

## Faculty Biographies

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**Emily Kahn, PhD, MPH, MA**

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Senior Epidemiologist

Community Interventions for Infection Control Unit

Division of Global Migration and Quarantine

National Center for Emerging and

Zoonotic Infectious Diseases

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Dr. Emily Kahn began her career with CDC as a member of the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) in 1997, assigned to the Bureau of Epidemiology at the Texas Department of Health. She worked with state, regional, and local health officials to identify, investigate and develop solutions for acute and chronic health.

In 1999, Dr. Kahn joined the Community Guide Branch of the Division of Prevention Research and Analytic Methods at CDC as a staff scientist. She developed and oversaw the systematic review of community-based interventions to promote physical activity for the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force on Community Preventive Services. In addition, Dr. Kahn was the co-chair of a working group that developed new methods and guidelines for conducting meta-analyses within the context of reviews of community-based interventions.

She also has many years of experience leading the development of new surveillance strategies and mechanisms for newborn conditions, including birth defects, newborn hearing screening, and screening for metabolic and genetic conditions and conducting research into causes and effects of maternal morbidity and fetal deaths.

Dr. Kahn is currently a senior epidemiologist with the Community Interventions for Infection Control Unit at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, where she serves as science coordinator and leads research efforts into the effectiveness of community strategies in mitigating the impact of influenza pandemics. She received a Master of Public Health degree in 1994 and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Epidemiology in 1997, both from the University of Minnesota.



**Alfonso Contreras, MD, MPH**

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Regional Advisor in Health Promotion and  
Communication

Pan American Health Organization

World Health Organization

Dr. Alfonso Contreras serves as the primary behavior change and communication specialist for the implementation and support of development communication and social mobilization projects in the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) Regional Office for the Americas.

He is a behavioral scientist with a medical degree and specialized training in Family and Community Medicine. As a Fulbright Scholar, Dr. Contreras completed his Masters program in Health Behavior and Health Education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

He has more than 15 years of international experience in building capacity and assisting countries in the design and implementation of national communication and behavior change (CBC) programs. He gained experience as a public health practitioner working as director of a Municipal Health Center in a suburban city near Madrid, Spain. Then working for several academic institutions, Dr. Contreras conducted behavioral research studies on smoking and taught the use of behavioral frameworks for the design and evaluation of CBC in many workshops for countries in the Americas. As a CBC Technical officer for the USAID-funded BASICS project on child survival, he assisted the implementation of national CBC programs in Honduras (COMSAIN), Senegal (PIC) and El Salvador (COSIN).

Currently at PAHO, he is responsible for the monitoring of risk and preventive factors through the Global School-based Student Health Survey and the implementation of the Health Promoting Schools initiative. Also, he is part of the PAHO's Emergency Operation Task Force for the Pandemic H1N1 and the current Cholera epidemic on issues involving behavior change communication and social mobilization.



**Sheri Hester, MS, AHIP, CHIS**

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Project Manager, Health Education

Health Communication and Technical Training

Health and Safety Research and Evaluation

Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education

Oak Ridge Associated Universities

Ms. Sheri Hester assists with international training and education activities at the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE), a U.S. Department of Energy institute managed by Oak Ridge Associated Universities, a university consortium leveraging the scientific strength of nearly 100 major research institutions to advance science and education by partnering with government agencies, national laboratories, and private industry.

Ms. Hester has partnered with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on a broad range of projects, including pandemic influenza planning and response train the trainer workshops on business continuity and community mitigation in Asia, Central America, South America, and Africa; media monitoring for influenza and other vaccine preventable infectious diseases; and conducting focus groups with refugee populations. Ms. Hester has developed and conducted training for the National Library of Medicine's (NLM) medical, HIV/AIDs, toxicological, and environmental sciences databases at more than 30 Historically Black Colleges and Universities/Minority Educational Institutions, faith-based organizations, and professional society meetings. Ms. Hester has represented NLM at more than 60 professional society meetings.

Ms. Hester has a Master of Science in Library Science from the University of Tennessee concentrating in science research, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science, History, and Philosophy. She has earned the Academy of Health Information Professionals and the Consumer Health Information Specialist credentials.



**Eldonna Boisson, PhD, MS**

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Advisor, Disease Surveillance and Epidemiology  
Caribbean Epidemiology Centre  
Pan American Health Organization  
World Health Organization

Dr. Eldonna Boisson is an epidemiologist serving 21 English- and Dutch- speaking Caribbean countries. She works with Ministries of Health to provide technical support to national and regional programs in the areas of epidemiology, surveillance, statistics, outbreak investigation and the production and dissemination of health information.

In 1986 she completed a Bachelor of Science degree in Biochemistry at the University of Calgary, Canada. In 1994 she received a Master of Science degree in Medical Demography from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in London, England and in 1998 she received the Doctor of Philosophy degree from the same institution.

