

## Steering Committee

### **Martine Hackett, PhD, MPH, CHES (Co-Chair)**

Martine Hackett is an assistant professor in the master of public health and community health programs at Hofstra University whose research interests include maternal-child health, infant mortality and community based participatory research. Her previous work experience is as a deputy director at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Bureau of Maternal, Infant and Reproductive Health and as a television producer. Dr. Hackett received her BFA in film and television from New York University, a master of public health from Hunter College and a doctorate in sociology from the City University of New York Graduate Center.

[Martine's LinkedIn](#)

### **Anthony Santella, DrPH, MPH, MCHES (Co-Chair)**

Anthony J. Santella is an Associate Professor of Public Health and teaches in the Public Health, Community Health, Health Sciences, and LGBTQ+ studies programs at Hofstra University. Dr. Santella also serves as Chair of the Nassau-Suffolk Ryan White HIV Planning Council, Governing Councilor of the HIV/AIDS Section of the American Public Health Association (APHA), Chair of the Committee on Health Equity of APHA, and Associate Editor for Frontiers in Public Health. Dr. Santella is a public health scientist and health services researcher specializing in HIV and STI prevention and sexual health. His research interests include exploring the role of dental professionals (dentists and dental hygienists), community pharmacists and health educators in conducting rapid HIV testing, integration of PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV prevention) in primary care settings, sexual health promotion among suburban gay men and transwomen, and HIV and STI prevention in correctional settings. He has also received grants from the foundation, university, and government sectors and has presented his work at local, national and international conferences and is currently funded by the New York State Department of Health and the National Library of Medicine. Dr. Santella earned a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences from the University of Connecticut, a MPH in Health Policy and Management from Emory University, a Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) in Health Systems Management from Tulane University, and an Advanced Certificate in Health Professions Pedagogy and Leadership from Hofstra University. He is also a Master Certified Health Education Specialist (MCHES).

[Anthony's LinkedIn](#)

### **Lauren Block, MD, MPH**

Lauren Block, MD, MPH is an associate professor of Medicine and Science Education at Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell. Dr. Block is a clinician educator in the Division of General Medicine and a core faculty at the School of Medicine. She sees patients in primary care, precepts students and residents, and teaches evidence-based medicine, health policy, and team-based learning to residents. At the School of Medicine she directs the Patient Physician and Society curricular component, which includes 100 sessions annually encompassing population health and clinical medicine. She mentors 30 students annually as a Family Head, leads the primary care elective and health policy electives for fourth year students, advises the school's chapter of Primary Care Progress, a national advocacy organization, and precepts students at the School's Student-Run Free Clinic. Her team received

a five-year, \$1.7 million federal grant to plan and implement an interprofessional primary care training program. The Improving Patient Access Care and cost through Training (IMPACcT) program launched in 2016 to provide team-based care, interprofessional education, and mentoring. Dr. Block's team was chosen as one of nine institutions nationally to participate in the PACER (Professionals Accelerating Clinical and Educational Redesign) program, which links the primary care disciplines of internal medicine, family medicine, and pediatrics to collaborate on educational programming, which has resulted in a new interdisciplinary community health residency track. Dr. Block's research interests include medical education and interprofessional education. Dr. Block graduated from Yale College, Harvard Medical School, and Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She completed residency and fellowship in internal medicine at Johns Hopkins.

[Lauren's LinkedIn](#)

### **Margo K. Cargill**

Margo K. Cargill is founder and CEO of Titanium Linx Consulting, Inc. a diversified project management firm specializing in corporate, institutional, and government strategy. Her expertise is in the areas of business and economic development through marketing and communications, public and government relations, and regulatory compliance channels. Cargill partners with commercial industry leaders, elite institutions, and government agencies on private, public, and public-private partnership (P3) ventures.

Her background as a corporate manager at both Fortune 500 companies and startups delivers insight into critical approaches of not only how to launch, but implement and sustain successful projects while controlling information, maintaining interfaces and managing crises.

