2021 RESEARCH DAY

RESEARCHING IN T.R.U.T.H.

Transcendent • Resilient • Uplifting • Transforming • History Makers

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24 | 10:00 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.

FACULTY, STAFF, & STUDENT RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS
10:00 a.m. - 11:10 a.m.
Research presentations by KU Medical Center faculty, staff, and students

PRESENTERS
Jephte Akakpo, Dr. Yvonne Chen, Dr. Babalola Faseru, Jessica Idowu, Romaric Keuwo, Dr. Crystal Lumpkins, Todd Moore, Wendena Parkes, Dr. Sharla Smith, Sierra Stites, Dr. Kevin Sykes, Dr. Cheryl Utley, Dr. Kenrick Waite, Dr. Joan Lewis-Wambi

DR. PATRICIA A. THOMAS COMMEMORATION
11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

THE DR. PATRICIA A. THOMAS KEYNOTE ADDRESS
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

CONSEULO H. WILKINS, M.D., MSCI
Vice President for Health Equity, Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Professor of Medicine & Associate Dean for Health Equity,
Vanderbilt University School of Medicine.

Dr. Wilkins, a trained geriatrician, is a nationally recognized thought leader in health equity and in addressing the elimination of systemic inequities that impact the health and well-being of racial/ethnic minorities.

As a community engagement research scientist, Dr. Wilkins has pioneered new approaches to engaging vulnerable, socioeconomically disadvantaged, and minority populations. She is Principal Investigator (PI) of three NIH-funded centers focused on translational science; precision medicine; and disparities, and PI of a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation award on engendering trust in health care among African American men.

ZOOM AVAILABLE: https://zoom.us/j/96358599286
Meeting ID: 963 5859 9286, Phone: 312 626 6799

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT WILL BE AVAILABLE.

SPONSORED BY KU MEDICAL CENTER OFFICE FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION
2021 Black History Month
Virtual Research Day
February 24, 2021
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Dr. Yvonnes Chen, Associate Professor
University of Kansas- Lawrence – School of Journalism and Mass Communications
y.chen@ku.edu

Yvonnes Chen is an associate professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of Kansas. She is one of the five 2017 Outstanding Educators awarded by the KU Torch Chapter of the Mortar Board (a senior honor society). She is also a 2017-2018 Keeler Intra-University Professorship recipient and was a Visiting Professor Program fellows awarded from the Advertising Educational Foundation in New York. Her research — which has received funding from government agencies — centers on designing effective programs to promote healthy lifestyles. Her most recent research focuses on how the brain is a window to understanding the effects of persuasive messages. Read it on KU News here: http://bit.ly/2pk74d3.

Chen teaches courses on research methods, strategic campaigns, health communication, grant writing, and data analysis. At the core of her teaching is a desire to nurture students' personal growth and problem-solving ability. One of her greatest joys is to see students succeed – at the personal and professional level. Her students have received university awards (e.g., KU University Awards), competitive fellowships (e.g., FleishmanHillard Diversity Fellow) and regional/national awards (e.g., Bronze Quill and Silver Quill Awards from the International Association of Business Communicators). Fluent in three languages (with another on the way), Chen is a classical music and opera enthusiast — and a wannabe rock climber.
Dr. Babalola Faseru, Associate Professor  
University of Kansas Medical Center – Department of Population Health  
bfaseru@kumc.edu

Dr. Babalola Faseru is an Associate Professor with joint appointments in the Department of Population Health and the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC). He is also the Consultant Medical Epidemiologist at the Bureau of Health Promotion, Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). Dr. Faseru received his Medical Degree from Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, and obtained his Master of Public Health from the University of Kuopio, Finland (Now University of Eastern Finland) with a Cancer Research Fellowship award from the World Health Organization International Agency for Research on Cancer (WHO IARC) Lyon, France. He worked as a researcher at the Environmental Epidemiology Division of the National Public Health Institute in Finland before his appointment at KUMC where he did a Postdoctoral Fellowship in Nicotine Dependence and Smoking Cessation and NIH K30 Fellowship in Clinical Epidemiology before his faculty appointment. He has been a Principal Investigator and Co-investigator on multiple grants and contracts including National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants, private foundation grants and state contracts aimed at reducing tobacco-related health disparities affecting underserved populations. He is an outstanding teacher with teaching responsibilities in the KU Schools of Medicine, Nursing and Health Professions. He has received multiple excellence in public health teaching awards. He also directs the KU Tobacco Treatment Education Program for healthcare professionals. He is a member of the Kansas Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant Advisory Committee, Kansas Cancer Partnership steering committee and the Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition Board. He is a leader in his field and was featured in the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco (SRNT) Member spotlight in 2019 for his impact in tobacco-related health disparities research. He is also a member of the Tobacco Control and Smoking Cessation Committee of the International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer (IASLC). He was recently elected into the Board of Councilors of the Council for Tobacco Treatment Training Programs (CTTTP) – the accrediting body for Tobacco Treatment Specialist Training Programs. He is currently an Associate Editor of the Substance Abuse Journal; a Member of the Editorial Board of the Contemporary Clinical Trials Journal and he serves on NIH study sections.

