



OCTOBER 8 – 9, 2025
CHARLOTTE, NC
CPCC HARRIS CONFERENCE CENTER

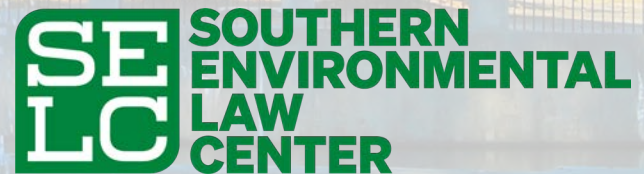
Planetary & Community Health
Solutions for the Future



A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPONSORS



Environmental and Epistemic Justice Initiative



WELCOME, AND ENJOY THE CONFERENCE!



Jeffrey Robbins
Executive Director
CleanAIRE NC

Dear Guests,

Welcome! It is a true honor to have you join us to celebrate a remarkable milestone: the 10th anniversary of the NC BREATHE Conference. For a decade, we have been a leading voice in North Carolina's environmental health community, and it is all thanks to our incredible partners, communities, sponsors, and the tireless work of our team.

This year's theme captures our mission to connect community, health, and policy. We believe the health of our planet and our people are inextricably linked, and over the next two days, we will explore this intersection with some of the most inspiring leaders in the field.

We are privileged to welcome our keynote speakers: Dr. Sacoby Wilson, Dr. Shaneeta Johnson, Charles Lee, and Dr. Undi Hoffer, four nationally respected voices at the forefront of environmental justice, climate, and health. Of course, the heart of this movement is the passion and leadership of the communities we serve. We are grateful to all the community leaders with us today, who are on the frontlines of driving change.

I also want to extend a special thank you to our Platinum Partner, AstraZeneca, for their phenomenal support. Their state-of-the-art AIRE Mobile Unit is providing free lung health screenings to our community and all NC BREATHE attendees. This is a powerful, tangible example of the collaboration and commitment needed for lasting impact.

From our dedicated Student Research Forum—which gives a platform to the next generation of environmental leaders—to our education sessions on effective advocacy, this conference is more than just a gathering. It's a catalyst for change. It's a space to build partnerships, share innovative solutions, and move from conversation to action.

As we kick off our tenth year, let's use this time to listen, to learn, and to strengthen the collaborative bridges that will create healthier, more sustainable communities across North Carolina. Thank you for being a part of this landmark event. Now, let's get to work!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey W. Robbins". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jeffrey Robbins

JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

#NCBREATHE25



Tag us on social! @cleanairenc

Free WiFi @ HCC
Password: hccguest

Over the next two days, we welcome you to visit the lobby and explore our special 10-Year Retrospective display, showcasing key moments from the last decade of the NC BREATHE Conference. You'll see how our movement has grown, the community partnerships we have built, and the impact our collective work has had on creating a healthier North Carolina.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONFERENCE AGENDA	2 – 3
DAY ONE: OCTOBER 8, 2025	4 – 11
KEYNOTE: <i>Climate and Health Equity – A Clinical Perspective on Building Resilience</i>	4
PANEL: <i>Understanding Environmental Determinants of Respiratory Health</i>	5
KEYNOTE: <i>Community Health and Well-being: Bridging the Divide</i>	6
YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM: <i>Student Research and the Future of Environmental Health</i>	7
PANEL: <i>Learning from the Past & Planning for the Future – Policy, Health, and Justice</i>	8
DAY ONE BREAKOUT SESSIONS (choose one track)	10 – 11
DAY TWO: OCTOBER 9, 2025	12 – 18
KEYNOTE: <i>Advancing Environmental and Community Health Through Policy and Practice</i>	12
CASE STORY: <i>NC Health & Community Resilience</i>	13
DAY TWO BREAKOUT SESSIONS (choose one track)	14 – 15
KEYNOTE: <i>From Awareness to Action: Students as Leaders for Environmental Quality</i>	16
PANEL: <i>Heat Mitigation: Listening to Community and Creating Solutions</i>	17
CLOSING REFLECTIONS: <i>The Future of Health & Human Services</i>	18
NEXT STEPS: CONFERENCE FOLLOW-UP	20
NC BREATHE 2025 PLANNING COMMITTEE	21
EXHIBITORS	22
NOTES	23