As president of the Uniondale Chamber of Commerce, Cargill apprehends a project's social, economic and environmental impact and ensures they are highly scrutinized by facilitating total stakeholder engagement.

She is the New York district U.S. Small Business Administration Minority Business Champion, an Engineering News-Record Top 20 under 40, Nassau County's Woman of Distinction, and serves as Chair of the Advisory Board of the Uniondale Community Land Trust. Titanium Linx Consulting, Inc. is a federally certified WOSB and New York State, New York City, Nassau County, Suffolk County, Port Authority NY/NJ certified MWBE/DBE.

[Margo's LinkedIn](#)

### **Eric Feinstein, MBA**

Currently, Eric is an investment director at Northwell Ventures, (the corporate venture arm of Northwell Health) and spends the bulk of his time running investment activities for the venture capital fund, driving portfolio growth, and commercializing new, innovative healthcare concepts within Northwell. He brings a wealth of experiences in the venture and private equity worlds, having made investments into and serving on the boards of several later-stage medical device and healthcare service businesses, as well as running long-term revenue growth engagements for consumer-focused companies. Eric has also served in an operational capacity as the interim CEO for Healthflix, a healthcare IT start-up focused on patient engagement. Current investments include: Conversa Health; Purple Sun; & Clarapath.

His functional investment and portfolio experiences include: new market and product entries; overall growth strategies (organic & inorganic), sales channel transformations, market research and sizing, consumer behavior and segmentation; growth oriented change management, & M&A.

Prior to Northwell Ventures, Eric was a Director of the Northeast Transaction Advisory and M&A group at RGP. Prior to that, he was a Principal at BSV Consulting Group, a boutique venture capital consulting firm focused on driving top-line revenue growth and performing transaction due-diligence. Eric spent six years evaluating and structuring new investment opportunities at Ampersand Capital Partners and Landmark Partners. He holds a degree in Economics (with a concentration in Behavioral Economics) from Trinity College and has an MBA from Cornell University.

[Eric's LinkedIn](#)

### **Lawrence Levy**

In 35 years as a reporter, editorial writer, columnist and PBS host, Lawrence (Larry) Levy won many of journalism's top awards, including Pulitzer Finalist, for in-depth works on suburban politics, education, taxation, housing and other key issues. As a journalist, he was known for blending national trends and local perspectives and has covered seven presidential campaigns and 15 national conventions. In his leadership role at NCSS, which he was invited by President Rabinowitz to create in 2007, Dean Levy has worked with Hofstra's academic and local communities to shape an innovative, interdisciplinary agenda for interdisciplinary suburban study, including a new Sustainability Studies degree. Over the years he has forged research alliances with other academic institutions, including Harvard, Columbia, Cornell, Boston College, Virginia Tech, New York University, Exeter, and Maynooths, as well as consulting relationships with not-for-profit groups, businesses and government agencies. One recent partnership of note, with the world-renown Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, resulted in the heralded exhibition "Black Suburbia: From Levittown to Ferguson." Along with Academic Director Christopher Niedt, NCSS has promoted the importance of studying suburbs nationally and internationally and has generated nearly \$4 million in grants, gifts and contracts. Dean Levy was recently invited to lecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and the Harvard Medical School on the challenges of the changing suburbs and gives about 30 talks a year to academic, civic and business groups on a variety of topics. As a member of a Brookings Institution advisory panel, he was a featured speaker at a Brookings Metro Policy Summit in Washington, DC. He was recently appointed Chairman of the Community Research Advisory Board at the Feinstein Institute for Medical Research, one of the world's leading such centers.

