

NBASLH 4th Annual Cultural Humility Virtual Conference

Saturday, October 3rd, 2026 9am-5:30pm

One of the major pillars of cultural humility is lifelong learning, accompanied by critical self-reflection and evaluation. The Cultural Humility Conference will feature a variety of scholarly presentations on the topic of Cultural Humility in Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences.



This year's theme, *Dear Mama: Honoring Black Mothering, Healing Our Communities*, centers the Black maternal health crisis as a justice issue that cuts across our field, not only at birth, but across the fullness of life. Drawing on Alexis Pauline Gumbs' work, we're approaching mothering as a practice rather than a biological category, one grounded in nurturing, resistance, and care for the next generation. The conference is also rooted in Tervalon and Murray-Garcia's model of cultural humility and Loretta Ross' reproductive justice framework.

Time Ordered Agenda:

9:00 - 9:30 Opening Session

9:30 - 10:30 Keynote Speaker

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45-11:45 Three concurrent Sessions

11:45 - 12:45 Three Concurrent Sessions

12:45 - 1:15 Lunch Break

1:15 - 2:15 Mama's Panel

2:15 - 3:15 Three Concurrent Sessions

3:15 - 4:00 Three Concurrent Sessions

4:00 - 5:00 Community Panel

5:00-5:30 Closing/Social

Individual Sessions Learning Outcomes/Presenter Details Below:

9:00am-9:30am:

Opening Session:

Dear Mama: Honoring Black Mothering, Healing Our Communities

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Define the four pillars of cultural humility: lifelong learning and critical self-reflection, redressing power imbalances, building mutually beneficial partnerships, and institutional accountability.
2. Identify the core tenets of Loretta Ross' reproductive justice framework, including its intersectional attention to race, gender, ability, and class.
3. Describe Alexis Pauline Gumbs' concept of revolutionary mothering, including its expansion of "mothering" beyond biological motherhood to include Black fathers, queer and trans parents, and chosen family.

Presenter Information:

R. Danielle Scott, Ph.D., CCC-SLP (she/her) is an Associate Clinical Professor at Northeastern University Charlotte in the Communication Sciences & Disorders Program and a Faculty Scholar with the Institute of Health Equity and Social Justice Research (IHESJR), where she contributes to the Institute's mission of advancing health across the health span — from campus to community, from local engagement to global impact. Dr. Scott is deeply committed to the work of justice, belonging, and liberation. A Northeastern University Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning Through Research (CATLR) Innovative Teaching Excellence Fellow, Dr. Scott's work in anti-oppressive pedagogy continues to shape her teaching, scholarship, and service. Her research pertains to cultural humility and therapeutic relationships.

Amy Hobek, PhD, CCC-SLP is a Clinical and Educator Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Cincinnati. She is also a licensed speech language pathologist providing clinical supervision of graduate students in a culturally and linguistically diverse preschool setting on UC's campus. Her teaching and scholarship focus on child language and literacy development with an emphasis on valuing and legitimizing cultural and linguistic variations in these areas within individuals, families, and communities. She is the co-chair of the Cultural Humility Task Force of NBASLH.

9:30-10:30am:

Keynote Address:

From Surviving to Thriving: Centering Black Joy, Agency, and Community Power in Maternal and Infant Health

Dr. Francoise Knox-Kazimierczuk, PhD, RDN, LD, CLC, ATC, CSCS, NSCA-CPT, FAND
(She/Her)



Session Description

Black maternal and infant health in the U.S. is often introduced through a familiar and devastating set of statistics: Black women experience significantly higher rates of pregnancy-related morbidity and mortality, while Black infants experience persistent inequities in preterm birth, low birth weight, and infant mortality. These disparities reflect cumulative exposure to structural racism, chronic stress, constrained access to resources, and inequitable healthcare systems across the life course. Although documenting these inequities remains essential, survival cannot be the endpoint of maternal and infant health. This presentation asks a different question: **What does it take to shift from Black surviving to Thriving?**

The session will first examine pathways linking structural inequity to maternal and infant health. Weathering theory will be used to describe the physiologic consequences of cumulative social and environmental stress, with particular attention to cardiometabolic conditions that disproportionately burden Black women, including hypertension, stroke, diabetes, and obesity. A life-course perspective and the Developmental Origins of Health and Disease (DOHaD) framework will extend this discussion across generations, emphasizing how maternal health, nutrition, stress, cardiometabolic risk, and social conditions before and during pregnancy can influence fetal development and later health. Together, these frameworks demonstrate why maternal health cannot be isolated from the conditions in which Black women live, work, build families, and receive care.