Jessica Idowu, MS, Graduate Student  
University of Kansas Medical Center – Department of Pharmacology, Toxicology, and Therapeutics  
jidowu@kumc.edu

Jessica Idowu holds a B.S. in Biology and minor in Chemistry from the University of Missouri-Kansas City and a M.S. in Biotechnology with a concentration in Bioinformatics from Johns Hopkins. Prior to joining KUMC IGPBS program, she worked at the Jared Grantham Kidney Institute. In May of 2019, she joined Dr. Hagenbuch’s lab.
Romaric Keuwo, Graduate Student  
University of Kansas-Lawrence & University of Kansas Medical Center- Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders  
rkeuwo@kumc.edu

Romy Keuwo is a Cameroonian first year graduate Speech Pathology student in the Intercampus Program for Communication Disorders at the University of Kansas. He is a 2020-2021 fellow in KUMC’s Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disorders (LEND) traineeship. He aims to conduct more research on speech-language-hearing services in Cameroon. His clinical and research interests also include the assessment and treatment of acquired neurodevelopmental disorders in adults, bilingual language acquisition in young children (including acquisition of different language variants/dialects), best practices in intervention with individuals who use various forms of augmentative & alternative communication (AAC), and ways to support caregivers and community stakeholders in their interactions with individuals who utilize AAC across the lifespan. He is also multilingual (French, English, Spanish).

Dr. Crystal Lumpkins, Associate Professor  
University of Kansas Medical Center – Department of Family Medicine  
clumpkins@kumc.edu

Dr. Crystal Lumpkins is an Associate Professor in the School of Medicine, Family Medicine & Community Health Research Division. She also serves on the KU-Medical Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Cabinet and is Co-Chair for the Health Equity and Community Engagement Subcommittee. Dr. Lumpkins holds a courtesy faculty appointment within the Department of Population Health and the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the KU-Lawrence campus. Dr. Lumpkins’ current and primary research interests are in evidence-based public health communication, cancer-related genetic counseling and testing communication targeted to minority and underserved populations. Her research is community driven where she takes a community based participatory research approach to engage Kansas and Missouri communities in the research process to address cancer health disparities and health communication inequities. She is currently chair and lead researcher with the “Faith Works – Connecting for a Healthy Community,” (FWCFHC) consortium that is comprised of area faith-based and community-based organizations, patients, medical and research professionals in the bi-state area. This collaboration, established in 2012, has yielded community-engagement grants from the National Cancer Institute (NCI), Patient-Center Outcome Research Institute (PCORI) and Kansas Leadership Center and also health-related community activities to reduce cancer health disparities and improve health equity among underserved and underrepresented populations. In addition to her research efforts within the department, she serves as editor for The Society of Behavioral Medicine’s newsletter Outlook, has authored dozens of health disparity and health communication publications and is actively engaged with other cancer-related research and training projects within the Department of Internal Medicine, Population Health, School of Nursing and throughout the Kansas City metropolitan area. She also mentors and teaches graduate, post-baccalaureate and undergraduate students and is an active member of within the faith community and the Kansas City, Kansas Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc. Dr. Lumpkins received her doctorate from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 2007 and holds a dual Master of Arts Degree in Media Communications and Management from Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri. She is married to Garry Lumpkins, Jr. and is a mom of three children, Israel, Isaiah and Shaddiah and resides in Shawnee, Kansas.
Todd Moore, PhD Student  
University of Kansas Medical Center  
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Todd Moore is a doctoral student the Health Policy & Management program at the University of Kansas Medical Center and co-chairs the Heartland Regional Health Equity Council for Region VII. He was born in Junction City, Kansas. His father’s career in the military gave him opportunity to live in many places including Germany, Oklahoma and North Carolina. Moore earned an undergraduate degree in African and African American Studies from KU and a master’s degree in public service from the University of Arkansas Clinton School for Public Service. He worked at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and at KU Medical Center as a research project director for research projects and helped improve recruitment of underrepresented populations in clinical research, particularly black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and rural populations.

