Dear Friends and Partners,

Success has often been described as “opportunity meeting preparation.” I offer another potent element to that equation: emotional intelligence. Today’s successful leaders of color a robust balance of all three: opportunity, preparation, and emotional intelligence.

The second annual Health and Life Sciences Conference (HLSC) encompasses best practices and lessons learned from leaders from a variety of industries. This is a disruptive innovation and development program like no other; it embraces the sensibilities of culture, community, business, emotional intelligence, and D&I strategy.

The road to success does not have to be traveled alone. Make the most of HLSC 2019. Connect and ask questions; listen, learn, and become an inspiring success story. It is with the financial support of partners such as Biogen, IXL Center, BridgeTower Media, and others that Color Magazine is able to create opportunities for multicultural professionals to network, connect, and rise through the ranks of today’s global economy as thought leaders and influencers.

Sincerely, Josefina Bonilla
President, Color Magazine
Chief Diversity Officer, BridgeTower Media

About BridgeTower Media
BridgeTower Media is a leading provider of business information, events, and marketing services for the legal, financial, construction, and government sectors in more than 20 local and regional markets across the United States. In addition to providing subscribers with content relevant to their daily professional activities, BridgeTower has a research unit focused on employee satisfaction, lead generation services, and live events centering on awards and education.

About GateHouse Media LLC
GateHouse Media is one of the largest publishers of locally-based print and online media in the United States, as measured by its 125 daily publications. As of December 25, 2016, our company operates in over 535 markets across 36 states, with over 600 community publications, over 535 websites, serving over 220,000 business advertising accounts, and reaching over 20 million people on a weekly basis.
11:30 AM - 12:00 PM
Registration & Networking

12:00 PM - 12:30 PM - Lunch

12:30 PM – 1:00 PM – Opening Remarks & Keynote Address

EMCEE
• Kit Pang

Keynote Speaker
• Dr. Eldrin F. Lewis, MD

1:00 PM – 2:15 PM - Executive Panel

Panel Moderator
• Dr. Shamard Charles

Executive Panelist
• Carolina Alarco

Executive Panelist
• Vijay Bhatt, CISM

Executive Panelist
• Cherie L. Butts, PhD

Executive Panelist
• Travis A. McCready

2:15 PM – 2:30 PM Coffee Break

2:30 PM – 4:30 PM Executive Sessions

2:30 PM – 3:30 PM Executive Speaker
• Rev. Rudolph A. Moseley Jr., Ed.D

3:30 PM – 4:30 PM Executive Speaker
• Eran Orr

4:30 PM – 6:00 PM Reception & Networking

Keynote Speaker
Dr. Eldrin F. Lewis
Director of the Cardiovascular Clerkship Program
Brigham and Women’s Hospital (BWH)
Associate Professor of Medicine
Harvard Medical School

Emcee
Kit Pang
Founder
BostonSpeaks

Moderator
Dr. Shamard Charles
Physician Journalist
NBC News

Executive Panelists

Carolina Alarco
President, Global Marketing and International Markets
Novelion Therapeutics

Vijay Bhatt, CISM
Deputy Chief Technology Officer
Harvard Pilgrim Health Care

Cherie L. Butts, PhD
Associate Medical Director in Clinical Development
Biogen

Travis A. McCready
President & CEO
Massachusetts Life Sciences Center

Executive Speakers

Rev. Rudolph A. Moseley Jr., Ed.D.
Founder & CEO
The National Students Of Color STEM Initiative

Eran Orr
Founder & CEO
VRHealth

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Executive Session Descriptions

Executive Session I:  
2:30 PM - 3:30 PM  
Rev. Rudolph A. Moseley Jr., Ed.D.  

Diversifying the Pathways to Prosperity

STEM professionals are hard to find; diverse STEM professionals are even harder to find and, in some cases, harder to keep. In today’s economy, companies need to be intentional if they want to stand out as an employer of choice. In this session, you will learn some best practices that companies should be doing NOW to recruit and retain diverse STEM professionals. You will also learn concepts to create a culture that celebrates leadership, diversity, and one that gets you ahead of the curve. Participants will also learn some strategies individuals and companies can make to have an impact on the next generation of STEM professionals.