- 8:00 AM • **REGISTRATION & BREAKFAST**
- 9:15 AM • **WELCOME & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**
Presenter: Kassidy Plyler, *Catawba Nation*
- 9:20 AM • **ASTRAZENECA RECOGNITION**
- 9:30 AM • **CLIMATE AND HEALTH EQUITY – A CLINICAL PERSPECTIVE ON REBUILDING RESILIENCE**
Keynote Speaker: Dr. Shaneeta Johnson, *Meharry Medical College*
- 10:15 AM • **UNDERSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINANTS OF RESPIRATORY HEALTH**
Moderator: Dr. Steve Justus, *Town of Davidson*
Panelist: Dr. Karl Welke, *Atrium Health*
Panelist: Dr. Maria Jison, *AstraZeneca*
Panelist: Dr. Virginia Guidry, *NC Department of Health and Human Services*
Panelist: Dr. Jean Wright, *COPD Foundation*
- 10:45 AM • **BREAK**
- 11:00 AM • **COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING: BRIDGING THE DIVIDE**
Keynote Speaker: Dr. Sacoby Wilson, *University of Maryland*
- 12:00 PM • **WORKING LUNCH & STUDENT POSTER VIEWING**
- 1:00 PM • **STUDENT RESEARCH LIGHTNING TALKS**
Presenter: Rafi Vaca-Tricerri, *CleanAIRE NC*
- 1:20 PM • **YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM**
Moderator: Dr. Melissa Haithcox-Dennis, *Fayetteville State University (FSU)*
Student Panelists: Taleah Meadows, *FSU*; Kayla Halliburton, *FSU*; Jessica Booker, *FSU*; Victoria Hightower, *FSU*; Moarashad Gibson, *FSU*
- 2:00 PM • **LEARNING FROM THE PAST & PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**
Moderator: Crystal Dixon, *Wake Forest University*
Panelist: Dr. Sacoby Wilson, *University of Maryland*
Panelist: Dr. Shaneeta Johnson, *Meharry Medical College*
Panelist: Charles Lee, *Howard University School of Law*
Panelist: Jasmine Washington, *Southern Environmental Law Center*
- 3:00 PM • **REFLECTIONS ON DAY 1 & BREAKOUT INTRODUCTION**
- 3:15 PM • **CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS (choose one track)**
Track 1: Eco-Trauma & Healing: Supporting Community Mental Health
 Sharisse McGill, *Tranquil Quietude*
Track 2: Health Equity, Policy, and Data: Driving Informed Action
 Dr. Shaneeta Johnson, *Meharry Medical College*; Dr. Virginia Guidry, *NC DHHS*; Dr. Arlinda Ellison, *Alamance County Health Department*
- 4:45 PM • **NETWORKING RECEPTION**

DAY TWO AGENDA

3

- 8:00 AM • REGISTRATION & NETWORKING BREAKFAST
- 9:00 AM • RECAP OF DAY 1 & VISION FOR DAY 2
- 9:15 AM • ADVANCING ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH THROUGH POLICY AND PRACTICE
Keynote Speaker: Charles Lee, *Howard University School of Law*
- 10:15 AM • NC HEALTH & COMMUNITY RESILIENCE – A CASE STORY
Moderator: Dr. Keith McDade, *Warren Wilson College*
Panelist: Julie Mayfield, *North Carolina State Senate*
Panelist: Gray Jernigan, *MountainTrue*
Panelist: Tiffany Fant, *Sol Nation*
- 10:50 AM • BREAK
- 11:00 AM • CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS (choose one track)
Track 1: The Future of Environmental Health & Access: Solutions for Community Practice
Charles Lee, *Howard University*; Sherri White-Williamson, *EJCAN*;
Dr. Arlinda Ellison, *Alamance County*; Maia Hutt (moderator), *SELC*
Track 2: Advocacy 101 for Health Professionals & Community Leaders
Brittany L. Griffin, *CleanAIRE NC*; Dr. Ciara Zachary, *UNC-Chapel Hill*;
Ryan Carter, *Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation*; Dr. Jovita Lee, *NC Black Alliance*;
Will Hendrick (moderator), *NC Conservation Network*
- 12:10 PM • LUNCH & STUDENT POSTER VIEWING
- 1:00 PM • STUDENT RESEARCH LIGHTNING TALKS
Presenter: Sherri White-Williamson, *EJCAN*
- 1:20 PM • FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION: STUDENTS AS LEADERS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
Keynote Speaker: Dr. Undi Hoffler, *North Carolina Central University*
- 2:10 PM • HEAT MITIGATION: LISTENING TO COMMUNITY AND CREATING SOLUTIONS
Moderator: Kennedy Williams, *CleanAIRE NC*
Panelist: Dr. Robyn Byers, *City of Charlotte Sustainability*
Panelist: Dr. Katherine Idziorek, *University of North Carolina at Charlotte*
Panelist: Dr. Charlene Wong, *Duke University*
Panelist: Bethany Milford, *NC Alliance of Public Health Agencies*
- 2:50 PM • CLOSING REFLECTIONS
Speaker: Dr. Virginia Guidry, *NC Department of Health and Human Services*
- 3:00 PM • ADJOURN