The presentation will then shift from risk and pathology to community knowledge, Black Joy, resilience, agency, and collective power. This discussion will be anchored in qualitative research and participant stories drawn from multiple community-engaged studies with Black women, including focus groups and participant experiences from the Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) for Pregnancy program and breastfeeding-focused qualitative research. Across these settings, Black women have described the realities of navigating pregnancy, postpartum

recovery, infant feeding, chronic stress, competing responsibilities, social and economic constraints, and healthcare systems that do not always meet their needs. At the same time, participants have identified sources of strength and protection, including social support, shared knowledge, culturally responsive care, peer connection, family relationships, trusted community spaces, and opportunities to exercise agency in decisions affecting their own health and the health of their children.

These narratives demonstrate that Black women are not simply recipients of healthcare interventions or health education. They are knowledge producers, advocates, caregivers, and problem-solvers who routinely develop strategies for navigating complex maternal and infant health challenges. When research and healthcare environments create opportunities for women to share experiences, build relationships, and collectively identify solutions, community becomes an important source of knowledge, protection, and action. Centering these perspectives creates space to move beyond deficit-based narratives and toward approaches that recognize the expertise, assets, and leadership already present within Black communities.

This framing also requires careful consideration of resilience. Resilience should not be used to normalize Black women's ability to endure inequity or to transfer responsibility for structural failures to individuals and families. Rather, resilience, agency, and Black Joy can be understood as forms of individual and collective capacity strengthened when systems create conditions for safety, dignity, belonging, connection, cultural affirmation, and self-determination. Community building therefore becomes more than a social support intervention; it is a mechanism for strengthening protective networks, amplifying community expertise, restoring power, and creating health-promoting environments.

The session will translate these concepts into practice through community-based participatory research (CBPR), whole-person care, and family- and community-centered models of care. These approaches challenge traditional clinician-centered models by recognizing Black mothers, families, and communities as partners in identifying priorities, designing interventions, and determining meaningful outcomes. They also require healthcare professionals and institutions to consider power, social and structural determinants of health, cultural context, and accountability alongside clinical risk.

Advancing Black maternal and infant health further requires interdisciplinary models of care. Maternal cardiometabolic health, nutrition, lactation, infant feeding, caregiver-infant interaction, communication, hearing, developmental outcomes, and social well-being are interconnected. No single profession can adequately address these overlapping needs. Effective models must therefore intentionally connect obstetrics, midwifery, nursing, dietetics, lactation, speech-language pathology, audiology, behavioral health, primary care, community health workers, doulas, and community-based organizations while maintaining Black women and families as active partners in care.

The session will conclude with an actionable framework for moving beyond disparity documentation toward systems that share power, strengthen protective community networks, and integrate clinical expertise with lived experience. Participants will be invited to consider how their own professional roles can contribute to a shift from crisis-oriented models focused primarily on preventing death and disease toward equity-centered systems designed to cultivate Black Joy, health, agency, connection, and thriving across generations.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Explain how structural racism, weathering, cardiometabolic disease, life-course processes, and the Developmental Origins of Health and Disease framework contribute to persistent inequities in Black maternal and infant health.
2. Examine how Black Joy, resilience, agency, community connection, and community-generated knowledge can serve as assets for advancing Black maternal and infant health without shifting responsibility for structural inequities onto Black women and families.
3. Apply community-based participatory research, whole-person and family/community-centered care, and interdisciplinary practice principles to develop actionable strategies for advancing Black maternal and infant health within participants' professional and community settings.

Presenter Information:

Dr. Knox-Kazimierczuk, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Rehabilitation, Exercise, & Nutrition Science at the University of Cincinnati. She is a staunch advocate for women's health, working to improve birth outcomes for pregnant women and their infants through her research and community outreach. Dr. Knox-Kazimierczuk has worked supporting women on their health journeys for nearly two decades. Her work as a clinician and her experiences with the healthcare system as Black woman led to her research interest in Black women's health. Dr. Knox-Kazimierczuk began her educational journey at Concordia University Chicago where she graduated with a double major in Exercise Science & Fitness Management and Psychology. She completed her master's degree in Kinesiology and Health from Illinois State University and two additional master's degrees in Dietetics and Chemistry from Ball State University. She completed an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Health Promotion with an emphasis in cultural studies from Miami University. She continues to pursue trainings and certifications to improve her knowledge and skills. Dr. Knox-Kazimierczuk is a certified lactation consultant, prenatal and postpartum yoga teacher, has been trained as a Lamaze educator and full spectrum doula through DONA. These trainings and certifications have become an integral component of her private practice and research. Dr. Knox-Kazimierczuk believes that change occurs at the individual, community, and systems level, therefore as Associate Professor and Public Health Researcher, she has focused on understanding the barriers and facilitators to positive health outcomes for women in all phases of their lives as whole people. To this end, she has framed her research using Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR). Her studies aim to use her findings to develop and advocate for policy at the local and national levels through service on local, state, and national boards. Her goal is to provide women with the support and resources they need to assert their power and find their way along their health path.

