

MISSISSIPPI TOBACCO CONTROL ADVISORY COUNCIL

FISCAL YEAR 2023

COUNCIL APPOINTEES		
Name	Location	Affiliation/Appointing Official
Mary Shaw, PhD, MCHES	Jackson, Mississippi	School of Public Health, Jackson State University/Dean, School of Health Sciences
Robert “Bob” K. Collins, MD	Mississippi State University	Mississippi Chapter American Lung Association/Lieutenant Governor
Winston Choi, PhD	Hattiesburg, Mississippi	College of Health, University of Southern Mississippi/Dean, College of Health
Gena Vail, CFNP	New Albany, Mississippi	Mississippi Nurses Association/Lieutenant Governor
Felicia Gavin, PhD	Jackson, Mississippi	Office of Healthy Schools/State Superintendent of Education
Pierre de Delva, MD	Jackson, Mississippi	The ACT Center for Tobacco Education, Treatment, & Research/Governor
Washington Cole, IV, PhD	Jackson, Mississippi	Mississippi Chapter American Heart Association/Governor
Krista Guynes, MSW, LCSW	Jackson, Mississippi	Mississippi Chapter National Association of Social Workers/Speaker of the House
Richard Friedman, MD	Jackson, Mississippi	American Cancer Society/Speaker of the House
Alan Jones, MD	Jackson, Mississippi	Office of Research, University of Mississippi Medical Center/Vice-Chancellor, Health Affairs
Azande Williams, JD	Jackson, Mississippi	Office of the Mississippi Attorney General/Mississippi Attorney General
Matthew Wesson, MD - Emeritus	Jackson, Mississippi	Non-Tobacco Affiliated Professional/Governor
Chawla Latoya Mason, MD, FASA	Jackson, Mississippi	Mississippi State Medical Association/Governor
Jonathan Hontzas, NP (Chair)	Jackson, Mississippi	The ACT Center for Tobacco Education, Treatment, & Research: Clinical Program Director
LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVES		
Senator Nicole Boyd	Oxford, Mississippi	State Senate/Lieutenant Governor
Representative Sam Creekmore	New Albany, Mississippi	State House of Representatives/Speaker of the House



Azande W. Williams, Esquire

Azande W. Williams, Esq. is a native of Jackson, Mississippi, currently residing in Clinton, Mississippi with her husband and children. She is a graduate of Tougaloo College, and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. Mrs. Williams is licensed to practice law in the States of Mississippi and Tennessee. Additionally, she has been practicing law for over twenty years, with more than fifteen years focused primarily in local governmental law.

Mrs. Williams began her professional career as a law clerk for the Hinds County Chancery Court in Jackson, Mississippi for the Honorable Patricia D. Wise, and Honorable Denise S. Owens. She later served six years as the Board Attorney for the Hinds County Board of Supervisors. While serving as the board attorney, she was very active in the Mississippi Association of Board Attorneys, where she held several offices, including the office of President during the 2007-2008 term. She also worked nine years as a Deputy City Attorney for the City of Jackson, Mississippi in the transactional division of the City Attorney's Office. She worked primarily with the Department of Planning and Development and its various divisions: Zoning, City Planning, Transit, and the Office of Housing and Community Development. During her tenure, she was a part of the International Municipal Attorneys Association and the Mississippi Municipal Attorneys Association.

Currently, Mrs. Williams is a Special Assistant Attorney General in the State Agencies Division where she serves as the Deputy Director of the Public Health and Well-Being Group. As the Deputy Director of the Public Health and Well-Being Group, she works closely with and supervises the Special Assistant Attorneys General assigned to the Departments of Health, Mental Health, Rehabilitation Services and Human Services. Ms. Williams is primarily assigned to the Department of Human Services, where she advises and assists the agency with matters such as public records requests, civil rights, privacy, administrative hearings, contract review, employment discrimination, personnel, and aging and youth services. In October 2022, she was appointed to serve as one of the southeastern representatives of the Public Health Services Attorneys (PHSA) (formerly American Association of Health and Human Services Attorneys (AAHHS)), an affinity group to the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA).



Alan E. Jones, MD

Associate Vice Chancellor for Clinical Affairs

Dr. Alan Jones is the Associate Vice Chancellor for Clinical Affairs at The University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC). In this role, Dr. Jones guides the Medical Center's patient care mission area. Dr. Jones works with executive and clinical department leaders to provide strategic operational leadership for the Medical Center's clinical mission area in the delivery of patient-centered, high-quality care using efficient and financially strong clinical and business practices. Dr. Jones facilitates the expansion and establishment of collaborations with hospitals and health systems across the state.