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

As an accomplished surgeon and leading voice in global health, Dr. Shaneeta Johnson brings a powerful perspective to NC BREATHE 2025. Dr. Johnson will use her expertise to unpack the direct clinical implications of environmental shifts on patient health, strategies for healthcare providers to adapt, and the imperative for health systems to champion community health.



Shaneeta Johnson, MD, MBA, FACS

*Associate Dean and VP of Global Health Partnerships & Engagement
Professor of Global Health, School of Global Health
Chair and Professor of Surgery, Department of Surgery
Meharry Medical College
Fellowship Director, Climate and Health Equity Fellowship
Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health*

Dr. Shaneeta Johnson is a distinguished surgeon, educator, and researcher at Meharry Medical College, where she is the Chair and Professor of Surgery. She is also Associate Dean and Vice President of Global Health Partnerships and Engagement at Meharry School of Global Health. Dr. Johnson is a member of the planning committee of the National Academy of Medicine Action Collaborative on Decarbonizing the US Health Sector and the American Hospital Association Community and Environment Technical Expert Panel, as well as a Fellow with the National Medical Association.

A recognized expert in global health, robotic minimally invasive surgery, and bariatric surgery, Dr. Johnson has dedicated much of her work to health equity, surgical sustainability, and environmental justice. She has served on advisory panels for the FDA, Joint Commission, and legislative committees. Her expertise has afforded her invitations to speak nationally and internationally.

Among Dr. Johnson's many accolades are the 2021 inaugural SAGES Social Justice and Health Equity Award, the 2020 National Medical Association Emerging Leader Award, the 2020 Top Women in Medicine honoree, and the 2018 Atlanta 40 Under 40 award. She has also received various awards for her excellence in teaching and has been named the 2022 Georgia Trend Top Doctor.

UNDERSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINANTS OF RESPIRATORY HEALTH

5

PANEL DISCUSSION

This panel will explore the direct impact of emissions and evolving environmental conditions on public health across North Carolina. The discussion will cover a range of issues, including respiratory health, cardiovascular disease, and mental well-being, with a special focus on the prevalence and management of chronic lung conditions.

PANELISTS

Virginia Guidry, PhD, MPH

NC Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS)

Dr. Guidry is an expert on environmental health and justice issues in North Carolina, with extensive experience in community-based research and applied epidemiology.

Karl Welke, MD, MS

Atrium Health Levine Children's Hospital

Dr. Welke's research focuses on improving outcomes for patients with congenital heart disease, with specific attention to healthcare structure and policy, socioeconomic status, and environmental factors.

Maria Jison, MD

AstraZeneca

Dr. Jison is an accomplished physician with extensive experience in pulmonary medicine, critical care, and pharmaceuticals. Her expertise extends to global clinical development, medical leadership, and community healthcare initiatives.

Jean Wright, MD, MBA

COPD Foundation

An enthusiastic leader of innovation and change management, Dr. Wright is an experienced clinician and educator with a passion for communicating novel ideas.