Dr. Boisson is currently working as an Advisor in Disease Surveillance and Epidemiology with the Pan American Health Organization, based at the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC/PAHO/WHO) in Trinidad and Tobago, where she was previously employed as the Manager of the Epidemiology Division. Prior to that, she was employed as a Research Fellow at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, England; and a Clinical Scientist at the Public Health Laboratory Services, Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre (CDSC), England.

She has been published in regional and international journals, has contributed to the development of several surveillance guidelines, and has delivered many presentations at national, regional and international forums.



**Leslie Edwards, MS**

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Caribbean Epidemiology Centre

Ms. Leslie Edwards is the Epidemiology Manager of the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC) where she supports communicable disease surveillance activities including influenza, vectorborne diseases, syndromic surveillance, public health emergencies, and outbreak investigations.

Prior to joining CAREC, she was an Epidemiologist with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), based in Guyana, with a focus on HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis surveillance, treatment and prevention programs. She was the Chief of the Division of Outbreak Investigations at the Maryland Department of Health in the United States and worked as an Emergency Department Nurse at a community hospital in Baltimore, Maryland.

Ms. Edwards received a Masters degree in Infectious Disease Epidemiology from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and a Bachelors degree in Nursing from the University of Maryland.



**Clive M. Brown, MBBS, MPH, MS**

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Associate Director for Science (Acting)

Division of Global Migration and Quarantine

National Center for Emerging and

Zoonotic Infectious Diseases

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Dr. Clive M. Brown has been with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for 15 years and is currently the Associate Director for Science in the Division of Global Migration at CDC. Dr. Brown obtained a medical degree from the University of the West Indies, Jamaica and completed his clinical training at Cornwall Regional Hospital. Before coming to the United States, he worked as the Medical Officer of Health for the parish of St. James in Jamaica. He received a MPH in Epidemiology in 1992 from Columbia University, New York and also has a Master of Science in Health Systems Management from the University of London.

Dr. Brown was a CDC Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer (class of 1993) assigned to the State of Delaware. Subsequent to EIS, his Preventive Medicine Residency, and an 18-month stint with PAHO's Caribbean Epidemiology Center, Dr. Brown spent 11 years in the Air Pollution and Respiratory Health Branch at the National Center for Environmental Health where he helped start CDC's asthma activities which eventually led to the CDC Asthma Program. Before leaving the Air Pollution Branch, Dr. Brown started developing the Branch's approach to addressing asthma-related health disparities.

Since joining the Division of Global Migration and Quarantine, Dr. Brown has taken the lead for ensuring an ethical framework relating to the control of infectious diseases among travelers and is working with the CDC Public Health Ethics Committee to establish such a process. Dr. Brown played a role in the development and clearance of CDC guidance documents for community mitigation and port of entry requirements and for travelers and the travel industry.



**Lisa M. Koonin MN, MPH**

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Senior Advisor

Influenza Coordination Unit

Office of Infectious Diseases

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Ms. Lisa M. Koonin currently serves as the Senior Advisor for the Influenza Coordination Unit at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Lead for Pandemic Influenza Medical Care and Countermeasures planning and response. In this role, Ms. Koonin provides leadership and coordination for the planning and utilization of key medical countermeasures for a pandemic (such as antiviral medications), clinical care guidance, infection control strategies, and worker safety issues during a pandemic.

She also provides direction for innovative initiatives linking public health agencies and the private sector for improving community-level emergency preparedness. Ms. Koonin has been a leader in the U.S. Government's efforts to include private sector businesses in pandemic planning and response and serves as CDC's Lead for private sector pandemic influenza planning and response.

Ms. Koonin contributed to the development of the U.S. National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan, and actively serves on the White House National Security Staff's Pandemic Interagency Policy Council and the Institute of Medicine's Forum on Medical and Public Health Preparedness for Catastrophic Events. She has authored several U.S. Government pandemic planning and response guidance documents. Ms. Koonin also recently served in a leadership role as part of CDC's 2009 H1N1 Flu Response. Ms. Koonin is a frequent lecturer at national and international meetings on pandemic preparedness. Since 2007, she has led workshops about emergency preparedness and pandemic response in the United States as well as in Asia, Africa, Australia, Canada, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.

Ms. Koonin has been with CDC since 1987. Prior to her current position she served as Chief of Reproductive Health Surveillance, Director of the Office of Healthcare Partnerships, and Branch Chief for Public and Private Partnerships. Prior to her employment with CDC, Ms. Koonin spent 10 years in a variety of nurse practitioner, clinical, and faculty nursing leadership positions. Ms. Koonin is a Family Nurse Practitioner and Epidemiologist and earned a Master of Nursing degree and a Master of Public Health degree from Emory University.



