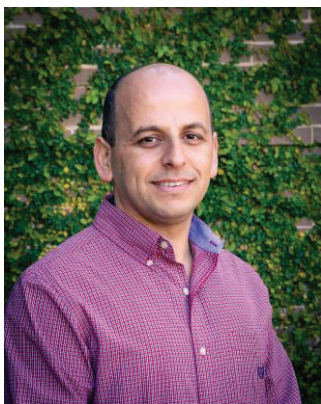




Elizabeth Adams, PhD

Assistant Professor in Exercise Science

The people who inspire me the most are the leaders who combine high expectations with a genuine investment in the growth of others. Throughout my career, I have been fortunate to work with people who created environments where I felt supported and challenged. What stands out most about these individuals is their ability to push me towards a potential beyond what I initially recognized in myself. They were intentional in their guidance and consistent in their support. I am particularly inspired by leaders who are both decisive and adaptable. This balance is what I strive to emulate in my own leadership. Being in PH GLIDE is important at this stage in my career as I transition from Assistant to Associate Professor with long-term goal of advancing to full Professor and taking on broader leadership roles. At this time, intentional leadership development can meaningfully shape my trajectory. Since joining USC, my research program has expanded rapidly, which came alongside managing larger teams, coordinating across multiple institutions and community partners, and sustaining multiple large-scale projects simultaneously. My leadership growth to date has largely been self-directed. PH GLIDE offers an opportunity to move beyond this and engage in more structured, strategic development. Through PH GLIDE, I hope to gain practical tools, mentorship, and peer learning that will enhance my effectiveness as a leader. Ultimately, I hope that investing in my leadership development will not only support my continued career progression but also increase the impact, sustainability, and reach of my research program



Mohammed Baalousha, PhD, MSc

Professor in Environmental Health Sciences

Reflecting on my academic career through a leadership lens, I recognize that leadership has been embedded in my daily activities from the very beginning—through decision-making and communication, mentoring, sustaining research efforts, etc.—even though I have never thought of these activities as leadership, in particular at the early stage of my academic career. When it comes to people who most inspired me, I am mostly inspired by humble leaders who lead with the best interest of their mentees in mind. I recognize the need for further leadership development and training, in particular in the wider leadership context beyond my research group. I would love to learn more about higher up leadership roles and responsibilities. Furthermore, although I have been involved in numerous leadership roles, I still feel that I need to enhance my ability to make confident, timely decisions in high-stakes situations where uncertainty limits full analysis. Additionally, I want to be more intentional in leading and mentoring, particularly in supporting others' leadership development and long-term growth. Finally, I aim to be able to better advocate for others within the framework of existing power dynamics. I view leadership as a continuous learning process. In this context, the PH GLIDE program is a critical opportunity to refine my leadership competencies within a structured and collaborative environment. I look forward to learning from leaders and peers across the Arnold School of Public Health, gaining new perspectives, and applying leadership competencies to my own practice. I aim to become a more effective and adaptive leader by strengthening my decision-making, influence, mentorship, and leadership presence.



Monique J. Brown, PhD, MPH, FGSA

**Associate Professor, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics
Director of Wellness and Collective Engagement, Arnold School of Public Health**

Deputy Director, Maternal and Child Health (MCH), Leadership, Education, and Advancement in Undergraduate Pathways (LEAP) Program

Faculty Affiliate, South Carolina SmartState Center for Healthcare Quality, Rural Health Research Center, Office of the Study of Aging

I am truly honored to be selected for the inaugural cohort of the PH GLIDE program in the Arnold School of Public Health (ASPH). Over my academic and professional career,

I have always felt a call to leadership. As I reflect on my first leadership role, as a bright-eyed 10-year old in Grade 6 at Howard Cooke Primary School in Montego Bay, Jamaica, I remembered being selected as the Student Leader. As I continued my academic and professional trajectory through high school, undergraduate and graduate school, and now as an Associate Professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics in ASPH, I continue to learn about the importance of leadership and the impact you can have on those who you serve. I have had several great leaders and mentors to learn from along the way, two of whom are currently in ASPH. These leaders continue to inspire me through their unwavering commitment to public health. I am inspired by Dr. Anthony Alberg, Chair of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, who leads by example and continued dedication to faculty, staff and students. I am also inspired by Dean Tara Sabo-Attwood, who is leading ASPH with grace, initiative, and commitment. Majority of my leadership experience has been from serving national and international professional organizations, including the American Public Health Association (Executive Board), the Society for Epidemiologic Research (Executive Committee), and the Gerontological Society of America (Board of Directors). Currently, I am the Director of Wellness and Collective Engagement within ASPH. Therefore, being selected for the PH GLIDE program at this point in my career will be crucial in helping me to hone my leadership knowledge and skills. As a life-long learner, I eagerly look forward to learning from, sharing and engaging with public health leaders in a safe and empowering environment.