MODERATOR

Steve Justus, MD, DTM&H, CPDM

Town of Davidson

Dr. Justus is a Public Health and General Preventive Medicine specialist serving multiple community-based organizations in north Mecklenburg County. His interests revolve around community well-being, equity, and sustainability.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Drawing from over two decades of experience as an environmental health scientist, Dr. Sacoby Wilson will discuss the various health burdens faced by communities associated with environmental factors. He will break down the critical role of public health in addressing these challenges and the solutions we should be focusing on now.



Sacoby Wilson, PhD, MS

Executive Director, T.H.E. EJ Lab
University of Maryland

Dr. Sacoby Wilson is a Professor with the Department of Global, Environmental, and Occupational Health and the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University of Maryland, where he directs The Health, Environmental, and Economic Justice Lab. He has over 20 years of experience as an environmental health scientist in the areas of exposure science, environmental justice, environmental health disparities, air pollution studies, community resiliency, and many others.

Through partnerships with community-based organizations, he studies and addresses environmental justice and health issues, translating research into action. Dr. Wilson founded 17 for Peace and Justice, co-founded the DC/Maryland/Virginia Environmental Justice Coalition, and co-founded the Mid-Atlantic Justice Coalition.

His impactful research and advocacy have earned him numerous accolades, including the 2008 Steve Wing International Environmental Justice Award and the 2015 APHA Environment Section Damu Smith Environmental Justice Award. He has also been honored with the 2011 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Social Justice Award and the 2018 Taking Nature Black Environmental Champion Award, among others, for his dedication to creating a healthier and more equitable environment.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM

Hear from the next generation of environmental leaders in this moderated student panel discussing their research findings on community environmental health issues and sustainability. The discussion will bring into focus their vision for a healthier, more resilient North Carolina, and the collaborative pathways needed to achieve it.



MODERATOR

Melissa Haithcox-Dennis, PhD, MA

Associate Professor of Public Health
Fayetteville State University

Dr. Melissa Haithcox-Dennis, also known as “Dr. H-D,” is an energetic and impactful Associate Professor of Community Health in the Health, Physical, and Secondary Education Department at Fayetteville State University (FSU). She has over 20 years of experience teaching, mentoring, and advising students, with a focus on preparing them to become effective public health educators.

VIEW STUDENT POSTER ABSTRACTS

We encourage conference participants to walk around and review student research posters, and ask the student presenters about their work. Written abstracts for all featured posters can be found at the link below:



cleanairenc.org/student-poster-abstracts-2025

8 LEARNING FROM THE PAST & PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE – POLICY, HEALTH, AND JUSTICE

PANEL DISCUSSION

With several of the nation's leading experts, we will explore the critical intersection of environmental policy, public health, and community outcomes. The discussion will move beyond simply identifying problems and envision a future where policymaking is a collaborative process that genuinely prioritizes community health and resilience.

PANELISTS

Sacoby Wilson, PhD, MS

T.H.E. EJ Lab, University of Maryland

Dr. Wilson is a Professor at the University of Maryland, where he directs The Health, Environmental, and Economic Justice Lab with decades of experience in environmental health.

Shaneeta Johnson, MD, MBA, FACS

School of Global Health, Meharry Medical College

A recognized expert in global health, robotic minimally invasive surgery, and bariatric surgery, Dr. Johnson has dedicated much of her work to health equity, surgical sustainability, and environmental justice.

Charles Lee

Howard University School of Law

Lee is recognized as an environmental justice pioneer, thought leader, and founder of the EJ movement in the U.S. He formerly served as the Senior Policy Advisor for Environmental Justice at the EPA's office on EJ and external civil rights.

Jasmine Washington, JD

Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC)

As a Glynn Key Associate Attorney, Washington researches cases involving Title VI, the federal civil rights law that requires local governments and other recipients of federal funding to ensure their programs do not discriminate.

MODERATOR

Crystal Dixon, MPH, MA

Environment and Sustainability Studies Program, Wake Forest University

Dixon's research explores the intersection of environmental racism, sustainability, and public health. She also serves on the CleanAIRE NC Board of Directors.

