every demographic. This film provides us with an opportunity to actually see the impact systemic racism is having on families. I believe that every person regardless of their background should watch this documentary as it sheds light on a topic that is known, but not talked about. We need to continue talking about Black maternal mortality and sharing the stories of Shamony Gibson and Amber Rose Isaac because how many mothers, wives, and daughters have to lose their life before change is implemented?

-Nayarith Lopez

Aftershock a documentary released by Hulu covers the issue of maternal mortality in the U.S. The mother of Shamony Gibson describes the loss of a Black mother, "like a tsunami, the death comes as an earthquake but there is a ripple effect leading to the aftershock." As a current medical student and native of Brooklyn, NY it was heartbreaking to learn that 80% of pregnancy-related deaths in NYC are accounted for by women of color continued as it was noted that 60% of Black birthing mortality was preventable. As a Black man, a son of a Black woman, I couldn't bear to imagine the pain felt by the Black men in the documentary who will never see their significant others again, the children who will never get the experience of a mother's warm embrace. My heart mourns for these families, but as a future physician, and a member of the Black community it is time to take a stand and raise awareness. Maternal mortality is on the rise in the U.S and its association with Black women indicates a systemic issue of negligence involving Black mothers. To effectively eradicate the issue of systemic negligence towards minority women in our healthcare system we must expose the deep-rooted foundation of racism within our healthcare system. A healthcare system that was not originally designed for the benefit of Black people. Thankfully enough the notion of racism is on the decline in this country but unfortunately when something is ingrained in a system eradication is not as simple.

Although the individuals within the system may not be racist this does not stop the system itself from being racist. Women of color should not be assumed to have a higher pain tolerance simply because of their skin color, and access to efficient healthcare, especially involving the birth of a child should not be limited by financial barriers. U.S hospital systems should model their reconstruction of obstetric delivery rooms to that of birthing centers, typically run by midwives and nurses. After all, this is how deliveries were conducted before the development of the OB/GYN doctor.

Implementing these practices while maintaining the resources available within hospitals will significantly decrease the birthing mortality of Black mothers.

-Adedoyin Akingbade



WHEN A BLACK MOTHER DIES,

THERE IS A RIPPLE EFFECT

DOCUMENTARY REVIEW: AFTERSHOCK

Aftershock is an eye-opening documentary describing the plight of black women in America undergoing childbirth. Black women are four times more likely than their white counterparts to die during pregnancy and/or childbirth. It follows multiple black families with a primary focus on two black women in New York- Shimony and Amber- as well as their newly widowed partners. The film opens with a video recording of Shimony at a celebration of life ceremony attended by family and friends. Shimony speaks excitedly about her birthing plans and meeting her son. Unfortunately, shortly after her C-section birth Shimony has progressive shortness of breath. Her husband Omari reaches out to hospital physicians, but Shimony's symptoms are dismissed by hospital doctors. After 2 weeks of worsening weakness and shortness of breath, Shimony passes away at a poorly-funded hospital from a pulmonary embolism, which could have been prevented with early intervention. The film segues to another couple in the Bronx, Bruce and Amber. Pregnant mother Amber starts to experience persistent headaches in her second and third trimesters. Again, doctors dismissed her headaches as pregnancy-related symptoms. The couple end up hiring a doula, who, after reviewing Amber's labwork from various prenatal visits, notices that Amber's platelets have been steadily decreasing. It was only after Amber made a Twitter post threatening to expose the hospital for her poor care that she was diagnosed with HELLP syndrome, a life-threatening condition. And as with the previous couple, Amber is admitted to the hospital to get a C-section. Her husband reports that resident physicians were performing the operation and the attending left the room. Amber passed away from complications of severe thrombocytopenia and the C-section. The unexpected passing of these two women strikes a cord, especially when you hear how their husbands describe pleading with doctors for help throughout the pregnancies. The grief that both families experience spur them to start and strengthen reproductive justice activism.

