



# REEDE NEWS

The Official Newsletter of The Reede Scholars, Inc.

## Is Health Equity in Danger?

An Editorial submitted by Reede Scholar Cynthia Hodge



In my search for information about what the upcoming administration might mean for vulnerable populations, I've been avoiding national TV news outlets and turned instead to the internet. With a Republican-controlled Congress, many programs—including the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and other protective organizations—could face threats of defunding or even elimination due to inaction from a non-functioning Congress.

In an opinion piece titled "[Election Implications for Telehealth, Health Equity, AI, and Life Sciences](#)," Sarah Starling Crossan of the Holland & Knight Healthcare Blog discusses the contrasting health policies of the Biden and Trump administrations. She notes that the Biden Administration prioritized health equity, AI standards and oversight, accessibility of Medicare and Medicaid, and drug pricing, supported by executive orders and regulations from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Conversely, the incoming [Trump Administration](#) is expected to use its authority to reverse many of these Biden-era initiatives. Crossan highlights that CMS has faced scrutiny from both political parties in recent years: Republicans have pointed out inefficiencies and the lack of significant savings, while Democrats have raised concerns about systemic barriers to care and the evaluation of certain programs from the CMS Innovation Center as potential drivers of consolidation.

I am deeply concerned that the rights and protections developed over generations could be erased in an instant under the guise of fiscal responsibility, all while tax breaks continue to benefit the super-rich. Some may argue that these programs have not achieved health equity, despite the significant resources invested in them. However, my generation reflects on the successful elimination of diseases like smallpox and polio, the dismantling of whites only signs, improvements in medication safety, advancements in educational opportunities, and the rise of economic parity in many communities. These are just a few of the benefits that these protections have provided.

By defining health equity, we take a step toward achieving it. This journey may be briefly set back and cause excruciating pain for some populations. However, once we address these challenges, we can resume our efforts and keep progressing until we achieve health equity for everyone.

### [Inside Boston's drive for health equity: A Q&A with Bisola Ojikutu](#)



All Boston residents deserve to live long and healthy lives, but health disparities among different populations persist. For example, there are stark differences in average life expectancy among neighborhoods, the most striking being a [23-year difference](#) between those who live in a part of Back Bay compared to those who live two miles away near Nubian Square in Roxbury. The City of Boston and the Boston Public Health Commission are working to close gaps and announced Boston's first [community-wide health equity agenda](#) over the summer. In this Q&A, Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, commissioner of public health for the City of Boston, will explain the city's approach to helping all residents live longer, healthier lives. A Harvard Chan School alum, she will also share insights from her career journey.

### [Salewa Oseni elected as President of the Association of Women Surgeons](#)

The Association of Women Surgeons (AWS), founded in 1981, is a not-for-profit educational and professional organization. With more than 3,700 members of all genders, AWS is one of the largest organizations dedicated to enhancing the interaction and exchange of information between women surgeons. Truly an international organization, AWS has members in more than 40 countries.

There are still so many challenges facing women in surgery today: pay equity, ergonomics, family leave, healthcare reform, changes in academic medicine, resident education, and work-life balance. Many of these issues affect both men and women, majority and minority groups, and they affect our ability to do our jobs and live our lives well.



## Reede Scholars, Inc.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:  
[ReedeScholars.org](http://ReedeScholars.org)

Editor & Writer  
Mary E. Fleming, President

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## 2025 EVENTS

April 4-6, 2025

Annual Leadership Retreat and Business Meeting  
Atlanta, GA

May 7-9, 2025

[Leadership and Faculty Development Program & Minority Health Policy Meeting](#)  
Boston, MA

May 08, 2025

Reede Scholars  
16th Annual Health Equity Symposium  
Boston, MA

November 2-5, 2025

APHA  
Washington DC

November 03, 2025

BOD Meeting and Breakfast  
Washington, DC

**2024 GIVING CAMPAIGN**

Thank you to all who registered and donated in 2024!

As 2025 kicks-off it's a good time to complete your registration online at [reedescholars.org](http://reedescholars.org) and submit the yearly \$100 membership donation.

The Reede Scholars, Inc. membership goal for 2025 is again \$10,000!

Your donations are truly appreciated, they help grow our organization and further our mission. Donations contribute towards our Annual Leadership Retreat, Annual Health Equity Symposium, publication of Reede News, and our Reede Scholars Live podcast!