SUPPORT THIS WORK

CleanAIRE NC is building a healthier North Carolina, together with you. From the AirKeeper Dashboard and CleanAIRE Academy to our Advocacy Manual and the annual NC BREATHE Conference, we're creating tools, knowledge, and spaces that empower communities to protect their health and their future.

This year, we're including free lung health screenings through our sponsor, AstraZeneca. Just one more way we're making solutions real. Your gift today helps sustain this work and ensures every North Carolinian has access to cleaner air and healthier futures.



cleanairenc.org/donate

DAY ONE BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Choose One)

Eco-Trauma & Healing: Supporting Community Mental Health

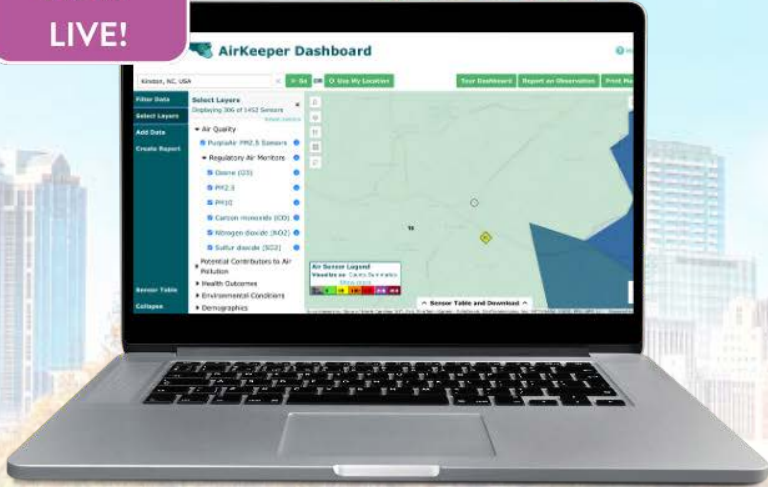
This session will address the psychological impacts of environmental disasters and chronic pollution on communities, and strategies for healthcare providers and community leaders to foster mental well-being and resilience.

PANELIST

Sharisse McGill, LCSW

Tranquil Quietude

As a climate aware clinician, McGill specializes in grief and trauma. She offers holistic coaching, mental health therapy, dynamic wellness workshops, and expertly curated international wellness experiences.



NOW LIVE!

Your community. Your air. Your data.

AIRKEEPER DASHBOARD

CLEANAIRENC.ORG/AIRKEEPER-DASHBOARD/

DATA AT YOUR FINGERTIPS



DAY ONE BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Choose One)

Health Equity, Policy, & Data: Driving Informed Action

This session focuses on utilizing public health data and environmental monitoring to identify disparities, inform policy, and ensure equitable environmental benefits and burdens. Discussion topics will include data transparency and accessibility for communities.

PANELISTS

Shaneeta Johnson, MD, MBA, FACS

School of Global Health, Meharry Medical College

As a distinguished surgeon, clinician, educator, researcher, and advocate, Dr. Johnson works at Meharry Medical College, where she is the Chair and Professor of Surgery. She is also Associate Dean and Vice President of Global Health Partnerships and Engagement at Meharry School of Global Health.

Virginia Guidry, PhD, MPH

NC Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS)

Dr. Guidry leads the DHHS Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Branch. She has worked on environmental health and justice issues in North Carolina since 2003, including experience in community-based research, communications, and applied epidemiology.

Arlinda Ellison, DHSc, MS, HHC

Alamance County Health Department

Dr. Ellison is a public and holistic health educator, coach, researcher, and facilitator. She is also an adjunct faculty member at Legacy Holistic Health Institute. She has over 20 years of experience in public health education and community-engaged research.

12 ADVANCING ENVIRONMENTAL & COMMUNITY HEALTH THROUGH POLICY & PRACTICE

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

As a pioneer of environmental justice in the U.S., Charles Lee has invaluable insights into where policy changes must be made. He will draw from his experiences in the EJ movement and his work for the EPA to discuss the evolution of environmental policy, effective strategies for meaningful community input in environmental regulations, and the role of federal agencies in supporting state and local initiatives for healthier communities.