NCSS has collaborated on a number of local, national and international scale conferences on aspects of suburban life, from diversity and housing, to ecology science and health care. The center also has participated in major consulting studies on sustainability, demographic change and education and health care challenges in suburbia. At NCSS, Dean Levy has co-authored major regional studies, including the LI2035 Sustainability Action Plan, all five Long Island Regional Economic Development plans, and many of the post Sandy recovery reports for Suffolk County communities. Before joining Hofstra, he was Senior Editorial Writer and Chief Political Columnist for Newsday; cohost of the PBS show Face-Off, and remains involved in the world of journalism and politics. Levy has been a guest contributor to BBC.com, CNN.com, Politico, Newsday, Citiwire, Hearst Newspapers and wrote about presidential campaign issues for the New York Times.com Campaign Stops blog. (Most of these articles and some of the media appearances can be found at the NCSS website. He appears regularly on local and national television. He is a graduate of Boston University's School of Communication. He's especially proud of organizing the Hofstra Celebration of Suburban Diversity, which annually brings together hundreds of people from different races, religions and other backgrounds and has raised more than \$1 million for diversity related scholarships, research and community engagement. At the same time, the event, which has featured the region's most

influential business and labor leaders as keynote speakers, has dramatically raised Hofstra's profile as a place that values diversity. He also is pleased to be able to "give back" by mentoring many young people in journalism and public life regardless of their ideological or political allegiance.

[Lawrence's LinkedIn](#)

#### **K. Aletha Maybank, MD, MPH**

Aletha Maybank, MD, MPH currently serves as a Deputy Commissioner in the New York City Department of Health and is the Founding Director of the Center for Health Equity. The Center's mission is to bring an explicit focus to health equity in all of the Department's work by tackling structural barriers, such as racism, ensuring meaningful community engagement, and fostering interagency coordination in neighborhoods with the highest disease burden.

Prior to this role, she was an Assistant Commissioner in the NYC Health Department and served as the Director of the Brooklyn Office, a place-based approach. Dr. Maybank also successfully launched the Office of Minority Health as its Founding Director in the Suffolk County Department of Health Services in NY from 2006-2009.

Dr. Maybank serves as Vice President of the Empire State Medical Association, the NYS affiliate of the National Medical Association. In the media and on the lecture circuit, she has appeared or been profiled on Disney Jr.'s highly successful Doc McStuffins Animated Series, ESSENCE Facebook live and their Festival's Empowerment Stage, MSNBC's Melissa Harris-Perry show, and various other outlets. She has also advised on the award-winning documentary Soul Food Junkies by Byron Hurt and Black Women in Medicine by Crystal Emery. For her accomplishments, she has won numerous awards.

Dr. Maybank holds a BA from Johns Hopkins University, a MD from Temple University School of Medicine, and a MPH from Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. A pediatrician board certified in Preventive Medicine/Public Health, she completed her preventive medicine residency at the SUNY Stony Brook University School of Medicine and her pediatrics residency at the Albert Einstein School of Medicine's Schneider Children's Hospital.

[Aletha's LinkedIn](#)

#### **Paul Meissner, MSPH**

Paul Meissner is Director of Research Program Development at Montefiore Medical Center and a faculty member in the Departments of Family and Social Medicine and Ob/Gyn & Women's Health at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He serves as Director of Network Development for the New York City Research Improvement Networking Group (NYC RING), a practice based research network dedicated to research in urban underserved populations. His professional interests are to bridge public health and medical care through the development of health services, implementation science, and comparative effectiveness research with a focus on social and behavioral interventions in urban primary care settings. He has extensive leadership experience in public health and holds an MSPH in Health Policy and Administration from the University of North Carolina and BS in Marketing from the University of Maryland.

[Paul's LinkedIn](#)

## **Gregson Pignott, MD, MPH**

Dr. Gregson H. Pigott, MD, MPH has been Director of the Office of Minority Health (OMH) in the Suffolk County Department of Health Services in Long Island, NY since June, 2009. He was born in Brooklyn, NY, and grew up in Valley Stream, Long Island. He holds a BA from Brown University, a MD from Brown University Medical School, and a MPH from Harvard School of Public Health. He completed his residency training in Internal Medicine at the Cambridge Hospital in 1997. He is Board Certified in Internal Medicine, and is a Clinical Assistant Professor in Preventive Medicine at Stony Brook University. He has worked as a primary care internist and attending physician in community health centers in Brownsville, Brooklyn and Cambridge, Massachusetts, caring mainly for the underserved.

