

Atlantic *Fellows*

FOR HEALTH EQUITY



**CASE FOR
SUPPORT**

Uplifting leaders, building community,
saving lives

About the Fellowship Program

OUR MISSION

To develop global leaders who understand the foundations of health inequity and have the knowledge, skills, and courage to build more equitable organizations and communities.

OUR VISION

The profound, life-limiting disparities in health and health care that exist throughout the world can be combatted and mitigated. This can be accomplished by people — determined people, with the appropriate training, strategically located in health sectors around the world. The product of their work, in a thousand different settings, will be years of life gained and quality of life enhanced for millions of individuals, families, and communities.

OUR APPROACH

The Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity (AFHE) was founded on the principle that more action is needed to combat inequity in health.

We believe that while some leaders may be born, leaders can also be developed. Our leadership curriculum introduces a powerful set of practices that have endured for centuries across different contexts. It centers on the power of relationships and people to envision and create change. People are ultimately at the center of our work as a fellowship program.

In practice, our emphasis on action means that we pair any discussion of disparities with an exploration of solutions. The development of a cohort and fellowship network is important to establish more leaders, inspire new approaches, and lend support when challenges arise. We envision a world in which the global community and its leaders strive to establish the conditions for all individuals and communities to achieve their full potential for health and well-being.

OUR PROGRAM

The fellowship is a one-year program offered by The George Washington University open to health sector professionals from around the world. The fellowship takes place over one year and involves self-directed online learning modules, virtual classroom sessions every two weeks, and three in-person convenings.

The fellowship’s curriculum is designed to build knowledge, develop skills, and sustain community through presentations, videos, readings, assignments, breakout sessions, and peer coaching, and features content developed by faculty, fellows, and renowned global leaders.

As a core part of the program, fellows design and implement health equity projects. Assignments and lessons support real-life implementation challenges, with an emphasis on building sustainable initiatives by sharing the training and building power with others. Many continue their projects after the conclusion of the fellowship.

All fellows participate in three in-person convenings over the course of the year. The Initial Convening in January launches the program year and allows the fellows to establish a shared base of knowledge and a common identity. The Mid-Year Convening brings the fellows together to explore issues of health equity in rural communities and low and middle income countries. The Final Convening allows the fellows to reflect on and share their personal and professional journeys through their Health Equity Talks.

By becoming an Atlantic Fellow for Health Equity, fellows join a lifelong global community of leaders in health and gain access to the collective experience, guidance, connections, resources, and wisdom of every cohort.

Letter from the Executive Director

The time for dynamic leaders to step forward and drive the global health equity movement is right now.



Our fellowship has always been about bringing people together across disciplines, geographies, and perspectives to address the deep, systemic causes of health inequity. As we look ahead to the future of this program, our focus remains unchanged: ensuring people do not suffer or die from avoidable causes.

As we look forward to our ten year anniversary, this is a moment of both pride and deep reflection. We honor the work of the 151 fellows who have come through this program and the countless ways they have taken action to advance equity where they live. And we challenge ourselves to think about what comes next. How do we sustain and grow this work? How do we remain a space where people from vastly different backgrounds can come together — not because they agree on everything, but because they share a fundamental belief in the dignity and value of a human life?

Looking ahead, we seek to build a more diverse and sustainable funding model to continue and grow this incredible program so future cohorts of fellows can realize transformational initiatives in their communities. We invite you to review this brief to learn more about our vital work and to join our growing global community who stand firm in the belief that health equity is worth fighting for.

We welcome your engagement and support,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Guenevere Burke".

Guenevere Burke
Executive Director



"In fact, I don't consider AFHE a network;
I consider this program a family. The
possibilities in this space are enormous. The
learning and unlearning never stop. I am truly
thrilled to be here."

Abraham Freeman
Monrovia, Liberia
2020 Cohort

History and Importance of the Fellows Program

Drs. Fitzhugh Mullan and Guenevere Burke along with Leigh Anne Butler, Selam Bedada and other members of the GW Institute for Health Workforce Equity established the fellowship program in 2016 under the name Leaders for Health Equity. Supported by an initial grant from the Atlantic Philanthropies, the program welcomed its inaugural class the next year. Following the program's successful first year, the Leaders for Health Equity joined the global community of Atlantic Fellows, and became the Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity, receiving additional support from the Atlantic Philanthropies to expand and extend our fellowship program.