10:30 - 10:45 BREAK and Presenter Check-In**10:45 - 11:45am: Three Concurrent Sessions****Supervision Highlighted Session****Revolutionary Supervision: Cultural Humility as an Act of Black Mothering**

Session Description: Clinical supervision is more than teaching clinical skills—it is an act of shaping future professionals and the communities they will serve. Drawing upon published scholarship on cross-cultural education in speech-language pathology, this presentation explores how culturally humble supervision reflects the principles of revolutionary mothering through intentional mentorship, reflective practice, and equitable relationships. Participants will examine how implicit bias, power dynamics, and microaggressions influence supervision while learning practical strategies that cultivate belonging, psychological safety, and professional

growth for culturally diverse supervisees. The session offers actionable approaches for supervisors seeking to build more equitable educational and clinical environments.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe how cultural humility influences the supervisory relationship and contributes to equitable clinical education.
2. Identify at least three ways implicit bias, microaggressions, and power dynamics affect culturally diverse supervisees.
3. Apply culturally responsive supervisory strategies that foster psychological safety, belonging, and reflective practice.
4. Develop one actionable plan to integrate principles of revolutionary mothering into supervisory or mentoring practices.

Presenter Information:

Nancy Gauvin, EdD, CCC-SLP, is the Associate Dean of Community Engagement and Global Health Initiatives and Assistant Professor at the University of Pittsburgh. Her work focuses on health equity, community engagement, clinical education, and culturally responsive supervision to strengthen equitable training experiences for future speech-language pathologists.

Kyomi Gregory-Martin, PhD, CCC-SLP, is an Associate Professor at Pace University whose scholarship focuses on cultural humility, dialect diversity, language development, and equitable clinical education. Her research examines culturally responsive supervision, African American English, developmental language disorders, and strategies that promote inclusive education and healthcare outcomes.

Beyond Birth: Practicing Cultural Humility Through Nutrition, Trust, and Black Mothering

Session Description: Black mothers deserve care that extends beyond pregnancy and honors their lived experiences, cultural traditions, and voices throughout every stage of life. This interactive workshop explores how cultural humility strengthens maternal health by cultivating trust, honoring community knowledge, and providing culturally responsive nutrition education. Participants will engage in guided self-reflection, analyze real-world maternal scenarios, and develop practical strategies to reduce bias, improve communication, and create environments where Black mothers feel heard, respected, and supported. Attendees will leave with actionable tools that can immediately strengthen their clinical, educational, research, and community based practice.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the two core principles mentioned above of cultural humility and explain how they differ from cultural competence in maternal health practice.
2. Identify at least three systemic or interpersonal barriers that contribute to mistrust and inequitable care experienced by Black mothers.
3. Demonstrate culturally humble communication strategies that foster trust, respect, and collaborative decision-making with Black mothers.
4. Apply principles of cultural humility to interdisciplinary nutrition care by identifying strategies for collaborating with speech language pathologists to adapt culturally meaningful foods for individuals with dysphagia while preserving dignity, cultural identity, and nutritional well-being.

5. Develop one actionable strategy for integrating cultural humility into their clinical, educational, research, or community-based work.

Presenter Information:

Maryam Khalilah Muhammad, MS, RD Candidate is a maternal nutrition educator, researcher, community health leader, and Founder and Executive Director of Heal Thy Life Center. She earned her Master of Science in Nutrition from the University of Illinois Chicago and is beginning a Master of Public Health with a concentration in Maternal and Child Health. Her work bridges nutrition science, community engaged research, and culturally responsive health education to improve outcomes for Black women and families. Maryam has served on maternal health research teams, is currently a community health research fellow at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, mentors young women pursuing careers in medicine, nutrition, and public health, and leads innovative community programs focused on maternal wellness, nutrition, and health equity. Her work is grounded in the belief that healing begins when Black women are seen, heard, believed, and supported across the fullness of life.

Centering Black Mothers' Lived Experiences: Preparing SLPs and AuDs to Support Early Communication Following High-Risk Pregnancy

Session Description: This interdisciplinary presentation explores how speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and audiologists (AuDs) can promote early communication development by understanding the lived experiences of Black mothers recovering from high-risk pregnancies and severe childbirth complications. Drawing from qualitative interviews with Black women who survived life-threatening maternal events, the session examines how recovery, caregiving, and infant communication development occur simultaneously. Presenters will discuss opportunities during pregnancy to provide culturally responsive anticipatory guidance on maternal recovery, infant hearing and communication milestones, and developmental monitoring. Participants will leave with practical strategies for integrating maternal lived experiences into family-centered interventions that improve quality of life for both mother and child.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe how severe maternal morbidity, high-risk pregnancy, and postpartum recovery influence caregiver wellbeing, parent-child interactions, and opportunities for early communication development.
2. Identify at least three opportunities during pregnancy for SLPs and AuDs to provide culturally responsive education related to maternal warning signs, postpartum recovery, infant hearing, communication development, and developmental milestones.
3. Explain how understanding Black mothers' lived experiences, including the influence of race on prenatal and postpartum care, can inform family-centered interventions that improve communication outcomes and quality of life for mothers and young children.
4. Apply prevention-focused strategies that prepare expectant families during pregnancy to support maternal recovery and early communication development during infancy and early childhood.

