

A Follow-Up to "The Family Tree Spreads its Limbs: National Academy of Medicine Family Physician New Members 2021"

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Shortly after the publication of the editorial celebrating the induction of several family medicine colleagues into the National Academy of Medicine (NAM),¹ I was quickly emailed by the indelible Dr John Frey, "What about Dr Alexandra Adams?" Clearly, in my excitement to share accolades of colleagues in family medicine, I missed 2 very important people. This served as a reminder that family physicians work in a variety of settings outside of family medicine departments. In addition to learning about Dr Adams, I was also alerted to Dr Olayiwola, another family physician, on the list of inductees. I offer my sincerest apology for the hurt I have caused these 2 phenomenal leaders.

So, as 2022 comes to a close, we'd like to take this opportunity to highlight the accomplishments of 2 more of our family medicine colleagues elected to the National Academy of Medicine. Both have had incredible personal and professional arcs and have made significant contributions to our discipline. The 2 physicians we are highlighting today have dedicated their careers to underserved populations and to the elimination of health inequities. I have invited my colleague, Dr Edgar Figueroa, to join me as we celebrate these 2 giants in our discipline.

Dr J. Nwando Olayiwola, MD, MPH, FAAFP, grew up in Columbus, Ohio, to Nigerian immigrant parents. Growing up in a family of academics and professionals, she was a voracious reader and writer. She completed her undergraduate studies at The Ohio State University where she was a participant in the prestigious Morrill Scholarship Program for minority students engaged in diversity-based leadership, scholastic excellence, social justice, and service and continued at The Ohio State University College of Medicine & the

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Cleveland Clinic Foundation for medical school. She completed her residency at the New York Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Irving Medical Center in New York City, where this author (E.F.) was proud to serve as her senior resident. During residency, in addition to serving as a chief resident, Dr Olayiwola founded a nonprofit organization that provided tools, confidence, and leadership skills for adolescent women of color to minimize risk of HIV/AIDS, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections. During residency, she also published her first novel, *Half Woman*. Dr Olayiwola went on to complete the Commonwealth Fund Fellowship in Minority Health Policy at Harvard University.

In the time since completing her training, Dr Olayiwola has worked in public and private health systems, earning multiple academic and leadership appointments, and established centers committed to primary care excellence, innovation, practice transformation, and systems redesign, including in her most recent academic role as professor and chair of family medicine at her alma mater. She has also served as an expert and champion for health equity and antiracism efforts, and the use of technology as a mitigation strategy for barriers to care for populations that have been disenfranchised. She also worked at a technology startup and is the founder and CEO of organizations committed to the empowerment and advancement of minority women professionals and improving health systems globally.

In speaking for this piece, Dr Olayiwola highlighted 2 pieces of scholarship, both published in *Annals of Family Medicine*, that she identified as particularly meaningful in her journey to becoming an internationally recognized and award-winning leader, speaker, author, and change agent. The first was one of the earliest randomized trials on the use of

telehealth (eConsults) to provide specialty access to patients in a large federally qualified health center (FQHC) system, and conducted long before the COVID-19 pandemic.³ The other was a reflection essay on her experiences with race and power in medicine, which was, at one time, 1 of the top 5 most read articles in *Annals of Family Medicine*.⁴

Dr Olayiwola currently serves as the inaugural chief health equity officer and senior vice president of Humana, Inc where she is responsible for creating the health equity agenda, strategy, and measures across all lines of business and for millions of patients. She remains an adjunct faculty member at The Ohio State University Colleges of Medicine & Public Health and provides mentoring and leadership training to residents in family medicine and public health. She also still regularly sees patients at the Heart of Ohio Family Health Center in Columbus, Ohio in their immigration clinic for refugees and asylum seekers.



Alexandra Adams, MD, PhD

Dr Alexandra Adams, MD, PhD, is the current Director of the Center for American Indian and Rural Health Equity at Montana State University. She has dedicated her life and her career to health equity research in partnership with Native American communities in our country, and has developed lasting relationships with multiple tribal nations, the longest of which is her relationship with the Menominee Nation. These relationships are part of Dr Adams' identity; her life's work centers around these collaborations.⁵ She became interested in indigenous health when she was in medical school, and it was during that time that she received her first National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant.

Dr Adams is a graduate of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, where she earned her MD and her PhD in nutrition. She then went to the University of Wisconsin (UW) School of Medicine and Public Health for residency and later, faculty. She practiced full-spectrum family medicine for many years, but as her research career demanded more time, she eventually settled on pediatric obesity treatment. She was also the founding director of the Collaborative Center for Health Equity at UW, a center focused on promoting health equity research with Wisconsin's underserved communities, including Wisconsin tribes.

After 17 years working in the UW Department of Family Medicine as a clinician and researcher, Dr Adams was recruited to direct the center she currently leads and moved to Montana. This center is funded by a renewable \$10.5 million dollar grant from the NIH and is a multidisciplinary center which

funds initiatives throughout Montana. The center's mission is to promote respectful research partnerships addressing health with rural and Native American communities in Montana and mentoring the next generation of community-engaged health researchers. Because Montana State University does not have a medical school, Dr Adams works across several disciplines. Her faculty appointment is in the department of sociology/anthropology, and she mentors nutritional scientists, engineers, psychologists, sociologists, and others who are early in their academic careers, and who share her vision of service to Native American and rural communities. Again, Dr Adams proves that family physicians are well equipped to bridge multiple disciplines in the benefit of their patients and communities.

Dr Adams' passion lies in the practice and teaching of community-based participatory research, and in the good this can bring to various communities.⁶ She is careful to ensure that the research partnerships address what the community wants, and she has built strong relationships of trust with tribal leaders to ensure that the work is of benefit to the community. In a recent conversation, Dr Adams shared that one of the proudest moments of her career was learning she was elected to the National Academy of Medicine at the same time as one of her mentees, Dr Eric Brodt. Early in Dr Brodt's career, Dr Adams helped establish Dr Brodt's center, the Native American Center for Health Professions, while they were both at the University of Wisconsin. This speaks to one of Dr Adams' most cherished characteristics—she finds joy in building the careers, and the lives, of others.



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Key words: cultural diversity; health equity; social inclusion; National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, US Health and Medicine Division; family practice; Blacks; African Americans; American Indians or Alaska Natives

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