



IPHA 85TH ANNUAL PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE CONFERENCE

Together We Thrive

FEATURED SPEAKERS GUIDE

Keynote Session Presenters

**Crowne Plaza Springfield - Convention Center
Springfield, Illinois**



SEPTEMBER 1-3 | 2026



Keynote Speakers

Get ready for the moments that will define your conference experience. Our keynote presentations bring the entire conference community into one room to hear from bold voices and fresh perspectives on the issues shaping public health today, setting the tone for two days of learning, connection, and action. Speakers are organized in chronological order by their scheduled presentation times.





Keynote Panelist

Wednesday | September 2, 2026



Tiffani Saunders, CDP

Bureau Chief, Special Populations
Illinois Department of Public Health

Session Information

Title	Rural Health Transformation in Illinois: Advancing the Future Together
Time	9:00 AM - 10:15 AM
Location	Crowne Ballroom

Biography

Tiffani Saunders is the Bureau Chief of Special Populations in the recently formed Office of Transformation at the Illinois Department of Public Health. In this capacity she leads the state's health equity strategy for historically marginalized populations, including racial and ethnic minorities, and rural, refugee and migrant, disenfranchised, and LGBTQ+ populations. She joined IDPH in 2024 as Division Chief of the Center for Minority Health Services. Prior to that, she was a lecturer at the University of Illinois at Springfield for 10 years, before leaving during the COVID-19 pandemic to join Memorial Health System as an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Consultant. Tiffani holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in sociology from Bowie State University, Maryland's oldest historically black college/university (HBCU), and Indiana University, respectively.



Keynote Panelist

Wednesday | September 2, 2026



Tracy Warner, CRHCEO

Executive Director

Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network

Session Information

Title	Rural Health Transformation in Illinois: Advancing the Future Together
Time	9:00 AM - 10:15 AM
Location	Crowne Ballroom

Biography

Tracy Warner, CRHCEO serves as Executive Director of the Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network (ICAHN), representing 60 rural hospitals dedicated to ensuring access to high-quality healthcare across rural Illinois. With more than 30 years of experience spanning hospital leadership, healthcare associations, advocacy, governance, and strategic planning, she is a recognized leader in rural health and healthcare transformation.

Prior to joining ICAHN, Tracy served in executive leadership roles with state hospital associations, health systems, and rural hospitals, building a career focused on strengthening healthcare organizations and the communities they serve. She is also the founder and CEO of Board Business LLC, a consulting firm specializing in rural hospital board governance, leadership development, and organizational effectiveness.

As Executive Director of ICAHN, Tracy leads statewide initiatives focused on rural hospital sustainability, workforce development, innovation, and policy advocacy. She is passionate about helping rural healthcare organizations navigate change through strong governance, collaborative partnerships, and strategic leadership.

Tracy earned the designation of Certified Rural Hospital Chief Executive Officer (CRHCEO) from the National Rural Health Association in 2021 after completing an intensive ten-month executive leadership program focused on healthcare operations, finance, clinical quality, and organizational leadership.



Keynote Panelist

Wednesday | September 2, 2026



Margaret Vaughn, MA, BA

Executive Director

Illinois Rural Health Association

Session Information

Title	Rural Health Transformation in Illinois: Advancing the Future Together
Time	9:00 AM - 10:15 AM
Location	Crowne Ballroom

Biography

Margaret holds both a BA and MA in Political Science and was dubbed the "Professional Persuader" by the "Chicago Tribune" for her successful passage of over 100 state laws and is often referred to as the "hardest working woman in Illinois politics". She founded her own lobbying firm over 30 years after working on the House and Senate staff directly out of college. She has served as the Executive Director of the Illinois Rural Health Association since 2012 and has grown its membership from 150 to almost 700 members and has made Rural Health Clinics a top priority. She also advocates on behalf of several public safety clients including the Illinois Fire Safety Alliance, the Illinois Firefighters Association and the Illinois Council of Code Administrators.