Presenter Information:

Lucinda Canty, PhD, CNM, FACNM, FAAN, is a certified nurse-midwife, researcher, artist, and Associate Professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. With more than 30 years of reproductive health experience, her work centers on Black women's maternal health

experiences and integrates research, storytelling, history, and art to advance maternal health equity.

Akilah Heggs, Ph.D., CCC-A is a public health scholar and audiologist whose work focuses on advancing equitable systems of care for children and families affected by developmental disabilities. She has more than 20 years of experience across clinical, public health, and policy settings. Dr. Heggs has extensive experience across the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) system as a clinician, state coordinator, and federal health policy analyst. Her work emphasizes health equity, workforce development, and community-based partnerships that improve developmental and behavioral health outcomes.

10:45am-11:45am: Three Concurrent Sessions

Ethics Highlighted Session

bell hooks' Love Ethic as a Guide to Using Ethics Concepts as Tools Toward Cultural Awareness, Humility, and Justice

Session Description: This presentation invites participants to explore how bell hooks's concept of a love ethic can inform justice-oriented, collaborative, and disability-conscious practice in speech-language and hearing professions. Together, we will reflect on how professional language, training, and systems may reinforce exclusion, while considering alternatives grounded in dignity, mutual respect, and shared decision-making. Drawing from disability ethics, bioethics, feminist ethics, and ethics of care, the session will offer practical frameworks to support more equitable partnerships with those we serve across clinical, educational, and community settings.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe how bell hooks's concept of a love ethic, alongside disability ethics, bioethics, feminist ethics, and ethics of care, can inform justice-oriented practice in speech-language and hearing professions.
2. Identify ways that professional language, training systems, and institutional norms may reinforce hierarchy, bias, and exclusion in clinical, educational, and interdisciplinary settings.
3. Apply concepts such as relational autonomy, epistemic humility, recognition justice, and reflexive practice to strengthen collaborative, dignity-centered partnerships with those they serve.

Presenter Information:

Elissa Larkin, M.S., CCC-SLP, HEC-C, is a Bioethicist in the Donnelley Ethics Program, Research Speech-Language Therapist in the Center for Aphasia Research and Treatment, and an interdisciplinary communication partner trainer at Shirley Ryan AbilityLab in Chicago. Elissa works to continually learn and promote access, equity, and inclusion across her roles. Lynne

Lynne Brady Wagner is the Senior Program Manager for Accessibility Services at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. A speech-language pathologist and ethics leader, she previously held equity, ethics, and neurorehabilitation leadership roles at Mass General Brigham and Spaulding. She teaches and presents widely on disability, bioethics, equitable care, and interprofessional leadership development.

“Here’s the Number”: Mapping the Hidden Work Between Referral and Access

Session Description: After recommending a service, clinicians may provide a phone number or resource list and assume that access is now possible. In this interactive virtual workshop, participants will use elements of cognitive task analysis to un-nest what occurs between “here’s the number” and a child receiving care. Through a progressively revealed pediatric referral case in breakout rooms, participants will map hidden cognitive, communicative, logistical, and material demands; examine how clinical decisions, documentation, and racialized perceptions shape responsibility; and locate likely access breakdowns. Participants will then redesign the referral pathway to identify practical clinical and institutional supports that can reduce burden and improve access.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Map the cognitive, communicative, logistical, and material demands embedded in a pediatric referral pathway.
2. Analyze how access barriers, clinical decisions, documentation practices, and racialized bias may shape interpretations of referral follow-through.
3. Apply a referral-access mapping framework to identify potential opportunities for clinical or institutional support within a composite case.

Presenter Information:

Kelly Ann Peña (she/they), MS, CCC-SLP, is an assistant professor in Communication Science and Disorders at the University of Pittsburgh. A bilingual medical speech-language pathologist and simulation educator focused on traumatic brain injury, her interests include critical thinking, cognition, and the cognitive and communicative demands experienced by both patients and healthcare professionals.