Wendena Parkes, Graduate Student  
University of Kansas Medical Center – Department of Pharmacology, Toxicology, and Therapeutics  
wparkes@kumc.edu

Wendena Parkes is originally from Portland Jamaica, and attended Claflin University in South Carolina where Parkes earned my Bsc. in biology with a minor in chemistry. Parkes joined the KUMC Integrated Graduate Program of Biomedical Sciences (IGPBS) in 2018 and then Dr. Michele Pritchard’s lab in 2019 in the Department of Pharmacology, Toxicology, and Therapeutics. Our research is geared towards understanding the role of hyaluronan in mammalian reproductive aging.

Dr. Sharla Smith, Assistant Professor  
University of Kansas Medical Center – Department of Population Health  
Ssmith37@kumc.edu

Dr. Sharla Smith is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Population Health at the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Kansas City. Dr. Sharla Smith has a PhD in Health Systems and Services Research with a concentration in Health Economics. Dr. Smith earned an undergraduate degree in biology from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, a Master of Public Health degree in Health Policy and Management from University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, and a PhD in Health Services and Systems Research at UAMS. She is a health services researcher that has been working in public health since 2006. Her current research focuses on maternal and infant health disparities.
Sierra Stites, Graduate Student  
University of Kansas Medical Center – Department of Population Health  
Sstites4@kumc.edu

Sierra Stites is a Master of Public Health student at the University of Kansas School of Medicine and is expected to graduate in May 2021. She grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, and attended Middlebury College in Vermont. Prior to enrolling in the Master of Public Health program at KU, Sierra worked for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation outside of Washington, D.C.

Dr. Kevin Sykes, Research Assistant Professor  
University of Kansas Medical Center – Department of Otolaryngology  
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Holding a Ph.D. in Health Policy and Management and a Master of Public Health degree, Kevin Sykes is part of our multidisciplinary team of researchers working within the department to advance the care of patients in Otolaryngology. While much of his time is spent working collaboratively on clinical research with the faculty and residents in the department, his research program includes a focus on healthcare delivery for the medically underserved and the impact of non-clinical factors on health outcomes. Dr. Sykes works internationally to develop effective and efficient models for delivering high quality healthcare services to marginalized communities in low-resource settings. Dr. Sykes is the Chair of the Advocacy and Policy Committee for the International Health Section of the American Public Health Association (APHA) and was recently elected as a Governing Councilor for APHA. Domestically, Dr. Sykes develops projects that aim to understand the challenges facing patients with complex diagnoses and treatment plans. Looking for ways to improve the care we provide by focusing on patient-centered outcomes, he designs studies that examine social and cultural barriers to the best possible results for these patients. Dr. Sykes has more than 15 years of experience developing, designing, and managing clinical research for our department in his role as the Director of Clinical Research.
Dr. Cheryl Utley  
University of Kansas Medical Center – Department of Population Health  
cheryl@kumc.edu

Cheryl A. Utley received her PhD from the Department of Rehabilitation and Special Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has held positions as an Associate Research Professor, Juniper Gardens Children's Project, Schiefelbusch Institute for Life Span Studies, University of Kansas and George Peabody College of Vanderbilt University. She has written grants and co-authored journal articles and books in special education, cultural diversity, and evidence-based practices. She is currently a Graduate Student, Department of Population Health, University of Kansas Medical Center.

