

## Minority Digestive Health Care Award

This ACG achievement award recognizes an ACG Member or Fellow whose work in the areas of clinical investigation or clinical practice has improved the digestive health of minorities or other underserved populations of the United States. These efforts can be shown by community outreach activities through clinical or educational programs, or research in an area of digestive disease that negatively impacts minority populations such as colorectal cancer, hepatitis B and C, cirrhosis and other GI cancers.

### 2018 Recipient

#### Renee L. Williams, MD, FACG



Renee L Williams, MD, MHPE, FACG, is a clinician-educator in gastroenterology with a focus on health care disparities and medical education. Dr. Williams received a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science from New York University (NYU). She received her medical degree and completed her internship, residency and gastroenterology fellowship from NYU School of Medicine. After completing her fellowship, she served on staff at Upstate Medical University as an Assistant Professor before transitioning to her current position. She recently completed a Master's in Health Professions Education in a joint program between Maastricht University in the Netherlands and NYU School of Medicine.

She is currently an Assistant Professor of Medicine at the NYU School of Medicine where she serves as the Program Director for the gastroenterology training program. Dr. Williams has been an active member of the gastrointestinal societies. Her committee service at the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) includes the Educational Affairs Abstract Review Committee, the Professionalism Committee and the Minority Affairs and Cultural Diversity Committee, where she has been a longstanding member, and served as Chair from 2016-2018. In her role as member and subsequent Chair of the Minority Affairs and Cultural Diversity Committee, she has spearheaded initiatives aimed at increasing diversity in gastroenterology. She has organized workshops and seminars in gastroenterology for students underrepresented in medicine along the pipeline, inclusive of high school, undergraduate and undergraduate medical students. She has worked with leadership of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA), the Latino Medical Students Association and the Minority Association of Pre-Health Students to highlight the field of gastroenterology and increase diversity. During her time as Chair, she worked in collaboration with the Public Relations Committee to organize and implement a national social medical campaign utilizing Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to advocate for increased screening rates and a lower age of screening for African-Americans. Prior to accepting the role of Committee Chair, she first authored the Committee's update to the systematic review on colorectal cancer in African-Americans emphasizing the continued disparities in this group along with

promoting screening at age 45 years. Under her leadership, the Committee implemented a restructured ACG Summer Scholars program with the goal of exposing students who are underrepresented in medicine to develop specific skills and attributes related to health professions research. Dr. Williams is committed to advocating appropriate healthcare in diverse communities through education and leadership.

She has been the recipient of the NYU School of Medicine, Division of Gastroenterology's Christopher Burch Award for Humanism in Medicine along with the Golden Rose Award for lifetime achievement from the Academic Achievement Program at the undergraduate New York University. Within her Department, she was the recipient of an award for outstanding mentorship from the Department of Internal Medicine's Organization for Nurturing Diversity (DIMOND) resident committee. She has also been involved in quality improvement utilizing a multi-lingual educational instrument to improve bowel preparation in a low English proficiency patient population.

Dr. Williams has been an advocate to the medically underserved throughout her training. While in medical school, she served on the executive board of the SNMA which was active in advocating for underrepresented groups. She has been an active participant in minority health events and has been invited to speak at church health fairs both locally and internationally and these efforts continue today. Her main clinical site is Bellevue Hospital, a city hospital with a large percentage of uninsured, underinsured and patients with a low English proficiency. She is involved in research and quality improvement efforts to improve outcomes in the underserved. Within the Department of Medicine, she is the current Chair of the DIMOND Executive Board which is comprised of senior leadership within the division and is the Departments Diversity Ambassador for the institution. Additionally, she is actively involved in recruitment and professional development of underrepresented medical graduate trainees. She has been a member of Building the Next Generation of Academic Physicians (BNGAP), serving on the core curriculum, conference development and academic scholarship committees. She has designed and implemented a workshop on educational scholarship that has now been implemented nationwide through BNGAP. BNGAP is a non-profit organization with the goal of helping diverse medical students, residents and fellows become aware of a career in academia and providing them with resources to explore and embark on an academic career.

Dr. Williams is honored to receive the 2017 Minority Health Care Award from the American College of Gastroenterology and wishes to thank her family, friends, mentors, mentees, and colleagues who have supported her medical career.

## **Past Minority Digestive Health Care Award Recipients**

2017	Darwin L. Conwell, MD, MS
2016	Maria T. Abreu, MD
2014	Fritz Francois, MD, MSc, FACG
2013	Frank A. Hamilton, MD, MPH, FACG
2008	Abbasi J. Akhtar, MD, FACG
2007	LaSalle D. Leffall, Jr., MD, FACG