Elizabeth Crouch, PhD

**Associate Professor, Department of Health Services Policy & Management
Co-Director, University of South Carolina Rural Health Research Center**

Ultimately, my goal as a public health leader is to build collaborative teams that produce rigorous, policy-relevant research while also supporting the development of future public health professionals. By strengthening my leadership skills in strategic thinking, inclusive engagement, communication, and conflict management, I hope to further contribute to the mission of the Arnold School and the broader public health

community. Participation in PH GLIDE will help me continue to grow as a thoughtful, deliberate, and engaged leader committed to advancing health equity and improving population health.



Barbara J. Cuevas, MPH

Director, Office of Undergraduate Student Services

From my early teenage years, I consistently found myself in leadership positions, often advancing quickly into roles where I was responsible for guiding others and improving processes. In every position I have held, I have been driven not only to complete the task at hand but also to enhance the overall experience by improving workflow, introducing new ideas, and inspiring others to think creatively and

collaboratively. This mindset has shaped my leadership style, which is grounded in initiative, adaptability, and a strong commitment to those we serve. Returning to the University of South Carolina as a faculty member in 2007 was a full-circle moment for me. As an undergraduate student in exercise science, I was mentored by exceptional leaders who modeled dedication, innovation, and student-centered thinking. Transitioning from student to colleague allowed me to view leadership from a new perspective and challenged me to rise to the same standard of excellence that had once inspired me. Since then, I have worked to contribute meaningfully to my department and to the broader mission of the Arnold School of Public Health. Beyond my own development, I am committed to sharing what I learn through PH GLIDE with others. As our office of undergraduate student services evolves, I see an opportunity to mentor emerging leaders within my department and foster a culture rooted in value-driven leadership. By modeling and teaching these principles, I hope to inspire trust, unity, and a shared sense of purpose that empowers our team to make a lasting difference in student success.



Rachel Davis, PhD

Associate Professor in Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior

I have held many leadership roles in my life. I cannot remember the first one, but I am sure that it involved bossing around my younger brother (or so I have been told by unreliable narrators). I have been most inspired by leaders who are visionary, kind, fair, good communicators, and respectful and supportive of other people, no matter their titles. I won't name them, but I am lucky to work with many individuals with these qualities in the ASPH. I am really excited to learn from the PH GLIDE program,

especially at this point in my career. I love my current job, but, the longer I work in academia, the more I want to engage in opportunities to make a difference in how academic institutions function, particularly when it comes to training and nurturing graduate students. Our world faces both persisting and emerging public health challenges, and we need talented people with new ideas to confront them. I have enjoyed serving on academic committees focused on improving how things are done and ensuring that university policies are applied equitably. I hope to have more such opportunities in the future!



Jessica Klusek, PhD, CCC-SLP

Associate Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Growing up, I never thought of myself as a leader or imagined that I would one day assume a leadership role. As someone who is naturally quieter and prefers to observe before acting, I did not fit the bold, extroverted profile of what I thought a leader looked like. However, as I progressed in my research career focused on fragile X-associated conditions and experienced firsthand many outstanding examples of leadership within the USC and broader research community, my perspective began to shift. I have come to realize that leadership can take many forms, and it is often most impactful when it is channeled through an individual's authentic strengths and values. One quality that I have consistently observed among the leaders I most admire is a strong internal motivation to create meaningful change, paired with a deep sense of conviction about the importance of the work they are pursuing. This sense of purpose becomes especially important when progress is slow and obstacles arise. At this stage in my career, as I transition from a mid- to late-career scientist, I am increasingly motivated to ensure that my research contributes to meaningful and lasting improvements in clinical care for people living with fragile X-associated conditions. I have also become keenly aware of my responsibility not only to help shape the scientific direction of the field, but also to support and mentor the next generation of scientists and clinicians. I see PH GLIDE as an opportunity to serve in these leadership roles with greater intentionality and effectiveness.



Courtney Monroe, PhD, EP-C

Associate Professor in Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior

Many people have inspired me to grow as a person and professional. They are humble, steady in the face of challenges, emotionally intelligent, excellent communicators, principled, self-reflective, resourceful, visionaries, and care for others' development. In my personal life, my mother has inspired me the most. She was a special education teacher and successfully helped run a household of five, quietly embodying key characteristics of an excellent and steadfast leader. Professionally, I have received guidance from several inspirational people (teachers; department chairs; senior colleagues). Through their actions, expertise, and genuine desire to elevate others, each one has positively influenced my trajectory and inspired me to pursue new leadership paths. I started developing leadership skills through early life experiences which helped me excel in my first career roles as a lecturer and undergraduate coordinator. While serving in these roles, I refined several soft and hard skills which translated to current leadership positions in teaching, research, and service. As a mid-career faculty member, PH GLIDE is important to me because I am seeking to enhance my ability to apply leadership skills across contexts, including future administrative and public health advocacy opportunities. I have accumulated enough leadership experience to understand both my strengths and areas in which I seek to grow. I am particularly interested in expanding my capacity to lead in the age of artificial intelligence, deepening my insights into issues unique to women in leadership, developing advanced skills in communication, and growing my network of leadership-minded peers and mentors. I am well positioned to contribute to and benefit from PH GLIDE. In doing so, I hope to enhance my leadership acumen and work alongside others to translate these skills into meaningful impact to help influence individuals, institutions, and society.