Currently, Dr. Pigott also serves as the Medical Director for Suffolk County Emergency Medical Services and as a physician in the Huntington methadone clinic. Dr. Pigott is fluent in Spanish and is an accomplished Gospel and jazz musician. He continues to be passionate about improving the health of minorities.

[Gregson's Website](#)

## **Ram Raju, MD, MBA**

Ram Raju, MD, brings vast executive leadership experience and a keen understanding of New York's health care delivery system to Northwell Health.

As senior vice president and community health investment officer, he evaluates the needs of Northwell's most-vulnerable communities, and provides solutions for them by collaborating with community-based organizations. He's responsible for promoting, sustaining and advancing an environment that supports equity and diversity, and helping the health system eliminate health disparities.

Prior to Northwell, Dr. Raju served as president and CEO of NYC Health + Hospitals from January 2014-November 2016. NYC Health + Hospitals has 42,000 employees, 11 acute-care hospitals, five nursing homes, six diagnostic and treatment centers, more than 70 community-based health centers, a large home care agency and one of the region's largest providers of government-sponsored health insurance, MetroPlus Health Plan.

Dr. Raju also served as CEO for the Cook County Health and Hospitals System in Chicago, the nation's third-largest public health system, where he improved cash flow by more than \$100 million and changed the system's financial health during his tenure from 2011-2014.

His medical career began at Lutheran Medical Center in Brooklyn and he later served as chief operating officer and medical director at NYC Health + Hospitals' Coney Island Hospital. In 2006, Dr. Raju became the HHC chief medical officer, corporate chief operating officer and executive vice president. Under his leadership, HHC continued to improve quality, patient safety and health care data transparency.

Dr. Raju served as vice-chair of the Greater New York Hospital Association and currently sits on the boards of numerous city, state and national health care organizations, including the American Hospital Association, the New York Academy of Medicine and the Asian Health Care Leaders Association. Among his numerous awards and accolades, Dr. Raju was selected to Modern Healthcare's "100 Most-Influential People in Healthcare." Modern Healthcare also named him one of the "Top 25 Minority Executives in

Healthcare” and one of the “50 Most-Influential Physician Executives in Healthcare.” In 2013, he was named a Business Leader of Color by Chicago United.

Dr. Raju earned a medical diploma and Master of Surgery from Madras Medical College in India. He underwent further training in England, where he was elected as a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons. He later received an MBA from the University of Tennessee and CPE from the American College of Physician Executives.

[Ram's LinkedIn](#)

### **Kaushik Sengupta, PhD, MBA**

Dr. Sengupta is Chair, Department of Management & Entrepreneurship and Professor at the Zarb School of Business. Dr. Sengupta is also Associate Dean, Business Graduate Education and Executive Director of the Online MBA Program. Dr. Sengupta's teaching and research are in the areas of operations management and supply chain management. He is involved with teaching and curriculum development for the BBA, MBA and Executive MBA programs.

Dr. Sengupta's current focus areas of research are in the analysis of supply chain management trends and practices, and analysis of industry wide similarities and differences in supply chain practices. Other related research areas of interest include quality management, supply chain security, healthcare operations, distance learning, and cross-functional research with interfaces between Operations/Supply Chain and other areas of business. His research has appeared in *Operations Research*, *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, *International Journal of Production Research*, *International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management*, *International Journal of Human Resources Management*, *International Journal of Management*, *Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management*, among others. His research has won Best Paper Awards at the Indian Subcontinent Decision Sciences Institute (ISDSI) conference, and the North East Decision Sciences Institute (NEDSI) conference.

Dr. Sengupta has previously taught at Indiana University, Michigan State University and Bucknell University. Immediately before joining the Hofstra faculty, Dr. Sengupta worked in the supply chain management industry at i2 Technologies, Inc., as Director of supply chain management solutions.

Dr. Sengupta earned his M.S. and Ph.D. in Business Administration at Indiana University. He has an MBA from the Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow, India.

