

# BOSTON PUBLIC POLICY FORUM

Thursday, March 30, 2023  
5:00PM - 8:00PM

## Event Speakers



**Deirdre Calvert, MSW, LICSW**

Director, Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS)

Deirdre Calvert has been the Director of the MA Bureau of Substance Addiction Services since April of 2019. Previously, Director Calvert worked for more than 20 years as a clinical director and social worker in the MA substance use disorder system. Her stated focus is on cutting edge and inclusive care for individuals contending with substance use and co-occurring mental disorders. Director Calvert holds a MSW from Boston University and is a licensed independent clinical social worker.



**Julia Ojeda**

Recovery Support Services Coordinator, BSAS

Julia Ojeda is the Massachusetts DPH Bureau of Substance Addiction Services Recovery Support Services Coordinator. A graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School of Management, Julia brings a vast array of skills and experience to the field of recovery support services. In addition to many other initiatives, Julia has enhanced the development of peer recovery support centers, recovery coaches, inclusive of recovery coach supervision. MOAR is very proud to have Julia as our BSAS contract manager.



**Kevin McCarthy, LICSW, MAPGS**

**MOAR** Board President

Kevin McCarthy is a person in long term recovery that after 20 years in sales management and training found his passion as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and recovery advocate. He specializes in the treatment of clients with co-occurring disorders, focusing their challenges with housing and the stigma of being in recovery. He uses his expertise to facilitate systemic change in recovery treatment, through legislation change advocacy and non-profit board service.

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## **Representative Marjorie Decker**

Democrat - 25th Middlesex

In 2012, Marjorie Decker was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives representing the 25th Middlesex District, including parts of the Cambridge neighborhoods of West, North, Riverside, Cambridgeport and mid-Cambridge. Representative Decker is both humbled and proud to serve the diverse and vibrant citizens of Cambridge and help to make it the strongest community it can be.

Marjorie has been a staunch leader in her public service career. She has fought for citizens, families, veterans, and seniors. In the legislature, Marjorie will continue to advocate for Cambridge residents as well as individuals across the state to ensure that every needy and eligible person has access to affordable housing, quality education and comprehensive health care.



## **Representative Ruth Balsler**

Democrat - 12th Middlesex

Ruth B. Balsler is the State Representative for the 12th Middlesex District, which includes parts of Newton and Brookline. Now serving her thirteenth term in the House of Representatives, Representative Balsler continues to be an independent progressive voice, fighting for the values and priorities of her community. Representative Balsler serves as a member of House Speaker Mariano's leadership team as a Division Chair.

As the first psychologist to serve in the Massachusetts legislature, Representative Balsler brings a unique perspective. She has made mental health public policy a top priority. She has championed many bills and budget amendments with the goal of expanding access to and quality of mental health and addiction services and reducing the stigma associated with these illnesses. She is credited with expanding mental health parity in Massachusetts, enactment of an omnibus children's mental health bill, and protecting behavioral health in health care reform legislation.

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**Jennifer Tracey, MSW**

Director, Boston's Office for Recovery Services

Jennifer Tracey is the Director of the Mayor's Office of Recovery Services, the first and only municipal substance use recovery office in the United States. The Mayor's Office of Recovery Services leads all substance use recovery policy and initiatives for the City of Boston. Jen holds a Master of Social Work from Salem State College and a bachelor's degree from Providence college.

**Senator John Keenan**

Democrat - Norfolk and Plymouth



John was raised in Quincy, the fourth of seven children, and attended the Quincy Public Schools, graduating from North Quincy High School. John graduated with honors from Harvard in 1986, with a government concentration, and in 1989 graduated from Suffolk University Law School. A lifelong learner, in 2019, he graduated from the Harvard Kennedy School with a Master's Degree in Public Administration.

John was appointed to the Quincy City Council in 2003 and was elected Councilor at Large the following year. He served as Chairman of the Council's Finance Committee for eight years, and in 2010 was elected to the State Senate, where he proudly serves his hometown of Quincy, as well as Abington, Braintree, Holbrook, and Rockland. In the Senate, John has advocated for his district and has spearheaded legislative responses to public health issues, such as tobacco reform, substance use prevention, treatment and recovery, and mental health treatment access.



**Taylor Bryan Turner**

Assistant Regional Director, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Taylor Bryan Turner is the Assistant Regional Director for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) where she serves as part of SAMHSA's leadership team and works to advance SAMHSA's mission in the six New England States and tribal nations. In this role, she develops, supports, and leads collaborative initiatives and supports other federal agencies to assure behavioral health is a priority throughout the nation. She engages stakeholders through technical assistance, promoting program development, policy innovation, and system transformation.

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**Julie Burns**  
President & CEO, RIZE

Julie is the founding executive of RIZE Massachusetts and leads the foundation's work researching, investing in, and expanding evidence-based treatment solutions as well as building coalitions across the nonprofit, public, and private sectors to end the opioid overdose epidemic in Massachusetts.