Today, as we approach our tenth anniversary, our program is stronger than ever. In 2024, the Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation presented Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity with the 2024 Award for Program Excellence in Social Mission, recognizing AFHE's innovative, interdisciplinary approach to advancing health equity and impactful leadership training worldwide.

WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT?

AFHE is not a typical professional development program. While many fellowship programs select highly-educated, highly-accomplished professionals to further advance their already-successful careers, AFHE stands apart as a unique experience in the world of higher education. The program has no degree requirements or prerequisites. We select our fellows, not based on academic attainment, but based on their experience and actions, including a demonstrated commitment to ethical leadership.

Representing over 35 countries across six continents, big cities, small towns, sovereign tribal nations and refugees, our fellows each bring their own unique background and experiences to the conversations on health. The AFHE fellowship presents an opportunity for these aspiring leaders to share their experience and perspectives with one another and to learn from, exchange ideas, and collaborate with their cohort and the entire AFHE community. By elevating the voices of these powerful advocates for health equity, AFHE is breaking down barriers between the ivory tower of education and global communities.

AFHE is more than a health fellowship, it's a transformational experience for health leaders. Our fellows emerge from the fellowship with the knowledge and tools to make a difference in their communities. We offer an immersive, transformational experience building the next generation of global leaders in health equity.

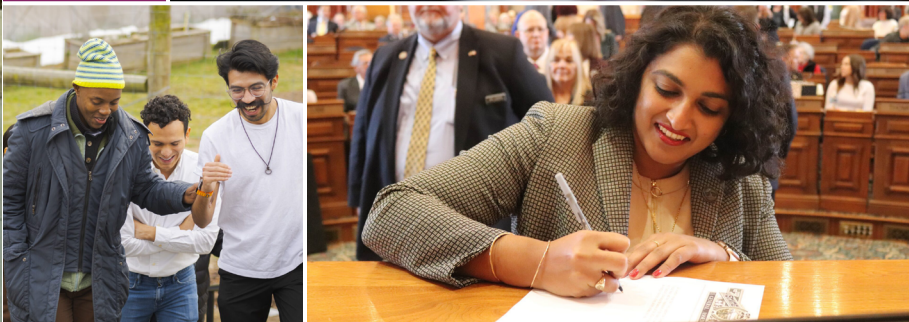


“The fellowship continues to challenge and build me years after first joining the AFHE family. Unlike other fellowships I have been a part of, this one continues to guide and influence my growth. I have had life changing experiences because of this fellowship and I will always be grateful!”

Esnatt Gondwe-Matekesa

Zomba, Malawi

2019 Cohort



AFHE BY THE NUMBERS

151

151 total fellows

800+

AFHE Fellows have produced 800+ publications, including 500+ opinion pieces, 375+ research and news articles, and 60+ books and reports

96%

96% of Senior Fellows say the leadership curriculum has enabled them to coach and/or support other leaders

100%

100% of Senior Fellows say their AFHE leadership skills have made them more effective leaders.

35M+

In 2024, AFHE Senior Fellows' health equity work served over 35 million people around the globe

Stories of Impact



JONATAN KONFINO

Historic Decline in Infant Mortality

As the Secretary of Health in Quilmes, Argentina, Jonatan Konfino lowered the infant mortality rate by training healthcare teams to identify and follow up with pregnant women who had stopped visiting healthcare facilities. He improved care for pregnant women and babies by strengthening the local hospital network, increasing access to specialized care for those in need. These efforts reduced the infant mortality rate to historic lows.

ANTHONIKA TITUS

Improving Healthcare Through Community Engagement

Anthonika Titus revitalized the NOVA Hope for Haiti clinic by establishing transparent communication and adopting leadership practices learned in the fellowship to transform her team. She implemented community outreach initiatives, including educational sessions, partnerships with local leaders, and sharing patient success stories through media. These changes, along with operational improvements, led to an increase in monthly visits from 450 to over 1,000.

ABRAHAM FREEMAN

Transforming Waste into Opportunity

Abraham Freeman trained volunteers, especially women who are household heads, to create new products, such as backpacks, from plastic waste through his work with Environmental Rescue Initiative. This initiative promoted environmental sustainability and community empowerment through innovation and education while creating economic opportunities for local communities.

ADRIAN BILLINGS

Deepening the Rural Physician Bench in Texas

Based in the Permian Basin, Adrian Billings developed a two-year rural training track for family medicine residents, focused on preparing physicians to serve in rural and underserved communities. While in clinical practice, he hosted more than 300 medical students and 50 residents for rotations. His efforts helped strengthen the local workforce, with former trainees returning to practice as family physicians in the Big Bend region.