Thank you to those who contribute loyally and generously. Reede Scholars, Inc. is your organization, your voices matter and your donations count!

Reede Scholars, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. For questions please email: [thereedescholars@gmail.com](mailto:thereedescholars@gmail.com)



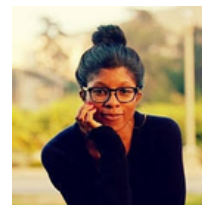
**Board of Directors:**

- C. E. Hodge, DMD, MPH, MPA  
Chair
- Ann Elrington, MD, MPH
- Alexy Arauz Boudreau, MD, MPH
- Shelia E. Roundtree, MD, MPH
- D'Nyce L. Williams, MD, MPH, MPA
- Kevin Simon, MD, MPH
- Kamillah Wood, MD, MPH

**Empowering the Next Generation: Inside the Mission of BSCP**

Dr. Reede is featured in this powerful video, where they take you on a journey through the mission of the Biomedical Science Careers Program (BSCP) and the life-changing impact it has on students from underrepresented populations pursuing careers in science and healthcare. From dedicated mentorship to invaluable resources, BSCP is building pathways for students to realize their dreams and thrive in their chosen fields.

You will hear from two inspiring voices: a BSCP alumnus who is now a doctor, and a current BSCP student on the path to earning her PhD before attending medical school. Their stories shine a light on the transformative support BSCP provides. Dr. Joan Reede, the visionary Founder, President, and Chair of BSCP, who shares her personal inspiration for creating the program and her unwavering commitment to uplifting future leaders in STEM.



**Rhea Boyd featured in Health Affairs**

Rhea Boyd, MD, MPH, Pediatrician and Child and Public Health Advocate, interviews Sarah Hemminger of Thread about social isolation and wellbeing, particularly for young people.

They discuss innovative ways to connect people and achieve transformational change. The Podcast: Research And Justice For All episode is entitled: Thread Unites Community & Combats Childhood Loneliness.



**Executive Officers:**

- Mary E. Fleming, MD, MPH  
President
- Nicole del Castillo, MD, MPH  
Secretary
- Don S. Lee, MD, MPH  
Treasurer

**PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

Happy New Year! Though many of our years did not start off the way we hoped -- another demoralizing tragedy in New Orleans, LA, uncertain changes looming with the new presidential administration and climate changes wrecking havoc in California. Our hearts and prayers for all who have been impacted. Yet, hope always prevails. Just writing this newsletter reminds me of the amazing alumni and leaders that we are!

As always, I remind you of our social hours, general business meetings and our committees that need your input. Contact any of the executive officers for more information. Please like, follow and subscribe to our social media accounts and list Reede Scholars proudly on your CVs and LinkedIn profiles.

--Mary



APHA  
Minneapolis, MN 2024



APHA  
Minneapolis, MN 2024

## I am Abel Foundation

Each year, the Reede Scholars select an organization to support and highlight that contributes to health equity in their community. This year, we chose I am Abel, a 501c3 nonprofit organization that seeks to bridge socioeconomic gaps and promote achievement amongst underrepresented minority inner city youth so that every child will have a shot at the not so impossible dream.

*Their mission, Our foundation believes that suboptimal education combined with inadequate mentoring and opportunities are key barriers for our children. Through our humanitarian outreach we will forever focus our students on the purpose of serving others with our gifts and talents. Through our camps, conferences, internships and mentoring programs, we are determined to increase exposure, education and opportunities for underrepresented minorities in math, science, research, medicine, public health, and medical entrepreneurship with a strong emphasis on widening our pipelines to medicine and research. I Am Abel Foundation employs several key principles. Our participants must recognize that because we are “Able” – we are capable of amazing success and must accept nothing less. Because we are “Abel,” we are also our brother’s keeper and are each personally responsible for the success of our brother.*

## Reede Scholars’ featured artist, Herb Bradshaw, artwork at the 10th Anniversary Presidential Soiree

Reprint from Spectrum1News -- LOUISVILLE, Ky. — The largest source of aluminum in municipal solid waste are aluminum cans and other packaging according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. But one man’s trash is Herb Bradshaw’s treasure.

“I use recycled cans. I use recycled frames from the thrift store. Everything I use is recyclable,” Bradshaw said. Bradshaw’s primary medium is beverage cans. He has cut and repurposed more than a few over the past decade. “I would at least say 1000 or more,” says Bradshaw. His process includes embossing, distressing, and arranging can scraps to create colorful pieces.