Takeaways:

- Learn Best practices to recruit and retain diverse STEM professionals
- Grasp Concepts to create an innovative culture that celebrates leadership, diversity, and inclusion one.
- Strategies for impacting on the next generation of STEM professionals.

Executive Session II:  
3:30 PM - 4:30 PM  
Eran Orr  

Virtual Reality in Health

VRHealth is the leader in Virtual Reality medical & therapeutic applications. Eran Orr, founder of VRHealth will discuss how the integration of innovative AR/VR technology will disrupt the healthcare market in two major areas: data and immersion.

“We aim to diagnose, treat and cure a wide range of diseases and injuries by harnessing the immersive AR/VR technology.”

Takeaways:

- Grasp the impact of AR/VR technology in the health and life sciences industry
- Understand how to implement innovation into a successful D&I strategy
- Learn how VRHealth is enhancing patient and clinician experience at clinics and at home.
Kit Pang is a communication expert, TEDx Speaker Coach, and keynote speaker. He is also the founder of BostonSpeaks. He is on a mission to help individuals become exceptional speakers and communicators. Kit’s seminars and talks have been credited as super fun, engaging, soul-searching and insightful.

Kit has lead seminars at Color Magazine’s Men of Color Leadership Conference in Boston, Emceed the 2017 All-Inclusive Awards, the inaugural Health and Life Sciences Conference, and will return to emcee the second annual Health and Life Sciences Conference.
Dr. Shamard Charles: Mastering Two Worlds to Spread Health Literacy

By Andre LaFontant

“I am a creative who chose to go to medical school,” says the Senior Health journalist at NBC News. “I always wanted to challenge myself and see how far I could go if I pushed myself intellectually.”

Although Dr. Shamard Charles has identified as a writer since the second grade, he disagrees with the idea that being a creative and practicing medicine are mutually exclusive pursuits. “The creative side of my brain is my life force, but one can be easily blinded by their creative passions. Medical school gave me discipline and taught me how to focus my light so that I could see my vision clearly.”

“As a physician-journalist,” he continues, “There is an immense responsibility to spread social awareness and expand health literacy. When I convey a message so that people read and feel it, my impact is greater.”

Dr. Charles credits his pivot into medical journalism to a serendipitous injury. “I ruptured my Achilles while doing a global rotation in Santiago, Dominican Republic. Unable to walk, I wrote most of the day. Some of my best work came from that dark place.” His friends encouraged him to post on Facebook and it was so well received that, from an analytics standpoint, he could be considered an influencer, Dr. Charles recalled.

With his friend’s encouragement, he sought a writing mentor who would provide him with an opportunity to move to NBC. “I capitalized on an incredible opportunity during a time when doing anything but clinical medicine was considered taboo, but I knew what writing meant to me. I can honestly say I write to live and I live to write. Writing kind of saved me.”

As a member of NBC news’ health and medical unit, Dr. Charles transitions between dot com, social media, and broadcast mediums to tell nationally pertinent stories ranging from aftermath coverage of Hurricane Maria to D&I challenges in medical schools. Looking ahead, Dr. Charles believes better integration between media, technology, and medical professionals is crucial.

“Health care professionals and patients should narrate the medical story; we should have a voice in the building of integrated electronic medical records and challenge physicians to use today’s technology to efficiently streamline information to patients.”

“Writing empowers me to be more than a bystander within the medical community,” he continues. “As a black man in medicine, I know there are systemic challenges ahead; I invite them. It’s my responsibility to lift others as I climb.”
When it comes to breaking into a global market for orphan drugs, Carolina Alarco’s go-to market approach is driven by a passion to help patients around the world who suffer from rare diseases. Carolina Alarco, President of Global Marketing and International Markets at Novelion Therapeutics, establishes new markets around the world to treat diseases, such as generalized lipodystrophy and homozygous familial hypercholesterolemia.