Charles Lee

Visiting Scholar

Howard University School of Law

Charles Lee is a widely recognized thought leader and founder of the EJ movement in the U.S. He wrote the landmark 1987 report, *Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States*, organized the historic 1991 First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, and helped spearhead the emergence of federal EJ policy – including the establishment of the EPA Office of Environmental Justice, National Environmental Justice Advisory Council, and Presidential Executive Order 12898 on environmental justice.

Throughout his career, Lee created the United Church of Christ's EJ program, directed EPA's Office of Environmental Justice, and served as the Senior Policy Advisor for Environmental Justice at the EPA's national program office on EJ and external civil rights. He has led efforts for collaborative problem-solving, transformed brownfields redevelopment into a community revitalization paradigm, incorporated EJ into EPA's rulemaking process, advanced EJ at the state level, and continued efforts to address cumulative impacts. Currently, Lee is a Visiting Scholar at the Howard University School of Law.

Lee has written numerous reports and articles and has received many awards. His work has been featured at the Smithsonian Institution and other museums, along with the archival of his professional papers at the Library of Congress.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Community leaders will discuss a multi-faceted approach to resilience. The conversation will focus on how state-level policy, institutional preparedness, and community-led action can converge to create a more resilient North Carolina.

PANELISTS

Sen. Julie Mayfield, JD

North Carolina State Senate

Sen. Mayfield was elected to the North Carolina Senate in 2020, representing District 49 (Buncombe County). She currently serves on the Agriculture, Energy, and Environment; Elections; Healthcare; Rules; and Transportation Committees.

Gray Jernigan, JD, MELP

MountainTrue

In 2023, Jernigan assumed the role of Deputy Director & General Counsel, where he oversees regional and programmatic goals of the organization across its entire service area and leads MountainTrue's legislative advocacy efforts.

Tiffany Fant

Sol Nation

Fant serves as Executive Director of Sol Nation and she operates at the intersection of social justice and environmental justice issues. Her work focuses on implementing solutions that help heal not only communities but the Earth as well.

MODERATOR

Keith McDade, PhD, MS, MCRP

Warren Wilson College

Dr. McDade is the Director of the MS in Applied Climate Studies program at Warren Wilson College. He is currently a board member with Village Focus International in Laos and has served the Western North Carolina regional community in many ways over the past decade.

DAY TWO BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Choose One)

The Future of Environmental Health & Access: Solutions for Community Practice

This session will showcase the research, health assessments, and community-led initiatives that are improving health outcomes in environmentally impacted areas, including new approaches to health department-driven plans, government agencies, and how community-based organizations across North Carolina can actively participate through partnerships and advocacy to lead change.

PANELISTS

Charles Lee

Howard University School of Law

Lee wrote the landmark 1987 report, *Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States*, organized the historic 1991 First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, and helped spearhead the emergence of federal EJ policy.

Sherri White-Williamson, JD, MPA

Environmental Justice Community Action Network (EJCAN)

White-Williamson is the Executive Director of the Environmental Justice Community Action Network (EJCAN). The organization works to identify the cumulative impacts of polluting sources on impacted communities.

Arlinda Ellison, DHSc, MS, HHC

Alamance County Health Department

Dr. Ellison is a public and holistic health educator, coach, researcher, and facilitator. She has 20 years of experience in public health education and community-engaged research.

MODERATOR

Maia Hutt, JD

Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC)

Hutt has worked on a wide range of water and air quality issues, including protecting communities and public health from pollution caused by industrial animal agriculture and landfills, and advancing energy policies that treat rooftop solar customers fairly.

DAY TWO BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Choose One)

Advocacy 101 for Health Professionals & Community Leaders

This session offers practical guidance on engaging with policymakers, understanding legislative processes, and effectively supporting health-protective environmental policies and energy affordability.

PANELISTS

Brittany L. Griffin, JD

CleanAIRE NC

As the Advocacy Manager at CleanAIRE NC, Griffin provides communities across North Carolina with the tools to advocate for cleaner air and a healthier environment.

Ciara Zachary, PhD, MPH

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Dr. Zachary, an Assistant Professor at UNC Chapel Hill in the Department of Health Policy and Management, conducts health policy research and advocacy to increase access to affordable, high-quality health coverage for underserved populations.

