Dr. Sara Josephine Baker

1873 - 1945
MD, DrPH

midwife training, basic hygiene, preventive care, well baby stations

1894 - Obtained on M.D. from the Woman’s Medical College of the New York Infirmary

1898 - Internship with the New England Hospital for Women and Children, realized the connection between poverty and negative health outcomes

1899 - private practice, medical examiner for the New York Life Insurance Company, city medical inspector

1907 - Assistant Commissioner of Health (smallpox vaccination, identifying “Typhoid Mary”)

1908-1923 - First director of the New York City Bureau of Child Hygiene (the first of its kind)

1910 - Established the Little Mothers League to teach girls 12+ how to care for their infant siblings so mothers could work and children would not be neglected

1917 - Earned a DrPH

1923 - Retired, NYC lowest infant mortality rate of any major US city

October is LGBTQ+ History Month

Marie E. Wilson for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, UAB School of Public Health
Mr. Pedro Zamora

1972-1994

“As gay young people, we are marginalized. As young people who are HIV-positive and have AIDS, we are totally written off.”

Immigrated to Florida from Cuba at 8 years old.

After donating blood to the Red Cross when he was 17, he was notified that his blood had been rejected because it was reactive, and after getting tested for HIV discovered he was positive for the disease.

He dedicated his life to raising awareness of and educating others about HIV/AIDS in a variety of community, school, and political settings.

He became the first out LGBTQ+ person living with HIV on a reality show in 1994 when he was chosen as part of the cast of The Real World on MTV. He took advantage of this platform to advocate for LGBTQ+ issues and HIV/AIDS awareness to his housemates and the audience of the show.

Pedro’s health began rapidly declining after filming of The Real World wrapped and he died the day after the airing of the final episode.

After his death, he was honored by President Bill Clinton for his work in raising awareness around the reality of living with HIV/AIDS.

Marie E. Wilson for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, UAB School of Public Health
Dr. Alan L. Hart

1890-1962
MD, MPH

“...I have been happier since I made this change than I ever have in my life, and I will continue this way as long as I live. Very few people can understand..., and I have had some of the biggest insults of my career.... I came home to show my friends that I am ashamed of nothing.””

Pioneered X-ray photography in TB detection and developed TB screening programs when TB was the leading cause of death in the US. With his X-ray screening system, TB death toll decreased to 1/50th of previous levels.

1918 - one of the first trans men to receive hysterectomy and gonadectomy in US

1950s - Worked for Department of Public Health in Connecticut

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Inspired to action by his own HIV diagnosis as well as the death of his partner from an HIV-related illness.

1990-1993 - Served as AIDS Coordinator for Los Angeles

1990-1995 - Co-chair of the Los Angeles County HIV Health Commission

1993-1996 - Served as Director of Policy and Planning at AIDS Project Los Angeles

1995-1998 - Appointed to the Health Resources & Services Administration AIDS Advisory Committee

1999 - Founded the Black AIDS Institute which heralds itself as “the only uniquely and unapologetically Black HIV think and do tank in America”

2010 - Appointed to President Obama’s Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS

Served as a World AIDS Summit delegate
Admiral Rachel L. Levine

1957 -

MD

Practice focus:
- intersection of mental and physical health
- opioid crisis, Naloxone availability
- maternal health
- improving children immunization rates
- eating disorders
- LGBTQ+ medicine

First openly transgender person to hold an office requiring Senate confirmation

First openly transgender 4-star officer (Admiral) in US’s 8 uniformed services

Pediatrician in the US Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

2015 - nominated by Governor and confirmed by state Senate as Pennsylvania’s Physician General

2018-2021 - Secretary of Pennsylvania Department of Health

March 2021-Present - US Assistant Secretary for Health of the US Department of Health and Human Services under President Biden

Marie E. Wilson for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, UAB School of Public Health
Dr. Bruce Raymond Voeller

1934-1994
PhD

Biolologist, AIDS Researcher

Studied biochemistry, developmental biology, and genetics

Championed the change from GRIDD (Gay Related Immune Defense Disorder) to AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome)

Pioneered use of nonoxynol-9 as spermicide/topical virus-transmission preventative

Cofounded the Mariposa Foundation for studying human sexuality and STDs

Later research:
- Reliability of different condom brands for preventing disease spread
- Viral leakage studies for then-recently approved internal condom

Marie E. Wilson for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, UAB School of Public Health
Ms. Cecilia Chung

1965-

BA

Developed and led “Transgender 101” training sessions for all staff of the San Francisco Department of Public Health

1994 - Part of San Francisco’s Transgender Discrimination Task Force

Immigrant from Hong Kong at the age of 19

2002 - Joined the Board of the Asian Pacific Islander Wellness Center for which she consulted on a mobile HIV testing project to serve transgender youth

2005 - First Deputy Director of the Transgender Law Center

2008 - First transgender woman and first person living openly with HIV to chair San Francisco Human Rights Commission

2013-2015 - Served on President Obama’s Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS

2015 - Founded Positively Trans, a national network of transgender people living with HIV that empowers through storytelling, advocacy, and leadership development
Dr. John Ercel Fryer
1937-2003  MD

“I am a homosexual. I am a psychiatrist.”

- Dr. Henry Anonymous

By remaining closeted “we are taking an even bigger risk...in not living fully our humanity, with all of the lessons it has to teach all the other humans around us.”

Gave an anonymous speech at the 1972 APA (American Psychiatric Association) meeting as Dr. Henry Anonymous, wearing a mask, wig, too-big tuxedo, and speaking through a voice modulator.

His pronouncement was central to removing homosexuality from the DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual), the psychiatric catalogue of mental disorders, in 1973.

Homosexuality was listed in the DSM in 1952 and meant that people could be institutionalized, fired, denied a mortgage, and have other rights severely limited.

Acceptable treatments for homosexuality until delisting: chemical castration, ECT (electroconvulsive therapy), and lobotomy.

Was fired from a medical post for being gay. A year after his anonymous speech, was fired again, but, this time, for being “gay and flamboyant.”

Marie E. Wilson for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, UAB School of Public Health
To Rustin, in 1986, the fight for LGBTQ+ rights was the “central struggle of our time, the central struggle for democracy and the central struggle for human rights.”

A key organizer of 1963’s March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom

A close advisor to Martin Luther King, Jr. and very influential in MLK’s stance of non-violence

Was never ashamed of his sexuality but remained relegated to the background so his being gay would not take away from the power and impact of the Civil Rights Movement.

As HIV/AIDS became a crisis in the 1980s, Rustin experienced intersectional stigma and discrimination from being a gay Black man in America.

He noted the great importance of being a non-LGBTQ+ ally in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights and even stated that he could have done more for LGBTQ+ rights if he had not been gay.

Rustin was pivotal in advocating for a range of social determinants of health for various minoritized communities in his fight for equity.

Marie E. Wilson for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, UAB School of Public Health
References

General

Dr. Sara Josephine Baker

Ms. Cecilia Chung

Dr. John Ercel Fryer

Dr. Alan L. Hart

Admiral Rachel L. Levine

Mr. Bayard Rustin

Dr. Bruce Voeller

Mr. Phill Wilson

Dr. Phillip Wilson

Mr. Pedro Zamora