When asked how she breaks into global biopharmaceutical markets, Alarco reveals that her go-to market approach is versatile and varied: “No one size fits all; each country has unique characteristics, culture, challenges, laws, regulations, and opportunities. Each market requires a tailored approach to commercialization. My goal, when approaching a new market, is to think globally, but act locally—according to the local culture and the needs of the patients.”

Alarco’s team is compassionate and committed. As a team leader, Alarco believes that an effective leader must have the ability to align people with a core, multi-dimensional strategy, with compassion and a results-driven work ethic. “Establish clear goals around the fundamental purpose of helping patients, and just go for it without fear of failure,” Alarco states. “Every company should aim to bring their innovative therapies to all patients around the world, regardless of where they live or what their life circumstances are.”

Alarco shares another factor in her leadership strategy, “Emotional intelligence is key to understanding the experiences of team-members and health care professionals, and the complex journey patients with rare diseases have to go through.”

Involvement in philanthropic endeavors is not new to Alarco, who is a founding member and past-chair of Boston Children’s Hospital’s Latino Council, known for its “Milagros para Niños” initiative. Alarco is also planning to launch a new initiative called “Latinos in Bio,” with the support of MassBio.

In line with Alarco’s commitment to servant leadership is her recent appointment by Massachusetts Governor, Charlie Baker, to the Massachusetts S.T.E.M Advisory Council. Eager to help expand access to STEM education to students in the Commonwealth, Alarco plans to increase opportunities for young professionals to successfully enter the workforce. “I’m deeply honored and humbled that Governor Baker has provided me with this incredible opportunity. As one of the few Latinas who has worked in the Biotech field for many years, I’m excited to further promote equal access to opportunities in S.T.E.M. for women and minorities.”
Dr. Eldrin F. Lewis: Embracing the Fabric of Diversity

By Evan J. Cutts
Eldrin F. Lewis, MD, MPH has served as a faculty member in the cardiovascular division at Brigham and Women’s Hospital for the last 16 years. The latter two-thirds of that time was spent as the program’s Director, a position he still holds. Driven by family, faith, and the well-being of his patients Dr. Lewis showcased promise early in his career being among the first recipients of the Minority Faculty Development Award for propitious young physicians with research potential. Today, Dr. Lewis holds major leadership positions with organizations such as Clinical Cardiology Council of American Heart Association, National AHA Research Committee, Association of Black Cardiologist Research Committee, and others.

Dr. Lewis received his B.S. Degree in Pre-medicine at Pennsylvania State University, his M.D. at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine where he won the Joel Gordon Miller Award for community service and leadership, and a Masters in Public Health degree from Harvard School of Public Health. As you will read in the following interview, Dr. Lewis’ commitment to the wellbeing and advancement of those he serves has only grown. Using his wealth of expertise, Dr. Lewis continues to lay a foundation for prospective medical professionals to excel in and transform the life sciences field.

CM: Can you tell me more about your role as Director of the Cardiovascular Clerkship Program at Brigham and Women’s Hospital (BWH)?

EFL: I have been Director for the past 11 years. I am responsible for coordinating the Harvard Medical School students and visiting students to get a general education on the management of patients admitted to the cardiology services. The students work on one of several services: General cardiology, coronary care unit, heart failure service, or consult service. We have up to 5 students for each 4-week rotation and have about 40 students annually. I have also developed a curriculum with a series of lectures germane to cardiovascular education. Finally, I interface with Harvard Medical School to provide final grades.

What are some of the rewards and challenges of your role?

It is rewarding to see bright, young students each month who are eager to start their careers, many of them in internal medicine and cardiology. I enjoy teaching the students each month and giving them career advice as needed. The key challenges are the logistics of the position and ensuring balance, fairness, and completeness in the evaluation of each student.

What motivates and/or inspires you to do the work you do?

There are several things that motivate me, including my faith, family, and friends. I have a strong faith that guides me in my daily walk in life. It helps me through whatever small and large storms that may arise. My family is so important; I strive to be the best for all of them and meet their individual needs. My kids all have unique talents and make me laugh. They are my true legacy! My friends keep me grounded and provide tremendous support and guidance.