Dear Mama, We See You: From Judgment to Curiosity in the NICU

Session Description: Neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) clinicians may rely on unspoken expectations when evaluating parental involvement, readiness, and engagement. This session examines how implicit bias may shape speech-language pathologists’ perceptions of mothers and parents of color, particularly when bedside presence, communication style, advocacy, or participation in feeding care differs from institutional norms. Participants will explore how narrow ideas of the “good NICU mother” can influence clinical judgments and family-clinician relationships. The session will discuss practical strategies for recognizing and disrupting bias, honoring parental knowledge, improving communication, and supporting more equitable family engagement and shared decision-making.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify at least three implicit or institutional expectations that may influence how NICU speech-language pathologists perceive the involvement, engagement, or readiness of Black mothers and other parents of color.

2. Examine how personal assumptions and institutional expectations may influence clinical judgments about parental involvement in the NICU.
3. Describe at least three practical strategies for reducing biased judgments, honoring parental knowledge, and supporting more equitable communication, shared decision-making, and family engagement in the NICU.

Presenter Information:

Jenan Maaz, SLPD, CCC-SLP, BCS-S (she/her), is a Muslim, multiethnic, bilingual (English-Arabic) speech-language pathologist and board-certified swallowing specialist. She practices at an academic medical center with a Level 1 Trauma Center & Level III NICU and is an Assistant Professor at California State University, Stanislaus, specializing in dysphagia, feeding, and DEI.

12:45-1:15pm: Lunch**1:15-2:15pm: Mamas Panel****Listening to Black Mamas: Lived Experiences That Transform Clinical Care**

Session Description: Black mothers possess invaluable expertise about navigating healthcare, educational, and therapeutic systems with their children. This moderated panel centers the lived experiences of Black mothers who have interacted with speech-language pathologists and other healthcare providers. Through authentic storytelling and guided discussion, participants will examine how trust, communication, cultural humility, advocacy, and systemic barriers influence family-provider relationships. Rather than focusing solely on clinical expertise, this session invites professionals to listen, reflect, and learn directly from Black mothers whose experiences offer meaningful guidance for creating more culturally responsive, affirming, and equitable care for children and families.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe how Black mothers' lived experiences influence trust, engagement, and participation in healthcare and therapeutic services.
2. Identify at least three provider behaviors that promote culturally humble and family-centered care.
3. Examine personal assumptions and clinical practices through reflection on Black mothers' lived experiences.
4. Develop one actionable strategy for strengthening culturally responsive partnerships with Black children and their families.

Presenter Information:

Kyomi Gregory-Martin, PhD, CCC-SLP, is an Associate Professor at Pace University whose scholarship focuses on cultural humility, dialect diversity, language development, and equitable clinical education. Her research examines culturally responsive supervision, African American English, developmental language disorders, and strategies that promote inclusive education and healthcare outcomes.

Lettie Sullivan is a professional Organizer, Life Coach, Bestselling Author, and Priestess of the Sacred Arts. A modern Mystic with 20+ years of spiritual study and private practice, Lettie blends intuitive insight with grounded guidance to help others find clarity, alignment, and empowerment. She is a mom of three children.

Deyana Walker is a stay-at-home mom to a two-year-old daughter and six-month-old son. She previously worked as a Patient Access Liaison at Westchester Medical Center, bringing that same care and attentiveness to her family life today.

Janice Clarke, IBCLC, is a lactation consultant, maternal health advocate, and founder of JC Lactation Counseling, and mother to a 7-year-old son. Her own breastfeeding journey inspired her commitment to culturally responsive, compassionate care that honors parents as experts in their children's lives.

2:15-3:15pm: Three Concurrent Sessions

Who Gets to Nurture? Revolutionary Mothering, Cultural Humility, and Reimagining Belonging

Session Description: Family-centered practice is foundational to speech-language pathology and audiology, yet clinicians rarely examine how assumptions about caregiving, family, and expertise shape professional partnerships. Grounded in Revolutionary Mothering, cultural humility, and belonging, this interactive workshop invites participants to reconsider who is recognized as a caregiver, whose expertise is valued, and how healthcare and educational systems can foster authentic partnerships with Black families. Through reflection, discussion, and case-based learning, attendees will explore practical strategies for building belonging, affirming diverse caregiving relationships including Black queer and trans parents and advancing equitable, culturally humble practice.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Analyze Revolutionary Mothering as a framework for cultural humility and family-centered practice within speech-language pathology, audiology, and related healthcare settings.
2. Examine how professional assumptions about caregiving, parenthood, and expertise influence partnerships with Black families, including Black queer and trans parents.
3. Apply evidence-informed strategies that cultivate belonging, strengthen equitable partnerships, and promote culturally humble practice across clinical, educational, and interdisciplinary settings.

Presenter Information:

Dr. Xavier Lord Williams, Ed.D., CCC-SLP is a pediatric speech-language pathologist, educational leader, researcher, and Black trans father. His work examines cultural humility, belonging, and equitable partnerships with Black families, integrating clinical practice, improvement science, and educational leadership to promote health equity and family-centered care across healthcare and educational settings.