Dr. Sengupta is a member of Decision Sciences Institute (*DSI*), Production and Operations Management Society (*POMS*), and the Institute of Supply Management (*ISM*). Dr. Sengupta has been active in the Decision Sciences Institute (*DSI*), as Vice President of Marketing on the Board of Directors, chairing many tracks at both national and regional *DSI* conferences including chairing the Annual Case Competition, the Instructional Innovation Award Competition and the New Faculty Development Consortium. He has been inducted into the honorary organizations – *Beta Gamma Sigma* (Business Honor Society) and *Alpha Iota Delta* (Decision Sciences Honor Society).

[Kaushik's LinkedIn](#)

## Community Technical Advisors

Malla Haridat

Malla Haridat is an award winning entrepreneur, author, and founder of New Designs for Life Inc. an innovative training company. (NY State and NYC MWBE certified).

Malla has been recognized by the Mayor of New York City for her work as a mentor to entrepreneurs.

She has won the NYC Small Business Award for entrepreneurship innovation.

The New York Times did a full-page article on her work and said “Malla Haridat gets people thinking like an entrepreneur.”

Malla Haridat is a contributor to Black Enterprise, Huffington Post and has been quoted by Fox Small Business and Inc.

She has worked with Black Enterprise Magazine Entrepreneur Conference and sits on the Board of Advisors for Barnard College’s Entrepreneurship Group.

Malla has a degree from Columbia University and is the former Vice President of College Relations for the New York chapter of the National Board of African-American HR professionals.

She specializes in teaching people how to tackle the big question marks in their life to get the most important answers needed to experience success.

Malla started her entrepreneurial pursuits at age 16 when she sold the car she inherited from her grandmother to start a vending machine and when she’s not working, she resides in Westchester County where she is teaching her young daughter how to take advantage of life through entrepreneurial thinking.

Vanessa Best

Vanessa Best, CEO of Precision HealthCare Consultants, is an award winning, exceptional consultant and effective trainer with over 25 years of professional development, executive coaching, healthcare management and entrepreneur training programs. Vanessa has expertise in assessment, strategy, and change management for organizations and small business. Vanessa is a medical coding and billing leader and has been partnering with medical professionals and practices since 1995 to ensure they are reimbursed quickly and accurately while complying with constantly changing healthcare regulations. In addition, Vanessa’s 8(a) MWBE DBE firm provides healthcare consulting services to government agencies, health systems, military hospitals, and physicians. And through her company’s executive consulting division, Vanessa coaches leaders across all industries in professional development, global leadership, and entrepreneurship. Through her work as an entrepreneur, Vanessa and her firm has earned numerous prestigious honors, including 2017 SBA Women Business Champion of The Year – NY District, selected as a 2016 “360 Business” by Entrepreneur Magazine, featured speaker at the Bank of America Entrepreneurs Conference, and featured as a success story in Black Enterprise Magazine.

Margo K. Cargill

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[Margo's LinkedIn](#)

## Management Team

Mark Lesko, JD

Mark Lesko is the Vice President of Economic Development at Hofstra University and oversees the Center for Entrepreneurship at Executive Dean, the Scott Skodnek Business Development Center, the Wilbur Breslin Center for Real Estate Studies, and Continuing Education. These departments implement programs to support the growth of the Long Island regional economy. Mark Lesko is the former Executive Director of Accelerate Long Island, a collaboration of Long Island research institutions to accelerate the formation of a regional innovation-based economy. As Executive Director, Mark oversaw the \$1 million Accelerate Long Island Seed Fund/Long Island Emerging Technologies Fund that invested in nine technology-based startup companies. Mark is about to launch a second \$3 million Accelerate Long Island Seed Fund, which will involve \$1.5 million of investment from New York Ventures. Under Mark's leadership, Accelerate Long Island also offered mentorship support for startup companies and engaged in a variety of activities that supported the growth of Long Island's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Prior to joining Accelerate Long Island, Mark Lesko was the Supervisor of the Town of Brookhaven – New York State's second-largest Town with 486,000 residents – for over three years. As Supervisor, Mark became a regional leader on the issue of economic development and served on Governor Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Council for Long Island. Prior to serving as Brookhaven Town Supervisor, Mark was a federal prosecutor in the U.S. Department of Justice for ten years in Washington D.C., Brooklyn and Long Island. Mark served as Deputy Chief of the Long Island Criminal Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York. As Deputy Chief, he oversaw all federal criminal prosecutions on Long Island and was the Computer Hacking and Intellectual Property (CHIP) crimes coordinator. Mark also personally prosecuted some of Long Island's most noteworthy federal cases, including the Muttontown "slave" case and the Symbol Technologies corporate accounting case. Mark also served as a prosecutor in the homicide/major crimes section in the U.S. Attorney's office for the District of Columbia. Prior to joining the Department of Justice, Mark was a corporate litigator with large law firms in Pittsburgh, PA and Washington, D.C. In Pittsburgh, Mark helped establish the Steel Valley Enterprise Zone Advisory Committee, an organization formed to assist economically depressed communities affected by the closure of steel mills. Mark is a graduate of Yale University, where he was a quarterback on the football team, and he received his law degree from Georgetown University Law School.