In addition, I am motivated by my patients, progress, and passions. My patients push me to always be better and give them the best chance to maximize their outcomes to have them live as long as possible and with the best quality of life possible. I constantly strive for progress in my research so that I can help people that I never will meet, personally in order to be the best person that I can be, and leadership in all of my roles. Finally, I like to pursue my passions of photography, travel, and sports.
In your opinion, what skills are necessary to be an effective leader?

There are several key skills to effective leadership, such as communication, emotional intelligence, and being a team player. Effective leaders are also able to achieve the following:

- An understanding of the needs of those whom you are leading and what is required to help them realize their goals.
- Provide oversight and growth within the framework of the organization’s ecosystem.
- Earn and reciprocate respect
- Make difficult decisions with fairness and decisiveness as well as a willingness to ask for help or admit your mistakes
- Maximize positivity in the environment
- Develop a short and long-term vision for the organization and ensure that it is a shared vision across the team/organization

How does emotional intelligence inform your goals, responsibilities, and strategy?

I am more likely to pause when I get upset at a situation and consider the alternative perspective to each situation. This informs my goal setting by thinking of alternative goals and ability to achieve them. Responsibilities are driven by my ability to complete the tasks and to determine if I need to delegate. Strategy is focused on determining how to achieve the goals most effectively and to be willing to reassess the importance of staying on a particular track.

What impact are millennials and Gen Z’ers having on the health and life sciences industry?

I think their biggest impact is bringing technology to healthcare delivery. Millennials and Gen Z’ers are helping us understand how we can leverage wearable devices, smart phones/watches, etc. to track health metrics and provide motivation to improve health is important. They also are leading the way in establishing healthy work-life balance.

Looking ahead, what should health and life sciences professionals keep their eyes on?

There are several key areas to focus on. Ranging from identifying and reducing disparities and avoiding unconscious biases that may influence our diagnosis and treatment of diseases, to changing behaviors that many have adopted in the US (e.g., less physical exercise, poor diet) and increasing strategies for primordial and primary prevention. Primordial prevention is focused on preventing the development of the initial risk factors for disease (e.g., avoiding childhood obesity, avoiding high blood pressure, etc.). Finally, as we understand the genetics of disease, we need to apply this carefully as we provide genetic counseling and determine if knowledge of a gene that one may have can impact their choices in life to avoid the disease or if it just creates anxiety as one ages.

In your opinion, what does it mean to be a person of Color in 2019?

A person of Color comes with reflecting on our rich culture/histories, embracing the beautiful fabric of diversity (all races), and understanding the continued struggles and challenges that persist in the United States. I think it is an important time to think strategically on how to build our community to compete in all aspects of the world and to embrace new ideas of what we can do, what gives us passion, and what we want to see for the next generation. Finally, I think we should seek out the similarities between all ethnicities/races as we realize that we are all important parts of the melting pot in the United States each providing small differences that make us incredibly unique and valuable to the entire community.
Innovation is the steady heartbeat for conducting business at Harvard Pilgrim Health Care (HPHC), and Vijay Bhatt, HPHC’s Deputy Chief Technology Officer, is one reason they never skip a beat. “I have thorough health insurance business knowledge that is necessary to align technology-related decisions [with] Harvard Pilgrim goals,” declares Bhatt, “which means I have a great understanding of our claims management, our wider contact management, and our care management systems.”

The innovation goals that Mr. Bhatt alludes to center upon the specific needs of the various communities Harvard Pilgrim serves. “Studies have shown that there are community-specific, genetic conditions which need individualized treatment methods. The Indian community, for example, is at greater risk [for] clogged arteries, compared to other ethnicities, due to narrower arteries;” Bhatt explains, “Therefore, necessary steps in specific preventative care strategies must take shape. We have developed a center for innovation that focuses on identifying, evaluating, and implementing new and emerging technologies, to improve the quality of our members’ healthcare programs in an intentional and nuanced way.”