Bruce and Omari start a support group for black fathers who have lost their partners during childbirth to share their grief and lean on each other. Shimony's mother begins to scale up her reproductive justice work, reaching out to local news and politicians about disparities for pregnant black women. The documentary subsequently focuses on these disparities across the country. A Harvard physician notes that C-sections have increased 500% since the 1970s, with black pregnancy mortality rates more than doubling over the past few decades. It also delves into the history of Black women in gynecology. It discusses the abuse that enslaved black women endured at the hands of white male gynecologists in order for the specialty to advance. It also briefly reviews the history of midwifery, which began as an independent, female-dominated profession. However, with the rise of male gynecologists, the profession has been sidelined in favor of hospital births. Similarly, Black midwives are often seen as more supportive, educational, and in-line with black mothers' birth plan goals, but there is a dearth in the number of black midwives. The film follows a black couple in Oklahoma who opts for a black midwife and a birthing center over a hospital delivery and documents their positive experience. The segment ends with Bruce and a black midwife scoping an area in the Bronx to open a new birthing center for the community. The film circles back to the activism work by Omari, Bruce, and Shimony's mother. They attend speaking engagements, coordinate public speaking events, and coordinate outreach to other families and widowed fathers that have been failed by the American hospital system. The film ends with Shimony's mother saying a prayer for her deceased daughter. The documentary provides a very raw view of the systemic racism that black mothers face. It does not mince words about the disparities that black women face, and it calls out hospitals, doctors, and politicians for allowing this epidemic to continue. I believe it does an excellent job of explaining the disparities, and should serve as an educational piece for medical students interested in women's health or pursuing the field of OB-Gyn.

-Rasheda Boachie

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [AFTERSHOCK DOCUMENTARY](#)



Aftershock

Join Us For A

PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE MATERNAL MORTALITY CRISIS

Sponsored by the Office of DEI, Student National Medical Association, American Medical Women's Association, Medical Students for Choice, OB/GYN Society, Rowan OB/GYN Dept, and The Wellness Center of Rowan University

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21 FROM 6-8PM

Participants are encouraged to view the documentary, Aftershock, streaming on Hulu prior to the event.

Webex Link: <https://rowan.webex.com/meet/thomps94>

AFTERSHOCK PANELISTS



Dr. Dana M. Iglesias is the Medical Director of the Chatham Hospital Maternity Care Center and Assistant Professor in the Department of Family Medicine at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine. She attends the Family Medicine maternal and child health services and provides full-scope outpatient care.

Dr. Iglesias completed a fellowship in family practice surgical obstetrics at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center and received a Master's in Public Health from the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health. Since finishing residency training, she has been committed to providing full-spectrum family medicine and maternity care to underserved populations in her local community. Dr. Iglesias worked for several years as a community physician in Salinas, California, and in the greater triangle area. Her passion for international health has led her to many places across the globe. Most recently, she spent the last four years serving as Head of Department and Director of Training for Family Medicine at Egbe Hospital in rural Nigeria.



Brielle Savage is an advocate, an investigator, a researcher, a professor, an entrepreneur, a wife, a believer, and a mother of two. She is an advocate down to her core and is passionate about criminal justice reform. She fights daily to foster change and bolster a voice for those that are often voiceless in this country. She became passionate about black maternal health through her own traumatic pregnancy experience. Being forced to advocate for herself in her own pregnancy, opened her eyes to the despicable disparities that black women face in this country daily. She vividly remembers countless tears, feelings of being unheard, and strong frustrations with the healthcare system as she was with child. She is excited to become equipped with the necessary knowledge needed to advocate for just and equal black maternal rights and services in this country.

AFTERSHOCK PANELISTS



Dr. Keisha Bentley-Edwards is a developmental psychologist who uses a cultural lens to understand social, emotional, and academic outcomes. Her work specifically examines how race, culture, and racism stress influence how the world responds to Black Americans and how this influences health and social disparities. She develops culturally cognizant measures, specifically in the areas of racial/ethnic socialization, racial cohesion and dissonance, and same-race violence. As an interdisciplinary researcher, Dr. Bentley examines the racial and societal contexts that influence health, coping, and well-being in schools, communities, and within families. She is also the Associate Director of Research and the Director of the Health Equity Working Group for the Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity.



As Assistant Dean of Clinical Education, **Dr. Michele Tartaglia** oversees third- and fourth-year clerkships at SOM as well as building and maintaining relationships with all affiliated hospitals and health centers that support student training. Currently, Dr. Tartaglia has clinical responsibilities in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Sewell.

A 'Top Doc' who received several accolades, Dr. Tartaglia is a proven faculty leader, with her most recent role being Obstetrics and Gynecology Program Director. Her return to SOM follows a term at Christiana Health Care System, where she was honored for her work as a physician and faculty member. She has over 20 years of experience.

She graduated from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in 2002.

AFTERSHOCK PANELISTS



Carla P. Clements, PhD, CRNP is a doctoral prepared skin scientist, nurse practitioner, health educator, and community advocate. She completed the BSN program at the University of Alabama, received her MSN (Critical Care Nurse Practitioner) from the University of Pennsylvania, received a post master's certificate in Nursing Education from Rutgers University- New Brunswick and the earned PhD in Nursing Scientist at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. Her research interest is skin science, specifically understanding the biomechanical property skin hydration and its relationship to skin injury with an emphasis on darkly pigmented skin.