Dr. Kenrick Waite, Research Associate  
University of Kansas Medical Center – Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
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Being born in Jamaica, he spent the early years of his life exploring nature with his family and friends. His family did not have much, but his mother worked hard to make sure they had everything we needed. Some of his fondest memories were in the summer when school was out, he would go to the country to stay with his grandmother. This is where his curiosity about nature and life began. At the age of twelve, he moved to Manhattan K.S. It took some time, but he eventually adjusted to life and school in America. He decided to go to college to study biology, with the plan of becoming a medical doctor. Through a series of events including the loss of loved ones to cancer, he changed course and aimed at a career doing research. He always loved biology and became particularly interested in understanding cancer biology. He graduated with a biology degree and his first research experience was working for the USDA studying viruses transmitted by insects. This experience solidified his desire to do research and he soon applied to graduate school. My years in graduate school and mentorship from his advisor propelled his maturation as a scientist. During this time, he was awarded several travel and research grants including an award for excellence in graduate research in molecular and cellular biology. He was the featured visitor at an international meeting, and he was invited to present his research at multiple meetings over the years. He also served as the President of the biology graduate students association and was chair of a number of graduate student committees. He is proud to have mentored several undergraduate students, both in teaching courses and working directly in the lab, who have gone on to pursue research careers. He defended his dissertation and transitioned to KUMC with my PhD advisor where he continues to do research in proteasome biology. His long-term goal is to do science with the aim of translating his work to benefit human health.
Dr. Joan Lewis-Wambi, Associate Professor  
University of Kansas Medical Center – Department of Cancer Biology  
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Joan Lewis-Wambi, Ph.D., is a tenured Associate Professor and the Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Cancer Biology at KUMC. Dr. Lewis-Wambi received her Ph.D. in Cancer Biology in May 2002 from Rutgers University and she completed her post-doctoral training at Northwestern University (2002-2004) and at Fox Chase Cancer Center (2005-2008). Dr. Lewis-Wambi has worked in the breast cancer field for over 15 years with expertise in estrogen receptor signaling, endocrine therapy resistance, triple negative breast cancer, and cancer health disparities. The focus of her lab is to understand the mechanism(s) by which breast cancer cells and breast tumors develop resistance to endocrine therapies and to develop alternative therapies for breast cancer patients. She utilizes unique human breast cancer cell lines, animal models, and clinical breast cancer samples to uncover the molecular underpinnings that drive the development of resistance in breast cancer patients. Additionally, her lab also studies triple negative breast cancer (TNBC) and inflammatory breast cancer (IBC) which are two aggressive and lethal subtypes of breast cancer that are difficult to diagnose and treat and disproportionately affect African American (AA) women compared to other ethnic groups. She has discovered a novel marker called interferon induced transmembrane protein 1 (IFITM1) that plays a critical role in promoting the aggressiveness of TNBC in African American patients. Dr. Lewis-Wambi has published ~45 research articles, has received several honors and awards including, NIH Young Investigator Award, Avon Scholar, Susan G. Komen Scholar, WIMS-AAMC Scholar Award, the KUMC Rising Star Award, and the STEMMy Educator Award and her research has been funded by grants from NIH, ACS, and the Department of Defense-BCRP.
Jephte Akakpo, Graduate Student
University of Kansas Medical Center – Department of Pharmacology, Toxicology, and Therapeutics
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I come from Benin, Cotonou which is located on the west coast of Africa. As a child, I was interested in exploring and discovering the inner workings of biological systems. To pursue this dream, I chose to focus on Science with a specialization in Biology while at Montaigne, a French high school in Benin. After graduating from Montaigne, my fervor to pursue a career as a research scientist grew. Unfortunately, scientific research is almost non-existent in Benin. This is why I became highly interested in the opportunity to study Biology at a top research facility in the United States of America. Subsequently, I earned a second high school diploma at the American International School of Cotonou to better familiarize myself with the American educational system. I then joined Wilkes University in Pennsylvania where I completed my bachelor’s degree in Biological Sciences. After obtaining my bachelor’s degree, I entered the Wilkes University Master’s program in Biological engineering. I chose the cell and molecular track to further my independent investigation into the role of unknown ncRNAs in Arabidopsis thaliana which I started during my undergraduate. I was quite motivated by the focus of our research to develop cost-effective solutions, like RNA-injection therapies, which could solve problems related to human health and benefit patients. Fortunately, driven by the curiosity to know how patients are care for in American hospitals, in 2007 I did an internship at the Dickson City, Pennsylvania Orthopedic Specialist clinic with Dr. Edwin Malloy, an orthopedic surgeon. In 2008, I also worked at the pharmacy department of the Community Medical Center Hospital in Scranton, Pennsylvania. I gained wonderful insights into a busy medical environment while serving patients as an orthopedic and pharmacy intern. To further my career in science, I applied to and was accepted into the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences at the University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC), where I am now a graduate student who will earn a PhD in toxicology in Dr. Hartmut Jaeschke’s laboratory. I brought my expertise in Molecular Biology to Dr. Jaeschke’s lab where I have had extensive experience planning and designing experiments, dosing animals, interpreting data collected by me or others, reviewing the literature, writing reports as well as making recommendations on how to adjust project expectations. My main tasks have focused on the role of mitochondrial function in acetaminophen (APAP) overdose related liver injury which is the main cause of acute liver failure in the USA. To date, I presented my research at several annual meetings, published multiple scientific manuscripts and I am on track to receive my doctoral degree in Toxicology in the summer of 2021.
Dr. Akinlolu Ojo, Executive Dean
University of Kansas Medical Center - School of Medicine