Ryan Carter

Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation

Carter is the Policy Director for Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation and coordinates Piedmont Promise, an alliance that advances state and local conservation legislation. He works with civic leaders to create change that protects and enhances our waters.

Jovita Lee, EdD, MPA, PgD

NC Black Alliance

The youngest Program Director in the North Carolina Black Alliance's history, Dr. Lee is also Policy Director for Advance Carolina and convener of the North Carolina Black and Brown Policy Network.

MODERATOR

Will Hendrick, JD

NC Conservation Network

As an Environmental Justice Director, Hendrick works to connect impacted community members and organizations with decision-makers.

16 FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION: STUDENTS AS LEADERS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Drawing on her extensive background in pharmacology and environmental toxicology, as well as her work in community engagement and research at North Carolina Central University, Dr. Hoffler will draw connections to the scientific realities of air pollution to its direct impacts on student health and learning.



Undi Hoffler, PhD

Director, Research Compliance and Technology Transfer
NC Central University

Dr. Undi Hoffler is an expert in pharmacology and environmental toxicology, with over 19 years of research experience focusing on metabolism and biomarkers of exposure. She conducted her research at the National Institutes of Health/ National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration/National Center for Toxicological Research. Currently, Dr. Hoffler serves as the director for the Office of Research Compliance and Technology Transfer (ORCTT) at North Carolina Central University (NCCU), where she also contributes as a health equity researcher.

Dr. Hoffler's expertise extends to supporting the creation of University-IP-based startups and mentoring students in social entrepreneurial ventures. She has served as principal investigator on multiple Technology Enhancement Grants funded by the North Carolina Biotechnology Center, facilitating studies that enhance the licensing potential of innovative technologies. Additionally, her office plays a crucial role in protecting faculty, staff, and students who report research noncompliance.

HEAT MITIGATION: LISTENING TO COMMUNITY 17 AND CREATING SOLUTIONS

PANEL DISCUSSION

Rising temperatures pose a significant health crisis for North Carolina. In this panel we'll examine how cities, counties, and municipalities are combating the public health impacts of extreme heat.

PANELISTS

Robyn Byers, PhD, MA

City of Charlotte Sustainability

Dr. Byers is the Assistant Director of Charlotte's Office of Sustainability and Resilience. Byers focuses on leveraging the talents and wisdom of communities and students to create growth and innovative ideas for a sustainable future.

Katherine Idziorek, PhD, AICP

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Dr. Idziorek is a community-engaged researcher who examines the role of social networks and social infrastructure in community-scale resilience and disaster preparedness.

Bethany Milford, MPH

North Carolina Alliance of Public Health Agencies

Prior to joining the North Carolina Public Health Collaboration as the Strategic Initiatives Program Manager, Milford worked in healthcare agency settings, where she focused on translating science into compelling content.

Charlene Wong, MD, MSPH

Duke University

Dr. Wong is a physician and health policy leader who served as the Senior Advisor for Health Strategy to the CDC Director, where she led the agency's collaborative work with health care and across government.

MODERATOR

Kennedy Williams

CleanAIRE NC

As the Environmental Justice Program Manager at CleanAIRE NC, Williams is deeply committed to advancing environmental justice, particularly for low-income and BIPOC communities.

The Future of Health & Human Services & How Community, Health Professionals, & Decision-Makers Create Better Outcomes

Dr. Virginia Guidry will close the conference with a forward-looking perspective on the themes of resilience and collaboration, offering a roadmap for how community members, health professionals, and policymakers can unite to create better outcomes. Her remarks will serve as a final call to action, inspiring attendees to turn conversation into tangible, collective action for a healthier North Carolina.



Virginia Guidry, PhD, MPH

Branch Head, Occupational & Environmental Epidemiology
NC Department of Health and Human Services

Dr. Virginia Guidry has been the head of the Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Branch in the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) since January 2019. She is also the NCDHHS Environmental Justice Lead and the Co-Chair of the Governor's Environmental Justice Advisory Council.