Lactation, Neurologic Recovery, and Black Maternal Health: Postpartum Stroke Prevention and Rehabilitation Implications for SLP Practice

Session Description: This session explores the relationship between postpartum stroke, breastfeeding, and Black maternal health. Attendees will learn how breastfeeding supports neurologic recovery, cardiometabolic wellness, maternal infant bonding, and stroke prevention, and how SLPs can address these factors through both prenatal education and postpartum

rehabilitation. The session highlights culturally responsive, lactation informed approaches that expand the SLP's role in promoting equitable maternal and infant health outcomes.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the epidemiology and clinical presentation of postpartum stroke, with emphasis on disparities impacting Black birthing individuals.
2. Explain the neuroprotective and cardiometabolic benefits of breastfeeding that relate to communication, cognition, swallowing, and stroke prevention and recovery.
3. Apply culturally responsive, evidence informed strategies for interdisciplinary collaboration and patient counseling in postpartum stroke care.

Presenter Information:

Emma Justice, MS, CCC-SLP, CLC, NTMTC, provides NICU feeding services at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital and established Justice for Infants in 2023. She co-created BABY STEP (Swallowing Training and Education Portal) and advances equitable maternal and infant health through culturally responsive care, advocacy, and educational pathways for clinicians.

Renee Garrett, MEd, CCC-SLP, CBIS, is the owner of BrainBridge Connect. She focuses on neurological rehabilitation of multicultural patients who have experienced ABI/TBI. Renee is active in educating caregivers and patients about neurological communication and cognitive disorders. She is the host of the podcast "Brainstorms: Functional Neurorehab for SLPs".

The Labor After the Labor: Caregiver Trauma, Access Pathways, and Healing in Black Mothering

Session Description: This session explores the emotional and systemic realities of Black caregivers raising children with learning differences. One presenter examines the hidden trauma caregivers carry—chronic stress, identity disruption, and the cumulative impact of navigating deficit-based systems. The second presenter highlights external supports and access pathways that strengthen families, including culturally responsive resources, advocacy tools, and community partnerships. Together, the session honors Black mothering as a radical act of care and resistance, offering trauma-informed insights and practical strategies for healing, empowerment, and equitable access across the lifespan.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify key features of caregiver trauma experienced by Black parents of children with learning differences, including emotional, somatic, and identity-based impacts.
2. Explain how structural racism, deficit-based practices, and inequitable access pathways contribute to cumulative caregiver stress across the lifespan.
3. Apply principles of cultural humility and trauma-informed care to strengthen communication and partnership with Black caregivers in clinical and educational settings.
4. Describe at least two strategies speech-language pathologists can use to support caregiver wellbeing, reduce advocacy burden, and promote equitable access to services.
5. Evaluate how community-centered, culturally responsive partnerships can advance healing, empowerment, and health equity for Black families.

Presenter Information:

Janice Brown Parker, M.S., CCC-SLP, is a veteran speech-language pathologist with over 30 years of service in DC Public Schools and Founder/CEO of Parent SPA, Inc. An educator, mentor, advocate, and adjunct professor, she empowers families, develops future clinicians, and champions equitable educational opportunities for children with communication and learning differences.

Dr. Tiffany Gurley Nettles is a medical speech-language pathologist with 25 years of experience, a program director and assistant professor at the University of the District of Columbia, and the founder of More Than Just Talk LLC. Her research focuses on post-stroke depression, family caregiver stress, return-to-learn post-concussion, and cognitive aging.

3:15-4:00pm: 3 Concurrent Sessions:**Maternal Instinct: Protecting Our Patients, Our People, Our Peace**

Session Description: Health disparities affecting Black patients are a critical concern in healthcare. Black patients continue to experience disproportionately high rates of chronic illness, health-related complications and mortality in comparison to White patients driven in part by systemic racism, economic barriers, and unequal access to quality healthcare. Too often, Black patients are not believed, heard, or adequately represented in decisions about their care. Healthcare professionals have a critical role in recognizing concerns, providing culturally responsive care, and advocating for patients in order to improve clinical outcomes.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Identify key systemic factors that contribute to health disparities experienced by Black patients in healthcare systems.
2. Describe key systemic factors that affect the experience, career advancement, and retention of Black medical SLPs.
3. Develop strategies for protecting and advocating for Black patients and Black medical SLPs

Presenter Information:

Marilouise E. Nichols, M.S., CCC-SLP, BCS-S is the Acute Care Rehabilitation Manager at Duke Raleigh Hospital in Raleigh, NC. Marilouise has an extensive background in medical speech pathology and has focused her career in neurogenic dysphagia and communication disorders, traumatic brain injury, and iatrogenic dysphagia in adult acute care, long-term acute care, and inpatient rehabilitation. She is a Board-Certified Specialist in Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders. Marilouise earned her B.A at Spelman College in Atlanta, GA and her M.S. at Purdue University in West Lafayette, IN.