Ms. Clements is the past recipient of an NIH-funded Diversity Minority supplement related to her research area and was a T32 Predoctoral Fellow for Research on Vulnerable Women, Children and Families. In addition to several other research-based awards and scholarships. She was selected as a national Johnson and Johnson Minority Faculty Scholar and received the Nurses Organization of Veteran Affairs Graduate Scholarship. She is a published author and has conducted poster and podium presentations for numerous national nursing conferences and virtual programs.

She has over 25 years of extensive clinical and administrative experience in various areas including Staff Development, Labor and Delivery, Cardiology, Geriatrics and Emergency Medicine. Carla is passionate about providing the best possible care for our nation's heroes and served tirelessly working in the Emergency Department as a front-line charge nurse throughout the pandemic surge. In her present role as the Service Chief for the Philadelphia VA Office of Connected Care, she leads an interdisciplinary team of 30 healthcare professionals. The Office of Connected Care focuses on improving health care through virtual technology by engaging Veterans and care teams outside of traditional health care visits.

Ms. Clements is passionate about health education for vulnerable populations and regularly conducts community and patient educational sessions on "Being Heart Healthy," "Hypertension in the African American Community," and "Skin Cancer is Colorblind- Sun Protection for People of Color." Most recently, because of generous funding from Planned Parenthood of North, Central and Southern New Jersey; NCBW and the founder of Melinated Moms collaborated to create the documentary "Listen to Black Mamas." The film raises awareness of the staggering Maternal Mortality crisis in New Jersey. Ms. Clements is the Creative Consultant and Producer of the documentary. The documentary is scheduled to premiere this Fall.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER 18-25

The Native Cinema Showcase is a weeklong celebration of the best in Indigenous film.

This year's online program includes a total of 35 films representing 30 Native nations in eight different countries. Genres include documentaries, music videos, kid-friendly shorts, films in Indigenous languages and more.

(National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution)

NOVEMBER 21

Understanding Trauma & Resilience in Lives of Contemporary Native Americans

Native Americans have experienced trauma and demonstrated resilience, both historically and in contemporary times. This presentation will provide an overview of the diverse Indigenous Peoples within the United States and explore how the social work profession has interacted with Indigenous individuals and Tribal Nations. The presentation will conclude with recommendations for moving forward together in respectful and powerful ways.

NOVEMBER 1-30

Share Some Gratitude

Join us in spreading joy this season by sharing a Gratitude-gram with someone on campus. Use the QR code to express your appreciation for students, faculty, and staff. Everyone on campus is invited to participate! Your message of thanks will be directly delivered to the recipient's email.



FOUNDATIONS OF DEI SESSIONS

As part of our efforts to develop a more inclusive and welcoming learning and professional environment, please see below for educational sessions we've arranged for SOM/GSBS/CMSRU faculty and staff. These sessions/modules are part of Rowan University's "Foundations of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" Certificate program and are facilitated by Yvonne Ortiz, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We are encouraging ALL Faculty and Staff at SOM/GSBS to attend a minimum of one DEI session per term (Sept-Dec; Jan-Apr; May-Aug).

MODULE 1: IDENTITY AND CULTURE

- Monday, 12/19, 9am-11am

MODULE 2: IDENTITY, CULTURE, AND CONFLICT

Please complete Module 1 before attending Module 2

- Friday, 12/9, 1pm-3pm

Review session descriptions or register for any of these sessions at the SOM Faculty Development site on the Rowan Online Marketplace. (Please register with your Rowan credentials; If unsure of your Rowan credentials, please contact garwoods@rowan.edu)

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

- [Recognizing Intersectionality Can Heal America's Health](#)
- [The Native American heritage of the body-mind-spirit paradigm in osteopathic principles and practices](#)
- [American Indian Cancer Foundation - Breast Cancer Awareness](#)
- [American Indian Health and Family Services](#)
- [Gender Diverse Teams Are More Creative](#)
- [Maternal Mortality Among American Indian/Alaska Native Women: A Scoping Review](#)
- [Racism's ill effects on the health-care system – and the body itself](#)



RESOURCES

GME Activity:

[Promoting Health Equity in Stroke: Transforming Patient Insights Into Change](#)

PERSONAL GROWTH

SHIFT FOCUS & RELIEVE STRESS

[Click here](#) to learn how to shift your focus away from stress! The article features tips for cognitive restructuring, turning around a bad day, enhancing optimism and maintaining gratitude.

MENTAL WELLNESS

BETTERHELP

FIVE FREE online therapy sessions with BetterHelp! Communicate with a licensed counselor anytime, anywhere you need it. Through our partnership with WellConnect, Rowan SOM medical students have access to five free sessions! Call WellConnect [866-640-4777 (code: RUSOM)] for the BetterHelp access code.