Dr. Akinlolu (“Ojo”) Ojo is the Executive Dean and Professor of Medicine & Population Health, University of Kansas School of Medicine. Dr. Ojo works with multinational research team that studies chronic kidney disease (CKD), kidney and kidney-pancreas transplantation outcomes, health disparities and global health issues.

Dr. Ojo is the Principal Investigator of the NIH-funded Human Heredity and Health in African (H3Africa) Kidney Disease Research Network – a research consortium focused on developing research capacity and conducting epidemiologic, clinical and translational studies in CKD in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The consortium currently has 4 active protocols involving > 14,000 research participants at 21 academic medical centers in seven SSA countries. Dr. Ojo received his medical degree from Lagos, Nigeria and received an MPH in Global Health from the University of Alabama in Birmingham.

He completed residency training in internal medicine at the University of Kentucky, Lexington and completed fellowship in nephrology at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor where he also received his PhD in epidemiology.

Dr. Ojo has over 200 peer-reviewed publications and serves on editorial boards, Data and Safety Monitoring Boards (DSMBs), FDA Advisory Committees and NIH study sections. Dr. Ojo has mentored >20 research scientists and physician scientists and has been elected into the American Clinical and Climatological Association (ACCA), American Society of Clinical Investigation, and the Association of American Physicians.
Dr. Jerrihlyn McGee, Vice Chancellor
University of Kansas Medical Center – Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Dr. Jerrihlyn L. McGee is the vice chancellor for diversity, equity and inclusion and chief diversity officer for KU Medical Center. Dr. McGee is also a nurse and clinical associate professor in KU School of Nursing. Dr. McGee earned her first bachelor’s degree from Xavier University of New Orleans, LA, and her second bachelor’s, a master’s and doctorate from KU School of Nursing. With a significant history of leadership in the practice and academic settings, Dr. McGee has led sustainable change by helping improve patient outcomes, by increasing staff and physician satisfaction scores, and through course and program development. Dr. McGee’s scholarly works have focused on diversity, civility, healthy work environment, cultural competency, emotional intelligence, mentoring and health and educational equity. These inquiries have afforded Dr. McGee opportunities to present locally and nationally and facilitate seminars and workshops. Dr. McGee’s community work in the Greater Kansas City area is extensive ranging from coordinating and participating in community health events, to leading professional development initiatives, and serving as a board of director for the REACH Healthcare Foundation. Dr. McGee is listed as an author in the 2019 State of Black Kansas City report, as well as other published articles. Dr. McGee has delivered numerous keynote addresses about diversity, fostering equitable and inclusive learning and working environments, leadership, unconscious bias and systemic racism. As a graduate of KU, Dr. McGee is proud to serve KU Medical Center, its stakeholders and surrounding communities. “I truly believe it is each our responsibility to change the world we live in. We can do this by respecting one another; being kind; embracing our differences; educating ourselves and others; mentoring; speaking out; holding ourselves and one another accountable; challenging the status quo; and most importantly -being the change we want to see. Transformative change begins with you, right where you are, on your platform and in your community.” We [KU Medical Center] are on the right path. We are committed to cultivating internal and external environments that are inclusive and equitable for our employees, learners, patients, partners and surrounding communities.”
Dr. Consuelo Wilkins  
**Vanderbilt University Medical Center**

Consuelo H Wilkins, MD, MSCI, is the Executive Director of the Meharry-Vanderbilt Alliance and Professor of Medicine at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Division of Geriatric Medicine. As Director of the Engagement Core of the All of Us Research Program (a component of the Precision Medicine Initiative), Dr. Wilkins oversees initiatives that meaningfully engage research participants in the governance, oversight, implementation and dissemination of the program. She has pioneered methods of stakeholder engagement that involve community members and patients in all stages of biomedical and health research.

