



WEBINAR GUEST BIO

Exploring strategies to strengthen civic participation for communities' health

April 16, 2024



Benita Duran **Senior director, equity and civic engagement** **National Civic League**

Benita Duran leads civic assistance projects for the National Civic League (League), assisting communities with strategic engagement and support, and helps to ensure that issues of social and economic equity are integrated and addressed in engagement opportunities, partnerships and guidance from the League.

Benita joined the League team in August 2022, bringing over 30 years of broad experiences and expertise in community engagement, planning, organizational programming, and economic development at local, regional,

and national levels. She has been a professional administrator in local governments in Colorado and has worked with communities as far away as Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

Early in her professional career, Benita was an aide to Denver Mayor Federico Peña, and a staffer of former League President John Parr, who oversaw the transition team for Mayor Peña. She is a former member of the governing board of the International City/County Management Association, a position she held when she was assistant city manager in Boulder, Colorado. She has been a Vice President for Government Affairs for a global environmental engineering firm and a program executive for Denver Public Schools.



Stella Safo **Co-founder** **Civic Health Alliance**

A board-certified practicing HIV primary care physician and public health practitioner, Dr. Stella Safo is dedicated to ensuring everyone has access to the best healthcare. As a Black woman practicing medicine and public health, Dr. Safo knows firsthand that systemic inequities are baked into healthcare delivery. That's why redesigning our healthcare systems to ensure that everyone has access to the best care is her life's passion. She believes that now is the time to call attention to and to work hard to address those inequities. And that is exactly what she has done. Dr. Safo is a

Ghanaian-American practicing HIV primary care physician and public health practitioner who has led teams dedicated to healthcare improvement in various settings. In 2021, Dr. Safo created Just Equity for Health, a health care improvement company that uses advocacy, education and care model design to ensure equitable care delivery across all sectors of medicine. Trained at Harvard for her B.A., M.D. and M.P.H. degrees, she

completed internal medicine training at Montefiore Health System in primary care, with a fellowship in HIV care through the HIV Medicine Association. As the former Senior Medical Director for Clinical Transformation at Mount Sinai Health System, Dr. Safo and a multidisciplinary team oversaw the system-wide redesign of Mount Sinai's 50+ primary care practices. This work included leading a practice transformation team to work within Mount Sinai's diverse eight-hospital system, and launching a year-long learning collaborative of physicians and staff to share real-time insights. She then went on to lead a national healthcare consulting research group as Chief Clinical Transformation Officer at Premier Inc. There, she oversaw the Applied Science and Implementation Research teams that utilized Premier's large healthcare database and real world research to identify novel clinical findings that impact patient care. These findings were translated to health systems across the U.S. through a healthcare leaders collaborative that Dr. Safo led. Currently, Dr. Safo is an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Mount Sinai where she holds dual appointments in Medicine and Medical Education. She is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Montefiore Medical System where she serves as the current Director for the Social Medicine Curriculum. Her research areas focus on qualitative analyses of challenges to healthcare delivery for vulnerable populations around the world. She has lectured nationally, and continues to teach and mentor students and trainees. In addition to consulting on projects around equitable care model design and to a commitment to social justice work, Dr. Safo also provides clinical care to HIV+ and LGBTQ+ patients in New York.