**Abby Kim**  
Senior Director of Public Policy, Association for Behavioral Healthcare

Abby Kim serves as ABH's Director of Public Policy and Strategic Initiatives. Prior to joining ABH, Abby worked as Legislative Director to Senator John Keenan. For more than four years, Abby has worked in the government and health sectors, focusing on issues relating to addiction and mental health, managing policy needs, tracking legislation, researching, and collaborating with internal and external stakeholders. She is a graduate of Boston University School of Public Health with a Masters in Public Health.



**Andrea Pessolano**  
Senior Manager of State Government Advocacy, Boston Medical Center

Andrea Pessolano serves at BMC's Senior Manager of State Government Advocacy. Prior to joining BMC, Andrea worked in the Massachusetts State House in various roles, including Chief of Staff for Senator John Keenan. She is a graduate of Boston College, with a bachelor's in political science and government.

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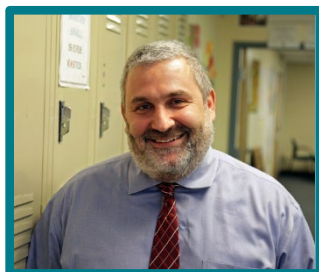
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**Dr. Bisola Ojikutu**

Executive Director, Boston Public Health Commission

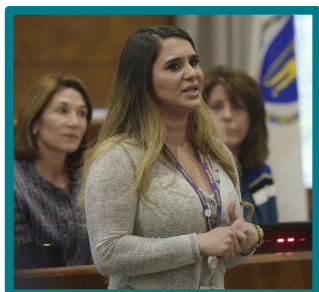
Bisola Ojikutu MD, MPH is a nationally recognized physician leader, health equity researcher, community advocate and expert in the prevention, care, and treatment of infectious diseases. Dr. Ojikutu was appointed Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) in September 2021. As Executive Director of the BPHC, Dr. Ojikutu manages a budget of \$162M and leads 1,200 employees to protect, preserve, and promote the health and well-being of all Boston residents, particularly the most vulnerable. Among other public health priorities, she is committed to addressing racism as a public health crisis and advancing health equity.



**Roger Oser**

Principal, Ostiguy Recovery High School

Roger Oser is an education and youth development leader focused on providing and developing the best possible service for at-risk youth as well as serving as a strong advocate and voice for policy and systems change. Roger is the founding principal of first recovery high school in Boston, Massachusetts. He oversees daily operations, fundraising, and development of a new educational model.



**Lina Abdalla, LMHC**

Senior Director of Public Policy, Association for Behavioral Healthcare

Lina Abdalla is a woman in recovery and strong advocate for collegiate recovery organizations. "Through my involvement with Recovery@UMB, I have gone from a place of complete and utter hopelessness to a place of hope and light, and I want to share how the collegiate recovery community (CRC) at the University of Massachusetts Boston changed my life." Lina is now the Johnson House for Women's Clinical Director.

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**Julie Pike**  
MOAR Recovery Coach

Julie Pike experienced 20 years behind the walls of a state prison. Upon her release, she faced the overwhelming task of reintegrating into a changed world. She sought out a Recovery Coach through the ATR/STR Program and was connected to MOAR. She is now a fulltime MOAR Recovery Coach.



**Keri McCallum & Kirsten Puccio**  
Miracle Mama's

Keri McCallum and Kirsten Puccio are the founders of M.I.R.A.C.L.E. (Mothers In Recovery Advocating for Change, Leadership, and Empowerment) Mama's, a support group for mothers in recovery. They aim to advocate for themselves and their children as they navigate their own pathway of recovery and everything that comes along with it.

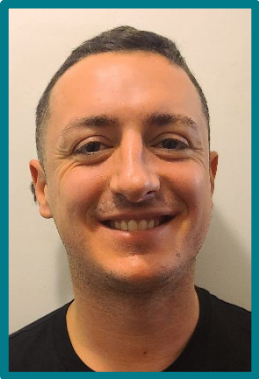


**Minister Randy Muhammad**  
Muhammad Mosque No. 11

As the leader of Muhammad's Mosque No. 11, Randy Muhammad oversees the chapter's various ministries and study groups. In non-pandemic times, he delivers the Sunday sermon, Wednesday evening lectures, Friday night study groups and Saturday prayer services. The mosque has ministries in nine state prisons and runs a food pantry that distributes produce and dairy from local farms. The mosque also runs a science, technology, engineering, arts and math program for teens and has launched a new initiative to reach out to people experiencing homelessness and substance abuse in Nubian Square. Randy Muhammad is also the Executive Director of Torchlight Recovery.

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**Filippo Napoli**  
Recoveree

My name is Filippo, and I am in recovery. ATR – Access to Recovery – has helped me get back on my feet, go to culinary school and live in a sober house. I would not be here without it.



**Father Joe White**  
Pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Boston and Director of Archdiocesan Addiction Recovery Pastoral Support Services

Pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Boston's West End, Director of the Archdiocesan Addiction Recovery Pastoral Support Services, and serves as the **MOAR** Board Vice President. Father Joe is well known for his dedication to ministering to those in recovery and is recognized as a leader in the field of addiction.