Vijay Bhatt reveals that their “inclusion marketplace effort” discovered a growing interest in holistic eastern medicine practices across a cross-section of core members. This led to their development of Eastern Harmony, a program merging traditional western and eastern health strategies, to best serve Harvard Pilgrim’s members. Harvard Pilgrim’s Wellness Program echoes the desire to provide its members, as well as employees, with individualized services. As an executive sponsor, Bhatt leads the push to advocate and become ambassadors to communities, to spread more thoughtful wellness practices.

To promote these innovative practices, Bhatt leans on his thorough business acumen and background in software engineering. With a Masters in Computational Geometry from Cranfield University, Bhatt is equipped to problem solve in domains such as Large Scale Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence. “My background gave me a jump start in the field of Software Engineering. Geometrical information—shape and size—are important components in medicine, biotechnology, and materials science,” he explains.

“Emotional intelligence, an additional essential piece to the puzzle, is key to developing an open-minded approach toward innovation and inclusion within any given industry,” Bhatt continues. “Harvard Pilgrim’s core values fit in [with] improving an individual’s emotional intelligence. We demonstrate high levels of integrity and trust that become the core of our relationship with our constituents.”
Cellular immunologist, Cherie Butts, PhD, is a medical director, leading clinical trials in multiple sclerosis at Biogen (Cambridge, MA). Dr. Butts’ expertise builds upon a foundation of experience in academia, government, and industry, to shape biomedical research and medicine.

“As part of my work at Biogen, I collaborate with biologists, engineers, and a variety of life sciences professionals, in developing meaningful therapies for patients with debilitating conditions,” she explains. “I enjoy finding ways to help fill the gap between meeting the needs of patients and understanding neuroinflammatory diseases.” Dr. Butts is continually inspired by her team, working in an environment with life sciences professionals who are trying to make a positive impact in biomedical research. Her inspiration from the lives of her patients is nothing short of invigorating.

Prior to Biogen, Dr. Butts worked at the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) conducting research and reviewing new drug applications. Her postdoctoral studies, conducted at the National Institutes of Health, studied hormone regulation of immune responses. Her doctorate from the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center focused on immune responses in ovarian cancer patients. Dr. Butts received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Johns Hopkins University.

Looking ahead in the field, Dr. Butts cautions about potential missteps in incorporating digital technologies, such as wearable devices (e.g., Fitbit), into research. Although useful as a tool for collecting data, Dr. Butts believes that life scientists and medical professionals must be careful not to overinterpret data.

“As a woman of color in 2019, I believe there is tremendous opportunity in biomedical research. This is only the beginning. I believe [that] we will innovate by leveraging the power of working in teams across academia, government, and industry. To other women of color, stay dedicated to achieving your personal and professional goals throughout your journey. If we each do our part, the impact will be exponential.”
Travis McCready is President and CEO of Massachusetts Life Science Center (MLSC), a billion dollar public-private partnership, whose mission is to advance the life sciences ecosystem in Massachusetts. Although MLSC has one mission, McCready has more than one business strategy, “I kind of design the strategy to suit the situation. I can tell you, however, that I have a deep belief in the power of communities, diversity, and the human spirit. No matter what I do, I always try to find a way to tap into that power, and magnify or channel it, for the benefit of those who wield that power, and toward the achievement of a positive mission.”

McCready describes his work directing and overseeing the center’s investment strategy as exhilarating, “The role places me at the global epicenter of the burgeoning life sciences ecosystem and affords me the opportunity to collaborate with a diverse network of leaders—scientific, academic, political, community, and civic. Every day, my brain is stretched in every direction possible. It is difficult to describe the rush I get from being exposed to the—sort of—molten core of innovation.”

“Data, data, data,” responds the Yale graduate when asked about the future for health and life sciences professionals; “Health and life sciences have entered the Data Age, where a byte of data is the new lingua franca. Profound changes are on the horizon that will reshape everything from the way a patient receives care, from the so-called “Amazonification” of health care to whole new classes of therapeutic interventions, [called] “digital therapeutics,” and everything in between.”