She has a PhD in Epidemiology and a Master of Public Health in Maternal and Child Health, both from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, as well as a BS in Medical Technology from the University of Delaware. She has worked on environmental health and environmental justice issues in North Carolina since 2003, including experience in community-based research, communications, and applied epidemiology.

In 2024, she received the Ronald H. Levine Legacy Award for her contributions to public health in North Carolina.

What science can do

What science can do is a celebration of our shared curiosity about the limitless possibilities of science.

In short, all of us at AstraZeneca are here for good reason. Because we believe that when we work together, we can help transform lives and create a healthier planet. And what's more powerful than that?

Change lives. That's what our science can do.



Through cutting edge research and technologies, AstraZeneca is focused on drug discovery, development, and life-cycle management. Our innovation is improving public health and changing lives, with a commitment to launching at least 20 new breakthrough medicines by 2030.



LET'S KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING!

Thank you for participating in NC BREATHE 2025! We hope you are feeling inspired and ready to build equitable solutions for healthier communities. Now the real work begins. Here are three ways you can keep the conversation going and promote environmental health and human well-being in North Carolina:



Take Our Post-Conference Survey

Did you enjoy NC BREATHE 2025? Let us know how we did! Your feedback will help us make next year's conference even better.

surveymonkey.com/r/ncbre25



Become a Voice for Change

Our Clean Air Advocacy Manual provides practical guidance on how to develop a targeted advocacy strategy, build partnerships to mobilize your community, and engage with policymakers and the media on clean air solutions.

bit.ly/Clean-Air-Advocacy-Manual



Start Your CleanAIRE Academy Learning Journey

Dive into the CleanAIRE Academy's first two courses, *Air Quality 101* and *Advocacy in Action*, to learn foundational air quality knowledge and strategies to boost your environmental advocacy.

cleanairenc.org/academy/



OUR 2025 EXHIBITORS



Key Environmental Consulting
The "Key" to EJ

Environmental Justice Community Action Network



PIERCING SUN
CONSULTING



Self-Help
Ownership & Economic Opportunity for All



SIERRA CLUB
NORTH CAROLINA



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
CHARLOTTE

EPIDEMIOLOGY AND
COMMUNITY HEALTH



University Volvo

PLANNING COMMITTEE

GERALD BABAO*Deputy Director***CleanAIRE NC****JASMINE BAMLET, CAPM***Event Manager***CRYSTAL DIXON, MPH, MA***Associate Professor of the Practice***Wake Forest University****MADISON FRAGNITO***Development Director***CleanAIRE NC****KAY JOWERS, PhD, JD, MA, MSPH***Director of the Just Environments Program***Duke University****KIM LYERLY, MD***George Barth Geller Professor in Cancer Research, Professor of Surgery***Duke University****UNDI HOFFLER, PhD***Director, Research Compliance and Technology Transfer***NC Central University****ALISHA KLEINHAMMES, MHA***Project Manager***Duke University****NIKHIL KOTHEGAL, PhD, MPH***Climate and Health Program Lead***NC DHHS****JEFFREY ROBBINS, MBA***Executive Director***CleanAIRE NC****WILLIAM ROSS JR., JD***Attorney of Council***Brooks Pierce****RAFI VACA-TRICERRI***Education Manager***CleanAIRE NC****SHERRI WHITE-WILLIAMSON, JD, MPA***Executive Director***EJCAN****JOVITA LEE, EdD, MPA, PgD***Program Director***NC Black Alliance****KARIDA GIDDINGS, PhD, MS***Access to Healthcare Program Coordinator***NC Black Alliance****BRAYNDON STAFFORD***Environmental Justice Coordinator***NC Black Alliance****KARL WELKE, MD, MS***Congenital Cardiothoracic Surgeon***Atrium Health**

NOTES



LOOK OUT FOR OUR POST-CONFERENCE REPORT

Following the conference we will publish a report highlighting the underlying themes and policy recommendations that arose from this week's proceedings and participant discussions. Look for it later this year and share it with your elected representatives.



clean
AIRE
nc

Protecting what connects us.

www.cleanairenc.org
704-307-9528

Contact us at
Connect@CleanAIREnc.org
to discuss how you can get involved.