

**Rutgers School of Public Health**  
**23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Public Health Symposium**  
**April 2, 2018**

**PRESENTER BIOS**

**Brian Castrucci - Keynote**

Brian Castrucci is the acting chief executive officer for the [de Beaumont Foundation](#) where he conceptualizes, identifies, and implements visionary public health projects. As Chief Program and Strategy Officer, Castrucci is responsible for identifying and fostering visionary public health projects and contributing to the strategic design and tactical implementation of Foundation initiatives. He has ensured that public health research and practice go hand-in-hand through grants such as the Practical Playbook, the BUILD Health Challenge, the Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Survey, and the Big Cities Health Coalition.

Castrucci seeks to bring academic rigor to public health practice and a focus on actionable outcomes to public health research. His commitment to improving population health, furthering robust collaboration between public health and primary care, and strengthening public health infrastructure in the United States is informed by a decade of experience working in state and local health departments.

As an award-winning epidemiologist and public health leader, Castrucci has published more than 50 articles in the areas of public health systems and services research, maternal and child health, health promotion, and chronic disease prevention. His recent work has focused on the public health needs of large cities, the need for better data systems, and public health system improvements. He is an editor and contributing author to *The Practical Playbook. Public Health. Primary Care. Together* published by Oxford University Press in 2015. Castrucci blogs on public health topics at the Huffington Post, where he is committed to advancing an understanding and awareness of public health issues through new media.

Castrucci graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from North Carolina State University and a Master of Arts degree from Columbia University in 2006. He is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Public Health Leadership at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's the Gillings School of Global Public Health.

**PANELISTS:**

**Kevin G. Sumner, MPH**

Kevin Sumner is the Health Officer/Director for the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission, a local health agency providing public health services to five municipalities in Somerset County. He has been employed here for over 30 years in varying capacities including environmental health specialist, health educator, and health officer.

Mr. Sumner is a Past-President of the New Jersey Health Officers Association and has been an officer in the Association since 2004.

He has been a member of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) Board of Directors since 2012 and is currently the President-elect of this organization. In his capacity as President he created 'PHACE,' the Public Health Associations' Collaborative Effort, a collaborative of the leadership of the state's many public health associations with a focus on creating a single voice and face for public health in NJ.

He is a 2006 Scholar of the Northeast Regional Public Health Leadership Institute, and recipient of the 2009 Health Officer of the Year Award and a 2016 Certificate of Recognition from New Jersey Local Boards of Health Association.

In 2013, he received the NJ Association of County & City Health Officials' Frank J. Osborne Award for Meritorious Achievement in Public Health. He has been a member of NACCHO's Board of Directors since 2012 and is currently the President-elect of NACCHO. He has twice been a Coach for NACCHO's Survive & Thrive program, is New Jersey's SACCHO representative to NACCHO and current Chair of NACCHO's Finance Committee. He is a past member of NACCHO's Accreditation Preparation and Quality Improvement Committee, Marketing Committee and former Chair of the Membership Committee. Mr. Sumner participates in the Public Health Accreditation Board's "small health department think tank," which seeks ways to support small health departments in achieving accreditation. Mr. Sumner is also a part-time lecturer at Rutgers University, teaching two classes for the public health program: Principles of Public Health and Public Health Preparedness. Here he applies his many years of both emergency medical and public health experience to educating the next generation of leaders.

Mr. Sumner received his M.P.H. from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and his B.A. in Biological Sciences and Classical Humanities from Rutgers University. He enjoys spending time with his wife and two adult children and, when time allows, being outdoors, or playing eclectic instruments such as the ancient percussive instruments, the "bones" and quijada.

### **Nilifa DeSiva, MPH**

Nilifa is a Project Director in the Department of Family and Social Medicine at Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University, Bronx, New York. Her current project is an NIH-funded research study called the Common Risk Factor Study, a multi-level strategy to reduce pediatric obesity and dental caries risk in South Asian children. As the project director for this study, Nilifa is responsible for the planning and oversight of the research and clinical intervention activities, as well as management of staff, including research personnel and health workers.

Nilifa earned her Master of Public Health degree from Rutgers University, New Brunswick in May, 2017. She graduated among the top 10 % of her class and was inducted into Delta Omega, an honorary society for graduate studies in public health. She was the recipient of the Stanley S. Bergen, Jr., MD, Medal of Excellence Award 2017 and the Bernard D. Goldstein, MD, Award 2017. As the recipient of the prestigious Bergen Medal, Nilifa also delivered the convocation class address for the graduating class of 2017. She has been an active health professional since she earned her dental degree from Mumbai, India in the year 2014.

Nilifa is currently pursuing a certificate in Clinical Data Science to augment her research skills, stay abreast of recent developments in the field and positively contribute to the ever growing public health taskforce

William Kernan, Ed.D, MS, MPA

Dr. William Kernan is professor and chairperson of the Department of Public Health at William Paterson University. A health educator by training, Dr. Kernan has over twenty years of experience developing collegiate and community-based health promotion and substance abuse prevention programs. As a former Peace Corps volunteer and United Nations staff member, he also has a special interest in global health, culture, and food systems.

Dr. Kernan is currently the primary investigator for a program aimed at reducing opioid abuse among young athletes.