



**GILLINGS SCHOOL OF
GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH**

The Minority Student Caucus Presents the 45th Annual Minority Health Conference

The Building Blocks to Well-being: Connections Between Health and Stress

The Minority Health Conference, the largest and longest-running student-led health conference in the United States, aims to raise awareness around minority health and mobilize students, academics and community members to take action for change. The conference was founded and is led by students at the UNC-Chapel Hill Gillings School of Global Public Health.

This year, we will explore social determinants of health — the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live and age — as well as the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life that impact health outcomes (Healthy People 2030).

Our theme, *The Building Blocks to Well-being: Connections Between Health and Stress*, highlights the pivotal link between these two states of being. In a world where global and domestic systems often fail to support universal health, recognizing the duality of wellness and stress becomes crucial.

The Minority Health Conference's approach to this topic centers on recognizing that many current public health challenges are rooted in structural issues, including entrenched racism, ableism, sexism and other discriminatory practices. By adopting a more holistic perspective that recognizes these systemic problems, public health practitioners can work with other professionals across various disciplines to drive better health outcomes.

This year's conference will dive deep into the social determinants of health, the stress they can cause, and their impacts on the short- and long-term well-being of minority populations. The goal of the conference is to conceptualize the mental and physical stress that social determinants can place on individuals and communities, sometimes with intergenerational life cycle impacts.

We hope that the theme will connect participants around the shared value of achieving better overall health and well-being — and a stronger future — for all.

Potential topics include:

- Life course and social determinants
- Policy and its effects on marginalized communities
- Mental health disparities among women of color
- Psychiatric facilities' perpetuation of minoritization
- Systemic codifications of ableism within wellness paradigms

This list of topics is by no means exhaustive, but it serves as a useful example of the barriers people face in their journey to achieve the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

At the Gillings School of Global Public Health, community is at the heart of how we accelerate positive change. The Minority Student Caucus was founded to raise the voices of Black students and to impact policies at the School of Public Health. Nearly every year since 1977, we have convened hundreds of community members, public health professionals and students to explore a diverse range of topics that have an impact on minority health. Together, we connect multidisciplinary champions working at the local, regional, national and global levels to support communities at home and around the world.

Save the date for our 45th annual Minority Health Conference on *The Building Blocks to Well-being: Connections Between Health and Stress!* Join us Friday, February 23 — either in-person at the Friday Center or through our virtual broadcast — to explore this year's theme.

Sincerely,



*Ciera Thomas
Department of Health Behavior
Minority Health Conference Co-Chair*



*Raven Walters
Department of Health Behavior
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