Dr. Wilkins is currently a Principal Investigator of two NIH-funded centers: 1) the Vanderbilt-Miami-Meharry Center of Excellence in Precision Medicine and Population Health, which focuses on decreasing disparities among African Americans and Latinos using precision medicine, and 2) the Vanderbilt Recruitment Innovation Center, a national center dedicated to enhancing recruitment and retention in clinical trials. She is widely recognized for her work in stakeholder and community engagement and has pioneered methods of stakeholder engagement that involve community members and patients in research across the translational spectrum. One approach is the Community Engagement Studio — a model of engagement that can be used to elicit project-specific input from patients and communities at any stage of clinical or translational research.

Prior to joining the faculty at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in 2012, Dr. Wilkins was an Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine, Division of Geriatrics, with secondary appointments in Psychiatry and Surgery (Public Health Sciences) at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri. She served as the founding Director of the Center for Community Health and Partnerships in the Institute for Public Health, the Co-Director of the Center for Community-Engaged Research in the Clinical and Translational Science Awards Program, and the Director of “Our Community, Our Health,” a collaborative program with St. Louis University to disseminate culturally relevant health information and facilitate community–academic partnerships to address health disparities.

Dr. Wilkins serves on numerous boards and committees such as the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Committee on the Return of Individual-Specific Research Results Generated in Research, AAMC Journal Oversight Committee for Academic Medicine Laboratories, Safety Net Consortium of Middle Tennessee, and the Academy Health Translation and Dissemination Institute Advisory Committee. Dr. Wilkins is an invited speaker around the country and a mentor to many junior faculty and health professions students.
Dr. Abiodun Akinwuntan, Dean
University of Kansas Medical Center- School of Health Professions

Abiodun Akinwuntan, Ph.D., MPH, MBA, FASAHP, became the school's sixth dean in January 2016. He previously served as associate dean for research at the College of Allied Health Sciences at Augusta University in Augusta, Ga., where he was professor of physical therapy, ophthalmology, and neurology. Dean Akinwuntan received his bachelor’s degree from the College of Medicine, University of Lagos in 1994, a master’s degree and a doctoral degree in neurological rehabilitation from the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Catholic University of Leuven) in Belgium in 2000 and 2004 respectively, a postgraduate certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education from the University of East London, England in 2005, and a master’s degree in Public Health in 2012 and a master’s degree Business Administration in 2015 from Augusta University, USA.

Dean Akinwuntan is a world-leading authority on the use of virtual-reality technologies to improve daily living activities in neurologically impaired persons. Akinwuntan has collaborated extensively on several funded grants totaling more than $15 million. He has authored more than 110 peer-reviewed publications and abstracts mostly in reputable journals with high impact factors, authored 8 book chapters. He is also co-director of the Laboratory for Advanced Rehabilitation Research in Simulation.

Dean Akinwuntan is a recipient of the prestigious United States Fulbright Scholarship to Nigeria in 2013 and a Fulbright Specialist Award to Iceland in 2016. He is the Editor-In-Chief of The Nigerian Journal of Medical Rehabilitation, an Academic Editor of PLOS ONE Journal, and Member of the Editorial Board for the Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Journal. He is a member of Nomination and Elections Committee and the Chair of the Research, Discovery, and Innovation Committee of the Association of Schools Advancing the Health Professions (ASAHP). Dr. Akinwuntan is the treasurer of the Midwest Deans Group and is also a member of the 2018 ASAHP Leadership Development Program. selected as a Fellow of the Association of Schools Advancing Health Professions in October 2020 in recognition of excellence in and contributions to education in the health professions.
Sponsors

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Black History Month Planning Committee

Special Thanks

Dr. Diane Mahoney and Dr. Hao Zhu, BHM Research Day- Co-Chairs, Dr. Babalola Faseru, Jessica Idowu, Suma Suswaram, Dr. Michelle Redmond, Dr. Eric Vidoni, Mary Beth Warren, and Captain Donald Holland