With all of that said, President McCready cannot think about the future without looking at his past years spent working in the NYC public school system. Although that experience was nearly three decades ago, it still resonates with him. “The lessons they taught me are as raw as ever: inequity is not a choice; power imbalances are institutional; and responsible adults must be held responsible. Regardless of where my career takes me, I try to do right by our kids, create clear pathways for them to achieve, and encourage other adults to do the same.”
According to Dr. Moseley, kids’ table conversations are equally as, if not more important than, conversations at any subsequent tables down the line. “If we want to patch up the leaky STEM pipeline,” he explains, “it’s not really about putting STEM programs in high school; it’s about creating more STEM programs at the elementary level. If you expose kids early in the process, their curiosity will drive them to research.”

In other words, conscious change in the teaching methods of science in schools will help to keep children engaged with STEM fields well into adulthood. Emotional intelligence rests at the center of developing young and inquisitive students. “The means that, developing emotionally intelligent leaders within STEM fields is [accomplished] through a project-based learning environment,” Dr. Moseley continues; “Students must know that they can’t get from point A to point B without a team.”

“Project-based learning in the classroom is what keeps STEM-related studies relevant,” claims Dr. Moseley. “Students learn most when they are given a problem—like understanding how sickle cell anemia affects their community—and then tasked with designing a solution, working in groups, solving the problem, and, finally, presenting their findings.”

The process of attracting young people to STEM fields, however, should not be confined solely to the classroom. Dr. Moseley believes that a more holistic approach is necessary, “Out of school activities are [excellent] opportunities to foster ingenuity; We must structure out of school time purposefully, to compliment intentional instruction within the classroom.”

As a father of five sons, Dr. Moseley maintains the commitment to supporting lasting STEM initiatives for youth of color. His vision resonates with themes in the Oscar-nominated film Black Panther, which inspired youth of color across the country to see a place for themselves at the tables of science, math, innovation, and influence. As Black Panther’s T’Challa resolves to use Wakanda’s resources to help the world grow and evolve, Dr. Moseley is creating and sustaining opportunities for youth of color to do the same.
Founder of VR Health and Former F-16 pilot Eran Orr’s career move resulted from an uncomfortable pang in his hand. “Four years ago, I started to feel pain in my right hand. I was diagnosed with suffering from whiplash, due to active flight,” he explains. His rehabilitation led him on a journey to improving the rehabilitative process, beginning with his idea to combine Virtual Reality and rehab. Before moving to Boston, Orr began to raise funding for his new company in his native homeland, Israel.

Based in both Israel and Boston, and partnered with high profile organizations like Facebook, AARP, and Cigna, VRHealth collects and analyzes user interactions in the virtual environment, to provide real-time data analytics for use in healthcare environments.

“Every time someone is using our applications, we are monitoring their performance. Once a patient puts a VR headset on, they basically become an element in a computer-generated environment. This enables us to quantify everything [the patient] is doing inside that digital environment. It’s not like any other wearable, because we can manipulate the environment and generate a far more valuable [tool] than any other sensor device.”

While his personal experience propelled his journey, Orr also finds motivation in the art of disruption. “I was always fascinated [by] the fact that we human beings like to stick to routines, even though there are better solutions out there. I think that’s what motivates me to unlock the potential of new technology, which, I believe, will completely disrupt the healthcare system and, at the end of the day, provide tremendous value to the entire market.”

Not for the faint of heart, entrepreneurship requires a steady hand and an unwavering drive. Orr believes that finding the right path to success is the most difficult task for startups. “It’s not always the fastest one. You need to make a lot of hard decisions on an ongoing basis, and you can never know if one decision, or another, will make the difference.”

Nevertheless, when the challenges of entrepreneurship are more difficult, success is that much sweeter. “Short-term success is every hospital that joins our platform or any customer that wasn’t a believer before he met us but becomes a believer. Long-term success [is] five years from now, we’ll do the same interview and see that VRHealth is the gold standard in the industry. I think that would be a success.”
Our mission is clear. We are pioneers in neuroscience.


At Biogen, we advance the power of difference by embedding a lens of diversity & inclusion in our business and talent strategies.

This approach is critical to our mission to be the leader in neuroscience for all.

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