The self-taught artist says he stumbled upon this craft. “I was on a family reunion cleanup committee and I had all these cans -- had about 4 or 5 bags of soda cans. I said, what am I going to do with all these beverage cans that I have?” Bradshaw recalled. He was cutting paper dolls with his granddaughter when the metaphorical light bulb lit up. I laid the doll down and I went to pick up the paper to put the dress on and I went, “That’s the answer. The cans.”

Bradshaw has created over 400 one of a kind pieces since then. “It’s relaxing to me. I worked on computers for almost 35 years, worked for IBM and it was a break fix thing and if it’s broke, fix it. Here, I’m just creating,” says Bradshaw. He’s making an art and impact. “One of my ongoing mission [sic] is to create a greener environment, so I figure taking these cans off the street, off the market to be in trash and the roads and it makes a greener society. It means so much because I guess I’m doing 2 things, really 3 things. You’re creating art. You’re helping the environment at the same time. You’re giving a person something they’d be proud to have,” says Bradshaw.

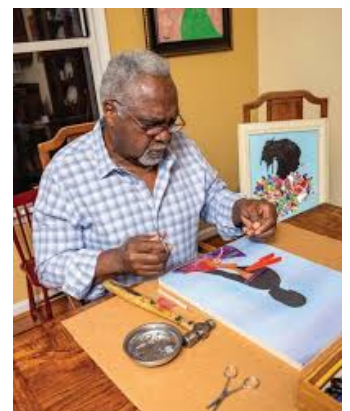
Made out of something they throw away each day. For a link to view more of Bradshaw’s can creations, [click here](#).



LaMenta Conway, MD, MPH,  
(Dr. Sweetie)  
Founder and Board President



Entitled, Wide-leg Jeans, using Samuel Adams cans (Boston)



## New Reede Scholars, Inc. Board of Directors Members Welcomed



We are excited to announce the newly appointed Board of Directors for Reede Scholars, Inc. for the 2024 – 2026 term, which was established during the May 2024 business meeting. The Board includes the Executive Committee members: Mary Fleming, Nicole del Castillo, and Don Lee. Additionally, the Board comprises Ann Elrington, Alexy Arauz Boudreau, Shelia Roundtree, D’Nyce Williams, Kevin Simon, Kamillah Wood, and Cynthia Hodge, who will serve as Chairperson. We are also pleased to share that Ralph Fuccillo, our long-time Leadership Retreat Facilitator, will serve as an official advisor to the Board.

The 2024-2025 Annual BOD Calendar has been distributed, and so far, all virtual meetings have seen majority attendance and participation. Fleming and Fuccillo are leading an orientation that outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Directors.

We have updated our mission statement from the 2020 Leadership Retreat: “Our mission is to engage and nurture a network of diverse leaders for collective action to achieve health equity. We shall effect change through research, education, policy, practice, and charitable endeavors.”

We are adhering to our organization’s three priority goals: 1) Maintain a group of experts and advocates for health equity and progressive health policy. 2) Promote quality improvement in providing health services for underserved communities nationally and globally. 3) Foster professional and social relationships and collaboration within the cohort.

The 8th Annual Leadership Conference information is now available on our website. The 2025 Leadership Retreat will be a conference for Reede Scholars, Inc. members who hold leadership positions, as well as those who are interested in pursuing leadership within the organization in the future. We’re thrilled to have the perfect team in place at just the right moment to forge an exciting and innovative future for the Reede Scholars organization. We are proud to have assembled an exceptional team of dedicated individuals who are perfectly positioned to drive transformative change and inspire a dynamic future for the Reede Scholars organization. Together, we are poised to embrace new opportunities and make a lasting impact!



*Celebrating 5 years of Reede Scholars Live!*

Check out our latest episodes!



Don Warne appointed to the board of directors at the CDC Foundation

*Thank you to our Sponsors!*



# Creating a More Equitable Oral Health System



The inequities in our society are all too clear — and those same inequities carry through into the oral health care system. Today, more than 76.5 million Americans have no dental coverage, missing the chance to live a life with good oral health.

Join CareQuest Institute for Oral Health as we work to build the oral health system of the future.



**CareQuest**   
Institute for Oral Health®

**Together, we're improving  
the oral health of all.**

**Visit us at [carequest.org](https://carequest.org)**