Dr. Taryn E. Townsend, SLPD, CCC-SLP, CBIS, is a medical speech-language pathologist with nearly 15 years of experience across the lifespan. Her clinical expertise includes pediatric acquired brain injury, cognitive-communication disorders, dysphagia, disorders of consciousness, and the care of medically complex patients in acute care. Her work is grounded in advancing equitable, culturally responsive, and patient- and family-centered care while expanding the visibility and impact of medical speech-language pathology.

Beyond the Referral: Why Community Is the Missing Link in Supporting Black Families

Session Description: Black families often leave healthcare appointments with information, referrals, and next steps, yet many continue to navigate diagnosis, advocacy, and caregiving in isolation. While healthcare systems play a critical role in identifying needs and initiating care, families frequently encounter barriers that cannot be addressed within the walls of a clinic alone. Drawing on lessons from founding Our Tribe, a community created by and for Black families raising autistic children, this session explores what happens after families leave the healthcare system and why trusted relationships, belonging, and community are essential components of long-term health and well-being. Participants will be introduced to a community-centered framework that expands traditional models of care beyond information-sharing and referrals to include relationship building, mutual partnership, and sustained community support. Through personal storytelling, examples of cross-sector collaboration, and practical strategies, attendees will examine how healthcare providers and community organizations can work together to create more responsive systems that honor the lived experiences of Black families. Rather than viewing community organizations as referral destinations, participants will be challenged to consider them as essential partners in improving engagement, trust, and family outcomes across the lifespan.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe common gaps Black families experience after leaving healthcare settings and explain why referrals alone often fail to create sustained support.
2. Identify the role of trusted relationships, belonging, and community connection as protective factors that influence family engagement, advocacy, and long-term well-being.
3. Apply strategies for building mutually beneficial partnerships between healthcare organizations and community-based organizations that extend care beyond clinical encounters.
4. Reflect on their own practice and identify opportunities to strengthen culturally humble, relationship-centered approaches to supporting Black families.

Presenter Information:

Josselyn Taylor is a nationally recognized community strategist, speaker, and nonprofit leader dedicated to improving outcomes for Black families through relationship-centered systems change. She currently serves as Director of Community Strategy at Cradle Cincinnati, where she leads cross-sector initiatives that bring healthcare systems, public health agencies, and community members together to advance maternal and infant health equity. She is also the co-founder and board president of Our Tribe, a grassroots organization created by Black families raising autistic children. Inspired by her own journey navigating her son Kai's autism diagnosis, Josselyn helped build the community she wished had existed for her own family: a place where parents find not only information, but belonging, trusted relationships, and practical support. Over the past five years, her work has expanded from supporting individual families to influencing systems through hospital-community partnerships, community advisory boards, policy and practice change, workforce development, and advocacy. She has collaborated with healthcare organizations to improve patient experiences, elevate community voice in decision-making, and strengthen partnerships that extend care beyond clinical settings. Josselyn's work is grounded in a simple but powerful belief: community is not adjacent to healthcare. It is an essential part of healing. Her presentations blend personal storytelling, practical experience, and systems-level insight to challenge audiences to rethink how institutions partner with communities to create lasting change for Black families.

Breastfeeding While Black: Transforming NICU Care Through Equity

Session Description: This presentation is an evidence-informed narrative review of racial disparities in NICU breastfeeding. It integrates the literature on lactation inequities, Black mother-reported NICU experiences, and unit-level quality improvement strategies. The participants will examine and discuss factors that influence breastfeeding among Black mothers in the NICU and highlight evidence-based culturally responsive strategies that healthcare teams can implement to improve breastfeeding outcomes. The author will present historical and medical context, case studies, and effective systems currently in place at NICUs around the United States. Discussion of these topics with participants will be encouraged as we strive to develop systems that will positively transform Black maternal and medically-fragile infant healthcare.

Learning Outcomes: Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe common structural, interpersonal, and historical barriers that affect breastfeeding for Black mothers in the NICU.
2. Recognize how NICU processes and communication can unintentionally widen disparities.
3. Apply practical, culturally responsive strategies to improve milk expression, visitation, pumping success, direct breastfeeding, and family-centered support.
4. Identify unit-level changes that promote equity in breastfeeding outcomes.