**Ricardo Basurto-Davila, PhD, MS**

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Prevention Effectiveness Fellow

National Center for Immunization and  
Respiratory Diseases

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Dr. Ricardo Basurto-Davila is a Prevention Effectiveness Fellow at the Influenza Division of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, where he has conducted several studies on the effectiveness and costs of interventions to mitigate the transmission of the influenza virus. He received a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Policy Analysis in 2009 from the Pardee RAND Graduate School. In his dissertation, he analyzed differences in health status between non-Hispanic Whites, Mexican Americans, and Mexican immigrants, and he assessed the evidence supporting several hypotheses regarding changes over time in the health of immigrants.

Between 2003 and 2009, as a Doctoral Fellow at the RAND Corporation, Dr. Basurto-Davila participated in a variety of research projects with topics ranging from health disparities and social determinants of health to hospital preparedness for public health emergencies and international experiences in catastrophic disaster preparedness and response.

Dr. Basurto-Davila also received a Master's degree in Economics from the University of Texas in 2003, and he worked for the Mexican Ministry of the Economy between 1998 and 2000. He obtained a bachelor's degree in Economics in 1997 from the Monterrey Institute of Technology in Mexico.





**Amanda McWhorter MPH, CHES**

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Health Education Specialist  
Quarantine Training and Education Team  
Division of Global Migration and Quarantine  
Quarantine and Border Health Services Branch  
U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Ms. Amanda McWhorter is a health education specialist for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Ms. McWhorter manages health education and communication projects as the Deputy Team Lead for the Quarantine Training and Education team. She guides large-scale efforts to reach key partners across the United States ports of entry with training and communication.

Ms. McWhorter brings experience in emergency response and in preparedness planning, implementation, and evaluation. She contributed to the CDC response to the novel H1N1 influenza pandemic as a member of the Quarantine Communications Team, and advised and trained on qualitative and quantitative research to understand the outbreak. Also, she has spearheaded projects to recognize and address the training, education, and communication needs of federal agencies and private sector organizations to better protect public health during an emergency.

Ms. McWhorter is a Certified Health Education Specialist with a background in communications and public broadcasting, and has a Master's degree in Public Health from the University of Michigan. She joined the CDC in 2006.



**Robert Lee, MD, MPH**

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Manager, PAHO Emergency Operations Centre  
Coordinator for Avian Influenza Prevention and  
Preparedness, Caribbean and South America  
Pan American Health Organization  
World Health Organization

Dr. Robert Lee established and manages the Emergency Operations Centre at the Pan American Health Organization in Washington, D.C. He is also the PAHO coordinator for Avian Influenza Prevention and Pandemic Preparedness in the Caribbean and Central America. He has more than 20 years of public health experience and his focus has been on epidemiology and developing programmatic interventions against HIV in the Caribbean.

Between 1989 and 1996, Dr. Lee helped establish the first HIV AIDS clinic for the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Medical Research Foundation in Port of Spain, Trinidad. From 1996 to 2000, he was in charge of the National Surveillance Unit in the Ministry of Health conducting the first evaluation of HIV AIDS surveillance with the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre and identifying the preponderance of infections among young women and confirming the epidemiological shift of the epidemic to the general population.

In 2000, Dr. Lee joined the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre to establish a novel surveillance system using the Internet and family practitioners in three Caribbean countries and later to work as an epidemiologist in the HIV AIDS program.

In 2004, after Hurricane Ivan hit Grenada, Dr. Lee joined a PAHO team to establish outbreak surveillance and to assist in relief work. In 2005, during the Hurricane Katrina response, he was deployed as a PAHO observer to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta. Dr. Lee earned a Medical degree at the University of Edinburgh Medical School, and received a Master of Public Health degree from Columbia University in New York.



**Marie-Claude Lavoie, BSc(OT), MSPH**

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Workers' Health Program

Area of Sustainable Development and  
Environmental Health

Pan American Health Organization

World Health Organization

Ms. Marie-Claude Lavoie joined the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), regional office for the Americas of the World Health Organization (WHO), in 2007. She is the regional technical officer in workers' health. She is involved in projects and initiatives aiming to improve the health and safety of workers across the region.

Ms. Lavoie is currently working on a regional initiative to protect and promote the health of healthcare workers. One of her main areas of interest is the effect of the physical and organizational environment on the health of workers. She serves as secretary of the Scientific Committee on Occupational Health for Health care Workers of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH).

Ms. Lavoie graduated from Ottawa University with a degree in occupational therapy, after which she worked as an occupational therapist in Northern British Columbia and the Canadian Arctic, serving at the community level with children and adults with disabilities. She also holds a Master's degree in Population and Public Health from Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada.