

# Spotlight on LGBTQ+ Health

Lister Hill Center for Health Policy, Spring 2021

## Overview

The mission of the Lister Hill Center for Health Policy (LHC) is “to connect and support those seeking to improve health outcomes through policy. Our aims include enhancing opportunities for policy collaboration through education, creating opportunities for dissemination of information, providing reputable data sources for academic research, and empowering students and community leaders to affect policy change. In 2019 the LHC hosted its first Semester Spotlight, a semester-long seminar series centered around a particular topic at the intersection of public health and public policy.

With the Semester Spotlight, we provide public health professionals, students, policymakers, and community members with the opportunity to explore a public health issue and its policy implications. Our most recent Semester Spotlight – Spring 2021 – centered around LGBTQ+ health. This was part of a larger initiative at the School of Public Health to establish the Magic City LGBTQ Health Studies Endowed Professorship. Together with our partners, the LHC hosted eight events focusing on LGBTQ+ health policy. Below is a summary of each event, followed by engagement statistics for each event.

## LGBTQ+ Health Events

### January 25, Policy Barriers in Transgender Medical Care

Dr. Vin Tangpricha, of Emory University, presented on the challenges that he and his transgender patients have faced in navigating health care in the United States. He also clarified certain treatments and care for transgender individuals, in light of the pending legislation in Alabama which would criminalize affirming medical treatment for transgender minors.

Link to Recorded Webinar: <https://youtu.be/54B6NvWeOV8>

### February 17, The LGBTQ+ Movement in Palestine

Dr. Sa’ed Atshan is an Assistant Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies at Swarthmore College, where he is also Coordinator of the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program. For this event, Dr. Tina Kempin-Reuter of UAB’s Institute for Human Rights interviewed Dr. Atshan about his new book *Queer Palestine and the Empire of Critique*. When told about the Endowed Professorship, Atshan expressed his excitement for the effort, saying that such a position is desperately needed.

### March 1, An Evening with Dominique Jackson

From fleeing persecution as a transgender woman in her home country of Trinidad and Tobago to starring in television hits, Dominique Jackson has seen it all. After experiencing homelessness and rejection from her own family, Jackson has used her success to shed light on the challenges transgender women like herself too often face. This student-led event was featured as a part of Blazer Spirit Council’s Blazer Way event series and Queer Peer’s BlaqOut series.

### March 10, LGBTQ+ Research at UAB

With this semester's focus on LGBTQ+ health, the planning committee felt it important to explore the good work that is already taking place at UAB. For this panel, Drs. Ronit Elk, Nicholas Van Wagoner, and Olivia Van Gerwen gave brief overviews of their ongoing work with the LGBTQ+ community in Birmingham and discussed gaps in current research. All three researchers expressed the importance of establishing the professorship, noting that filling this position would pave the way for bridging gaps in LGBTQ+ health policy.

*Link to Recorded Webinar:* [https://youtu.be/J7jm\\_VjRfdY](https://youtu.be/J7jm_VjRfdY)

### March 23, Pursuing Equity through Legislation

Heather Walter-McCabe, Associate Professor of Law and Social Work at Wayne State University, investigates legislation meant to drive LGBTQ+ equity. Neil Rafferty represents District 54 in the Alabama House of Representatives. For this event, Professor Walter-McCabe presented on the links between policy, stigma, and health; Representative Rafferty outlined pending legislation in Alabama that would affect transgender youth. Both Walter-McCabe and Rafferty feel that the LGBTQ+ Health professorship will increase opportunities for evidence-based legislation at both the state and federal level.

*Link to Recorded Webinar:* <https://youtu.be/MmMF18ZiVu8>

### April 7, Mapping LGBTQ+ Policy Across the 50 States

Dr. Caceres and his PhD students are investigating LGBTQ+ friendly policies and regulations across the United States. Caceres presented on this work as well as some of the nuance in considering LGBTQ+ health, particularly noting the disparities within LGBTQ+ populations along racial, gender, and socioeconomic lines. When asked about the professorship, Dr. Caceres stressed the need for the faculty member in this position to engage with LGBTQ+ communities directly.

*Link to Recorded Webinar:* <https://youtu.be/3O-1qprCTP0>

### April 13, Building a Cohort Study for LGBTQ+ Health

Conducting research with vulnerable populations comes with quite a few challenges. Several factors play into communities' reluctance to join research studies, and the LGBTQ+ community is not shielded from this. However, the PRIDE Study - the first major cohort study specifically for LGBTQ+ communities - is off to a great start. Kristen Clark, a PhD candidate who works with the study, provided an overview of the study's policy research and engagement methods.

*Link to Recorded Webinar:* <https://youtu.be/oQWd7lQ0yKU>

### April 21, Issues and Challenges Facing the LGBTQ+ Community in the Caribbean

This event, spearheaded by the Sparkman Center for Global Health and the Behavioral and Community Sciences Core at the Center for AIDS Research, featured the Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition for a presentation and discussion on the issues and challenges facing LGBTQ communities in the Caribbean with a special focus on access to healthcare.

## Additional Activities

*Holding Space: One Entity Embracing All* is an exhibition of digital stories collaboratively created and presented by UAB medical students and Birmingham LGBTQIA+ storytellers. This exhibition, showing at Vinegar until May 15, is the culmination of a new UAB School of Medicine elective, sponsored by the Department of Family and Community Medicine's Office of Identity, Inclusion and Collective Conscience, that teaches medical students how to use the power of storytelling in medicine and amplifies the stories of critical members of the Birmingham community. Dr. Brandi Shah leads the course and reached out to the LHC to help promote the April 17 opening event once she heard about the Spotlight series.

Sean McMahon, program manager for the LHC, will present in the Birmingham Public Library's Virtual Community Spotlight program on June 17. This presentation will feature several of the topics covered throughout the Semester Spotlight.

## Engagement Statistics

On average, each event had 49 attendees, with 341 individuals virtually attending at least one of the eight events. The table below provides data on the number of registrants, attendees, and YouTube views. Attendee reports are available upon request.

Date	Event (short title)	Registered	Attended	Post-event Views
1/25	Policy Barriers in Transgender Medical Care	92	60	42
2/17	The LGBTQ+ Movement in Palestine	41	22	N/A
3/1	An Evening with Dominique Jackson	145	137	N/A
3/10	LGBTQ+ Research at UAB	115	77	67
3/23	Pursuing Equity through Legislation	41	17	41
4/7	LGBTQ+ Policy 50 States	82	52	34
4/13	Building a Cohort Study for LGBTQ+ Health Issues and Challenges Facing the LGBTQ+	16	9	8
4/21	Community in the Caribbean	107	19	N/A