MONALISA PADHEE

Improving the Health of Rural Women in India

To support a more holistic understanding of women’s well-being in rural India, Monalisa Padhee designed a Women’s Wellness Curriculum focused on nutrition, menstrual health, and reproductive health. The curriculum uses simple, practical, and interactive tools such as group discussions, pictures, infographics, videos, and games, all tailored to be accessible for semi-literate audiences. Since its launch, Monalisa and her team have used this approach to train more than 250 women across 12 states in India, expanding its reach and impact across diverse communities.

Opportunities for Support

Targeted Support

EMPOWER LEADERS' WORK: CONTRIBUTE TO THE FELLOW COLLABORATION FUND

Foundations or charitable giving entities whose focus does not include human capital development or educational programs may be interested in supporting fellows' on-the-ground health projects and programs. These health leaders continue their vital work and remain lifelong members of our community long after their fellowship year is complete. Selected for their ability to lead with both ethics and impact, their work addresses global health challenges from sustainability to gender equity, infectious disease prevention to community health.

Donors may choose to restrict funding to a specific fellow, project, cause, or geographic region, or may simply opt to have AFHE distribute the gift where it is most needed. Supporting the Collaboration Fund is an easy way to bolster fellows' efforts creating innovative solutions to the greatest challenges in global health and ending systems of health inequality.

CATALYZE COMMUNITY: SUPPORT THE COSTS OF A CONVENING OF OUR COMMUNITY - \$150,000

Our thematic convenings are much more than a part of the fellowship curriculum, they are incubators for innovate solutions to the greatest challenges in health equity. Our convenings assemble forward-thinking, young health professionals from around the globe to exchange ideas and bring forth new solutions to global problems. The discussions and collaboration that occur at these convenings have spurred projects such as the "Hope, Healing, Home & Humanity" program at Nundu Deaconess Hospital in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which adapted trauma-informed care in a conflict zone to provide practical mental health skills to health workers for themselves and their patients.



Programmatic Support

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUND - \$30,000

AFHE fellows work to advance health equity in communities all over the world – including in conflict zones and areas affected by political instability or natural disasters. AFHE provides our fellows with emergency support so they can carry on their critical work, even in the face of dire obstacles such as financial assets being frozen due to armed conflict or facilities or homes being destroyed in a hurricane. Your support will help endow an Emergency Support Fund dedicated to offering vital assistance to public health professionals in these extreme circumstances.

PROGRAM-WIDE IMPACT: SUPPORT A FULL YEAR OF BOTH CURRENT AND SENIOR FELLOWS PROGRAMMING - \$3,000,000

Current fellows and Senior Fellows are leaders who translate every learning opportunity into action for the communities they serve. Although each cohort is small by design, the ripple effect is immense: one fellow influences dozens of institutions, hundreds of partners, and millions of people worldwide. This is the return on investment we champion, impact measured not in dollars, but in lives reached, systems strengthened, and communities transformed through the work of our fellows.

SUSTAINED TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE: ONGOING SUPPORT FOR OUR SENIOR FELLOWS COMMUNITY TO EXTEND THE PROGRAM FOR 5-10 YEARS

AFHE is offering the unique opportunity for a generous individual or institutional donor to underwrite this transformative program for the next 5-10 years. This philanthropic investment would be a powerful way to advance health equity around the world and carries with it unique opportunities for visibility.

Why Invest Now?