C. LaToya Mason, MD, FASA
Professor of Anesthesiology

C. LaToya Mason, MD, FASA - Professor of Anesthesiology at University of Mississippi Medical Center - is a Board-certified anesthesiologist and one of the obstetric anesthesiology fellowship-trained anesthesiologists practicing in the state of Mississippi. She is Director of Obstetric Anesthesia Education, Course Director for the M4 Anesthesiology clerkship, and Society of Obstetric Anesthesia and Perinatology (SOAP) liaison to the Mississippi Maternal Mortality Review Committee and the Mississippi Perinatal Quality Collaborative.

A Jackson native and former valedictorian of Forest Hill High School, Dr. Mason completed medical school and Anesthesiology residency at Tulane University. She completed an Obstetric Anesthesia fellowship at Baylor College of Medicine. She has attained Fellow of the American Society of Anesthesiologists (FASA) designation, ASA's highest acknowledgment recognizing years of dedication to exceptional education and leadership. She is a two-time recipient of a UMMC Trailblazer Award and finalist for SOAP Teacher of the Year,

Dr. Mason has authored abstracts, book chapters, and publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals. Dr. Mason is Associate Editor of Shnider and Levinson's Anesthesia for Obstetrics Textbook, 5th Edition. She has been an invited speaker and workshop instructor at numerous local, state, and national meetings. In addition to her passions for obstetric anesthesia, improving maternal outcomes, and resident education, Dr. Mason has a keen interest in music; she is a classically trained pianist and violinist.



Pierre de Delva, MD

Pierre de Delva, MD graduated from Emory University School of Medicine and completed general and thoracic surgery training at the Massachusetts General Hospital and the Harvard Medical School. In addition, he completed a minimally invasive esophageal surgery fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. He was recruited to UMMC to develop a general thoracic surgery and multidisciplinary thoracic oncology program in 2011.

Dr. de Delva is Section Chief of General Thoracic Surgery and holds several leadership positions in the Cancer Institute. He is State Chair of the Commission on Cancer and a member of the IRB. He is Associate Program Director of the cardiothoracic fellowship program and has received numerous teaching awards throughout his career. Dr. de Delva's research interests include outcomes and quality improvement in thoracic surgery, health disparities in cancer and development of biologic tracheal substitutes. He is Associate Editor of Thoracic Oncology for BMC Cancer. His clinical interests include minimally invasive lung and esophageal surgery, management of benign and malignant disorders of the airway and thoracic outlet syndrome.



Robert "Bob" K. Collins, MD

Collins and his wife first came to Starkville as a young couple with no expectations of staying for long, but 40 years later, they have become permanent members of the community, enthusiastic supporters for the growth of both Starkville and MSU. As the university and city have grown, so have the responsibilities Collins has accepted. When Longest retired in 1988 as the head team physician and head of MSU's student health center, Collins stepped up and took on both roles, becoming a medical pillar of support for multiple generations of Bulldogs, students and athletes alike.

Collins retired from the health center a few years ago, though he kept his role with MSU's football team, and now, after a career and lifetime dedicated to the health and wellness of others, Collins is finally turning his attention the other direction and retiring to a life where nights are spent with family at home rather than teams on practice fields and weekends are spent building model ships or skeet shooting instead of working on the road. In fact, it was on one of those road trips early this season that Collins ultimately settled on full retirement as his next step.



Hwanseok Choi, PhD
Associate Professor, School of Health Professions
University of Southern Mississippi

Hwanseok Choi is an Associate Professor of Biostatistics with graduate work in applied Statistics and is a trained statistician. From 2002 to 2008, Dr. Choi worked as a graduate assistant for data collection, variable creation and modification, and various statistical analyses in numerous economic and business research. After completing the Ph.D. program, he worked as a biostatistician for four years at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). During that time, he participated in multiple projects from cardiovascular diseases research, cancer research, social behavior research, to clinical trials. He was also involved in design of the studies, data entry design, data coding, data edit checking, analyses, and statistical reports for more than 60 studies as a statistical staff using multiple statistical packages such as SAS, SPSS, STATA, R, ArcGIS, etc.

His current focus is teaching as an Assistant Professor in a teaching-focused organization, the University of Southern Mississippi (USM). He is working to develop new biostatistical teaching modules based on his research experiences to bring real-world experiences into the classroom.



Gena Vail, CFNP

Gena A Vail is a Nurse Practitioner Specialist in New Albany, Mississippi. She graduated in her field of study with honors. She has more than 23 years of diverse experiences as a Nurse Practitioner.



Dr. Felicia D. Gavin
Chief of Operations
Mississippi Department of Education

Dr. Gavin's career includes more than 30 years in the private and public sector as a Finance and Operations Executive. She obtained a Doctor of Philosophy degree from Jackson State University, a Master of Business Administration from Mississippi College, and a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Louisiana Tech University. In Dr. Gavin's current role, she directs the fiscal operations of the agency and serves as a member of the Executive Leadership Team.