Keynote Panelist

Wednesday | September 2, 2026



Vicki Weidenbacher-Hope, MSW

Associate Director, Rural Workforce and Center Development

National Center for Rural Health Professions -
University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford

Session Information

Title	Rural Health Transformation in Illinois: Advancing the Future Together
Time	9:00 AM - 10:15 AM
Location	Crowne Ballroom

Biography

Vicki Weidenbacher-Hoper, MSW, is Associate Director for Rural Health Workforce and Center Development at the National Center for Rural Health Professions (NCRHP) at the University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford. For more than 25 years, she has worked in rural health, medical education, community engagement, and workforce development, supporting programs that prepare healthcare professionals to serve rural and medically underserved communities.

Her work focuses on developing and strengthening educational pathway programs, building partnerships with rural communities and healthcare organizations, and supporting grant-funded initiatives that expand opportunities for students interested in rural practice. She also assists with student research, program evaluation, and collaborative projects that advance rural health education and workforce development.

She has contributed to numerous rural health education and workforce projects through presentations, publications, and collaborations with local, state, national, and international partners. She is passionate about creating opportunities that strengthen the rural healthcare workforce and improve access to care for rural communities.



Keynote Panelist

Wednesday | September 2, 2026



Ollie Idowu, JD, MPH

President + Chief Executive Officer
Illinois Primary Health Care Association

Session Information

Title	Rural Health Transformation in Illinois: Advancing the Future Together
Time	9:00 AM - 10:15 AM
Location	Crowne Ballroom

Biography

Ollie joined IPHCA as President + CEO in May 2021 following more than 10 years of continuous leadership as a healthcare business leader and development strategist.

Ollie led growth at a broad range of organizations, from two Fortune 500 managed care companies, to a start-up data-analytics company. He previously served as the Director of State Governmental Affairs at IPHCA. He regularly puts into practice many of the lessons learned from the last decade of innovation in health care.

The mission and purpose of our members is so vital to improving the health and well-being of communities across our state. Ollie is eager to advocate for Illinois' community health centers so every person and community across the state can access the cutting-edge, compassionate care they need to thrive.

Chicago born, Ollie grew up in Lagos, Nigeria and lives in Geneva, Illinois with his family. He received his bachelor's degree from Eureka College, his master's degree in Public Health from the University of Illinois at Springfield and a Juris Doctor from Western Michigan University's Thomas M. Cooley Law School.



Keynote Speaker

Thursday | September 3, 2026



Lisa L. Campbell, PhD, MHA, RHIA, CHC, FAHIMA
Speaker, Author, Educator, Consultant
The Growth Motivator

Session Information

Title	Future Forward: Honoring the Past, Activating the Present, and Designing a Healthier Tomorrow - Together
Time	9:00 AM - 10:15 AM
Location	Crowne Ballroom

Biography

Raised in a foundation of support and a strong work ethic and motivated as a young girl to become a changemaker or future president, Dr. Lisa L. Campbell loves to learn, inspire, and educate others. She is relentless in her drive to pick apart processes, understand the “how” and “why,” and explore opportunities to find improvements within her own and others’ lives. Not content to be complacent or accept “that’s the way we do things” as an answer, Dr. Campbell quickly worked up the ranks of becoming a manager at McDonald’s at 17, learning “front, middle, and back of the house” operations, constantly challenging to learn more than what was being taught to her.

Dr. Campbell is a healthcare veteran who started her career in 1992 as a Certified Medical Assistant (CMA); today, she holds 11 national certifications in the areas of Health Information Management (RHIA), Clinical Documentation Improvement (CDIP), Medical Coding (CCS, CCS-P, CPC, COC, CRC), Compliance (CHC), Medical Billing (CPB) and Medical Auditing (CPMA).

Since 1997, Dr. Campbell has been a beacon of hope for aspiring healthcare professionals, particularly those from underserved communities, who are actively working towards degrees in Healthcare Administration, Health Information Management, and Medical Billing and coding. As a Chicago native, Dr. Campbell’s commitment to making a difference in the lives of those less fortunate is unwavering. Throughout her journey, she has always believed in a better, more innovative way and has been driven to selflessly share her insights with others.

Dr. Campbell’s reputation as a nationally recognized speaker precedes her. Her ability to deliver complex material in a relatable and engaging manner has captivated audiences both in the US and abroad. Recently, she has been sharing her expertise with large and small audiences, sparking interest and curiosity with her diverse range of topics.



Contact Us!

For any questions about the presenters, please contact:

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