Presenter Information:

Lindsay Meyer Turner, PhD, CCC-SLP, CNT, IBCLC, RLC, NTMTC is a speech pathologist and lactation consultant working in a Level III NICU in Houston, TX. She is the owner of Dandelion Feeding & Speech Therapy, PLLC and has 15 years of outpatient pediatric and NICU experience with expertise in oral feeding and swallowing disorders. Dr. Turner is responsible for the establishment of several departmental programs and initiatives revolving around neuroprotection/neurobehavioral development, oral feeding (breast and bottle), language nutrition, and parental involvement. Her current research is centered on the establishment of cue-based feeding protocols, increasing direct breastfeeding outcomes, facilitation of language nutrition through parent involvement, nurturing touch and parent bonding, and understanding the potential effects of swaddle bathing on oral feeding performance. Dr. Turner mentors graduate students, guest lectures, and educates medical personnel and other SLPs on the local, state, and national levels. Dr. Turner is a Board Certified Neonatal Therapist, an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant, and a Certified Neonatal Touch and Massage Therapist. She was an invited speaker at National Black Association of Speech Language and Hearing in 2018, as well as American Speech Language and Hearing Association (ASHA) in 2023 and 2024. She maintains an active seat on the ASHA Convention Pediatric Feeding and Swallowing committee, is a member of the Community Advisory Board at University of Houston, and is an adjunct professor at Valdosta State University and Southern University.

4:00 - 5:00 pm

Community Panel

Community Voices, Ancestral Care: Partnering with Communities to Address the Black Maternal Health Crisis

Session Description: This panel centers the voices of community leaders and organizers doing on-the-ground work to disrupt the Black maternal health crisis. Grounded in cultural humility (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998) and reproductive justice, panelists will share how their organizations build reciprocal, mutually beneficial partnerships with the communities they serve — partnerships rooted in trust, shared power, and sustained relationship. Moving beyond the birth event and into the fuller, ongoing work of sustaining Black mothering, children, and families, this conversation invites speech, language, and hearing professionals to consider what our field can learn from community-defined models of care, and what it means to show up as genuine partners in this work.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this session participants will be able to:

1. Define cultural humility as an ongoing practice of self-reflection and power-sharing, within community-centered work.
2. Describe at least three examples of community-based approaches to addressing maternal and child health inequities, as shared by panelists.
3. Identify key elements of mutually beneficial, reciprocal partnerships between institutions/providers and the communities they serve.

Presenter Information:

R. Danielle Scott, Ph.D., CCC-SLP (she/her) is an Associate Clinical Professor at Northeastern University Charlotte in the Communication Sciences & Disorders Program and a Faculty Scholar with the Institute of Health Equity and Social Justice Research (IHESJR), where she contributes to the Institute's mission of advancing health across the health span — from campus to community, from local engagement to global impact. Dr. Scott is deeply committed to the work of justice, belonging, and liberation. A Northeastern University Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning Through Research (CATLR) Innovative Teaching Excellence Fellow, Dr. Scott's work in anti-oppressive pedagogy continues to shape her teaching, scholarship, and service. Her research pertains to cultural humility and therapeutic relationships.

Jocqueline Pressley is a dedicated midwife, doula, certified community health worker, educator, and maternal-infant health advocate committed to transforming the birth and postpartum experience for families. As the founder of Cherished Hearts Family Support Services, Jocqueline provides compassionate, culturally responsive support that centers the physical, emotional, and social well-being of mothers, babies, and families. With a background in community health and extensive experience supporting families throughout pregnancy, birth, and postpartum, Jocqueline has developed a unique approach that combines clinical knowledge, education, advocacy, and community care. Her work is especially focused on addressing disparities in Black maternal and infant health and ensuring families have access to the resources, information, and support they deserve. Jocqueline is also a certified CPR instructor and car-seat installation technician, reflecting her commitment to equipping families with practical skills that promote safety and wellness beyond the birth room. Through her work

as a birth worker, educator, speaker, and community advocate, Jocqueline continues to create spaces where families feel seen, heard, empowered, and cherished. Her mission is rooted in the belief that every family deserves respectful, informed, culturally affirming care throughout their reproductive and parenting journey.

Rachel M. Dean, MPH, RDN, LDN, IBCLC, RLC, is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, Lactation Consultant, and Executive Director of Queen City Cocoa B.E.A.N.S. She specializes in maternal and child health equity, clinical nutrition and lactation care, and workforce development to reduce health disparities for BIPOC families.

Dr. Aver Yakubu is a public health systems strategist, researcher, consultant and executive with more than ten years of experience in maternal and child health across academic, nonprofit, healthcare, government, and community settings. Dr. Yakubu has designed and implemented evidence-based programs in multiple states, led community-engaged research and evaluation, and published in reputable peer-reviewed research journals.

5:00 - 5:30pm

Closing/Social

Our Cultural Humility Conference will close with an opportunity for attendees to stay online and socialize, network, and reflect on this day of learning within this year's theme of Black maternal health and its intersections with the speech-language pathology and audiology professions and its responsibilities to individuals, families, and communities.