Matthew Wesson, MD

Dr. Wesson is a Native of Tupelo, MS. He is a graduate of Millsaps College and University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC). After graduating from medical school, Dr. Wesson interned in Denver, Colorado. After interning in Denver, Colorado, Dr. Wesson returned to Mississippi where he completed his Ophthalmology training at UMMC. Dr. Wesson practiced in Tupelo from 1977 – 2021. Dr. Wesson also spent 2 years in the United States Army.



Mary Shaw, PhD, MEd, MCHES
Department Chair and Professor
Behavioral and Environmental Health
Jackson State University

Mary Shaw, PhD, MEd, MCHES is a Professor and Department Chair for the Department of Behavioral & Environmental Health at JSU College of Health Sciences (A CEPH Accredited School of Public Health). She has more than 25 years of academic-community experience focused on addressing education and health disparities in underserved communities across the country. She has focused research on women's health and well-being with an additional focus on educating and training first generation college students for advanced degrees in health-related fields. She is an author, public speaker, educator, researcher, and mentor. Cancer prevention and control focused on the family has been a long-time interest. Dr. Shaw is married and has one daughter and one granddaughter. She is also the President and owner of a small consulting group, Shaw & Associates, LLC that provides education and health consultation services, primarily focused on program planning and evaluation services.



Representative Sam J. Creekmore, IV
House of Representatives

Sam J. Creekmore, IV is the president and principal landscape architect of Creekmore Landscape LTD. After moving to New Albany, Mississippi in 1992, he and his wife, Warner, founded Creekmore Landscape. Twenty-six years later, Creekmore Landscape is a leader in the landscape design, build and management industry in North Mississippi.

Creekmore Landscape was inspired by Sam and Warner's education at Mississippi State University, where they each earned a Bachelor's Degree in Landscape Architecture. Sam is a licensed landscape architect and holds a commercial contractor's license issued by the State of Mississippi. By merging landscape and contracting, Sam can fully handle creative developments and see the projects from conception to the final coat of paint.

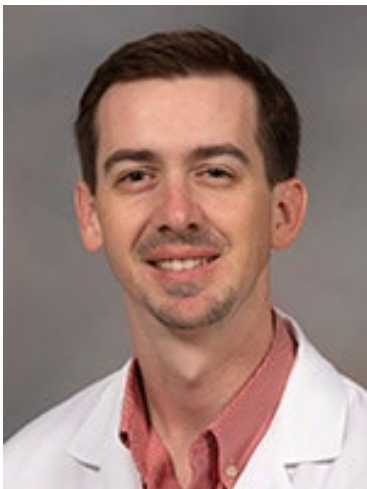
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Sam has always found ways to serve his community. He currently chairman of the New Albany Sustainable Advisory, a committee that is responsible for many of the successful spaces in New Albany. Sam recently served as a member of the New Albany City School board. A school system that is consistently rated tops in the state. In 2019 Sam was elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives, he represents District 14. He is currently serving his fourth year in the legislature, where he has chaired subcommittees on mental health and drug issues in the State of Mississippi.



Krista K. Guynes, MSW, LCSW
Director, Office of Women’s Health

Krista Guynes serves as the MSDH Director of the Office of Women’s Health. She oversees the Maternal and Infant Health Bureau, Healthy Moms/Healthy Babies Program, Family Planning Program, Breast and Cervical Cancer Program, and provides leadership support to other Office of Health Services programs. Krista is a License Licensed certified (clinical) social worker with over 20 years of experience. She has been with MSDH for 8 years and prior to this was a school social worker in Warren County for 12 years.



Jonathan Hontzas, DNP, NP-C
Clinical Program Director, ACT Center for Tobacco Treatment, Education, and Research
Co-Director, Lung Cancer Early Detection Program

Jonathan Hontzas is a dedicated healthcare professional with a passion for addressing lung cancer screening and smoking cessation barriers. He graduated from the University of Mississippi Medical Center’s Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Program in 2017 and subsequently completed the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program in 2022.

Since 2018, Jonathan has played an integral role in the development of the lung cancer screening program at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. He now serves as the Co-Director of the Lung Cancer Early Detection Program and is the Clinical Program Director for the ACT Center for Tobacco Treatment, Education, and Research.

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He serves on the Mississippi Lung Cancer Roundtable's Steering Committee, the Vice-Chair of the Lung Cancer Screening Workgroup, the Chair of the Smoking Cessation Workgroup, and the Chair of the Mississippi Tobacco Control Advisory Council.