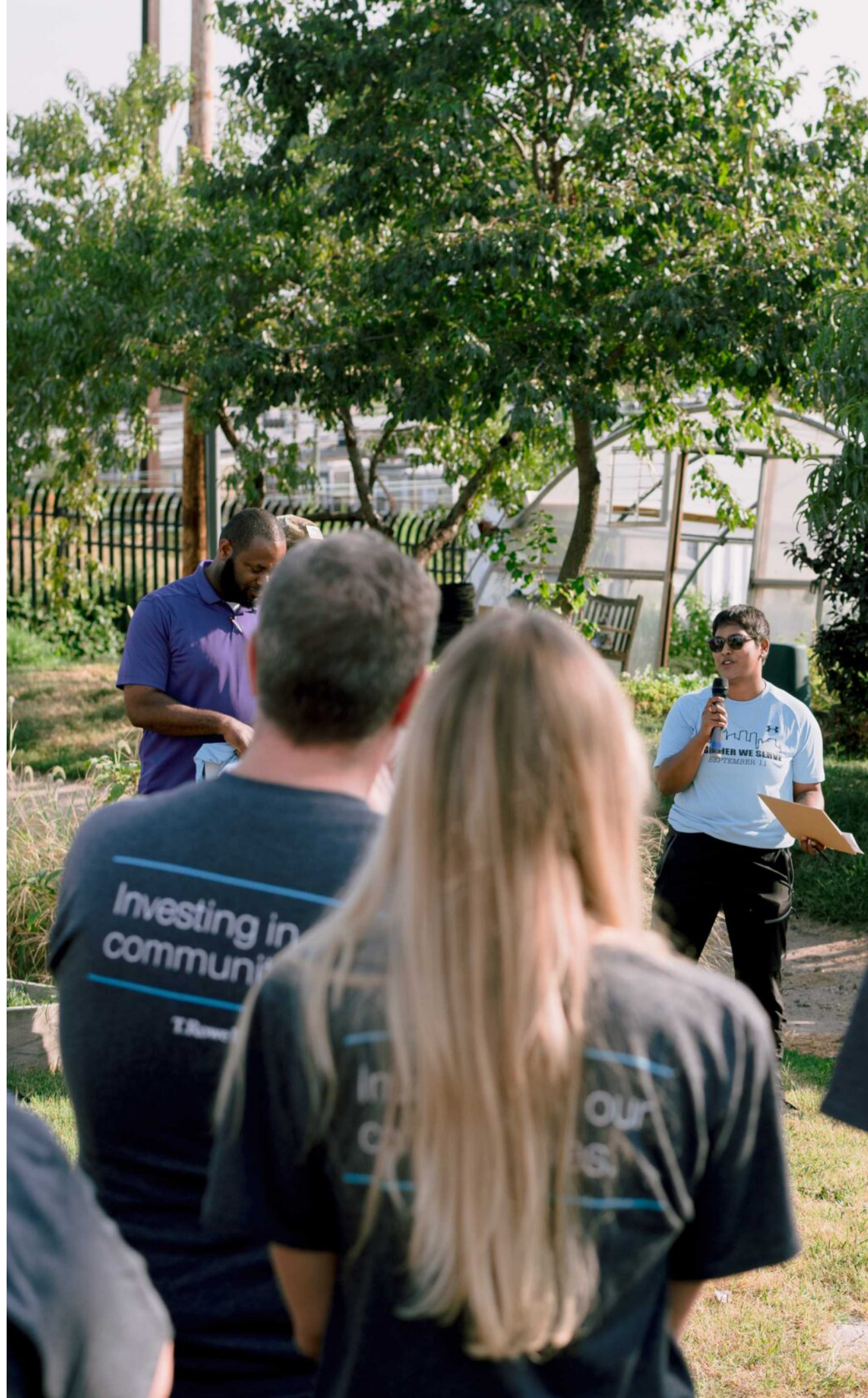
Investing in global health equity has never been more important. Global conflicts, climate change, and declining interest in international cooperation and aid have led to the abandonment of those who most need support. By developing local leaders, the fellowship is not about recreating a failed system of aid, but reimagining what is possible when community members and leaders design, develop and lead initiatives to improve health and well being.

The threats to global health equity - and the opportunity to create positive change - have never been greater.

An investment in Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity allows foundations, corporate giving entities, and philanthropists to expand and extend their impact by investing in leaders who are trained to achieve measurable results and who take responsibility for sharing their knowledge and experience with peers and networks for sustained impact. Your support helps create a growing network to tackle the most critical global health issues of our time. Supporting AFHE not only allows for the development of transformational health leaders today but also facilitates long-term change through the communities and individuals our fellows' work touches.

With your support, Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity can continue to expand our growing global footprint, training, supporting, and mentoring the next generation of health equity champions as they step forward to fight for global health equity.

JOIN US TODAY.



How to Make a Gift

CONTACT:

Dr. Guenevere Burke
Executive Director
AFHE@atlanticfellows.org

DONATIONS:

By check:

Please make the check payable to the George Washington University. Designate “Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity” in the notes field on the check.

Mail to:

Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity
Milken Institute School of Public Health
The George Washington University
2175 K Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20037

ONLINE:

healthequity.atlanticfellows.org/support/

Atlantic Fellows

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