[Mark's LinkedIn](#)

### **Christel Hyden, EdD**

Christel Hyden is a consultant with over 10 years of experience developing and evaluating health education programs and educational materials, with an emphasis on multimedia and technology based interventions. She has led federally and locally funded projects addressing a wide variety of health disparities, including HIV treatment and prevention, pediatric nutrition, early childhood sleep hygiene, vaccine uptake, and migraine management. She also serves as Director of Research and Evaluation for the Harlem Health Promotion Center at Columbia University and holds a faculty appointment in the Department of Family and Social Medicine at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

[Christel's LinkedIn](#)

[Christel's Website](#)

## **Stacey Sikes**

Stacey Sikes is the Senior Assistant Dean for Administration at the Hofstra University Center for Entrepreneurship, where she develops and implements programs including the Hofstra-Digital Remedy Venture Challenge, the Healthcare Entrepreneurship Community Challenge, the START-UP NY program, and the Center's various ecosystem events and mentor sessions. Stacey Sikes previously served as the Assistant Executive Director for Accelerate Long Island, where she coordinated the efforts of the Accelerate Long Island Seed Fund and assisted with the launch of the Accelerate New York Seed Fund. Prior to starting at Accelerate Long Island in 2012, Stacey served as Deputy Chief of Staff to then-Brookhaven Supervisor Mark Lesko, focusing primarily on economic development issues, including the Ronkonkoma Hub Transit-Oriented Development. Stacey was on the writers' committee for the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council, contributing to a strategic plan that was awarded \$101 million in economic development grants for the region. Stacey was previously Deputy Regional Representative to United States Senator Charles E. Schumer on Long Island and Director of Special Projects to Nassau County Executive Thomas R. Suozzi. Stacey received her Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Government and Politics from St. John's University, where she graduated Summa Cum Laude. She also served as an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Government and Politics at St. John's.

[Stacey's LinkedIn](#)

## **Sharon Goldsmith**

Sharon Goldsmith is the Director of Operations for the Center of Entrepreneurship. Prior to joining the Center for Entrepreneurship, Sharon worked for twelve years in business management and the entertainment industry. Sharon graduated from the University of Rhode Island in 2003 with a degree in Public Relations and immediately joined LL Business Management, Inc., where she was a business manager for recording artists, NBA players and other high net worth individuals. Her most famous client, 50 Cent, asked her to join G-Unit Records, Inc. in 2005 as the Director of Finance and later, the Director of Finance and Human Resources. During that time Sharon earned her M.A. in Speech Communication and Rhetoric Studies at Hofstra University. Sharon spent over ten years contributing to the success of multi-platinum music releases and supporting 50 Cent's entrepreneurship. She helped him to achieve success in the tech, non-profit, entertainment and consumer electronic space. Sharon Goldsmith is a Hofstra University M.B.A candidate who recently launched Hofstra University's first student-run record label and completed the VentureWell Lean Launchpad Educators Program.

[Sharon's LinkedIn](#)