Melissa Nolan, PhD, MPH

Associate Professor of Epidemiology

Director of the Institute for Infectious Disease Translational Research

My first leadership role was working as a catering manager at Atlanta Bread Company. I was responsible to solicit new contracts, coordinate and prepare the day's catering orders, and work with the store manager to order extra food supplies for planned, larger catering orders. In this job, I needed time management skills and soft-skills to motivate employees to complete their assigned tasks on time so the entire operation could function. I've been fortunate to have several inspirational mentors over the years. At the aforementioned job, our store manager, Karen Mangillo, always believed in me and encouraged me to go to college and make something of myself. She was a single mother, raising two boys, without a college degree and despite hard circumstances, she always wanted better for others and was very supportive of her staff. My primary academic mentor, Dr Kristy Murray, was another inspirational woman. Another single mother, she demonstrated how to juggle personal and professional responsibilities. She had excellent time management skills and 'people' skills, which helped her get promoted to an Institute director and later as the VPR at Baylor College of Medicine, and now as the Chief Research Officer at Emory. Similar to Karen, she was always supportive of others and invested heavily in people to see them succeed. As my team grows and my career advances, I would love to learn pragmatic tips on how to support others in their respective career growth. We are taught how to do the research, but not how to manage people--which is not an easily learned skill!



R. Sean Norman, PhD, MS

Associate Professor & PhD/MS Program Director in Environmental Health Sciences

My first meaningful leadership role began through mentoring the many undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral trainees I have guided in my laboratory. Those early experiences taught me that leadership is not simply about holding a title; it is about helping others build confidence, recognize their abilities, and connect their work to a larger purpose. The people who most inspire me are those who lead with humility, clarity, and service. People who remain calm during uncertainty, listen carefully, make principled decisions, and create opportunities for others to succeed. I have tried to bring those qualities into my own leadership, whether mentoring students, leading interdisciplinary research teams, coordinating wastewater surveillance partnerships during the COVID-19 pandemic, or serving in departmental and school-level roles. At this point in my career, PH GLIDE is especially important because I am moving into a period of greater responsibility as PhD Program Director and future interim department chair. I want to become a more intentional and effective academic public health leader by strengthening my skills in emotional intelligence, communication, conflict management, strategic decision-making, delegation, and boundary setting. PH GLIDE offers the opportunity to reflect on my leadership identity while developing practical tools to support faculty, staff, students, and partners in ways that are transparent, mission-driven, and sustainable.



Nelis Soto-Ramirez, PhD, MS, MPH

Clinical Assistant Professor in Epidemiology and Biostatistics

My earliest leadership experiences began as a graduate student. During my Master of Public Health program in Puerto Rico, I became someone my classmates relied on to help organize projects, collaborate with community partners, and support group initiatives. As part of my MPH cohort, I helped organize community-based public health initiatives, including a health fair for underserved communities and a vaccination clinic in collaboration with the local health department. Later, during my master's in microbiology, I continued mentoring classmates and peers in laboratory and teaching settings, eventually leading my mentor's microbiology laboratory and mentoring students on research projects. These experiences shaped how I view leadership today as a collaborative process grounded in active listening, trust, mentorship, and creating opportunities for others to grow. Throughout my career, I have continued to lead in ways that center relationships, communication, and real-world impact. At the SC Department of Public Health, I contributed to the development of a statewide communicable disease and outbreak surveillance system through collaboration across epidemiology, informatics, and leadership teams. Later, at the Center for Child and Family Studies, I led multidisciplinary teams on state- and federally funded projects focused on training, research, and evaluation initiatives for children and families. In my current role as a Clinical Assistant Professor, I lead research projects focused on mental health services, child welfare systems, and health disparities while mentoring students and supporting collaborative learning environments. I am most inspired by leaders who lead with intentionality, emotional intelligence, and humility, and I see PH GLIDE as an opportunity to continue refining my skills in strategic decision-making, communication, and conflict management as I grow into broader leadership roles in public health.



Lauren Workman, PhD, MPH

Research Associate Professor (HSPM) and Associate Director (CARE)

One of my first leadership roles was leading my high school marching band's 'bugaloo' dance in the stands during football games. My job (with my co-captain) was to come up with dance moves and shout them to the band to perform; it was great fun! The people who inspire me are courageous and unapologetic in doing what is right, even if it is unpopular. They are deeply thoughtful, have foresight and creativity, and don't always accept the popular perspective. They have the ability to balance the big picture with the importance of respecting and supporting the people involved. I'm interested in the opportunity to learn and grow as a leader and look forward to doing so alongside other like-minded colleagues in ASPH! I am excited about learning from seasoned leaders and investing time to consider new approaches and perspectives.



Jim Thrasher, PhD

**Professor, Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior
Co-Director, Global Health Initiative**

My participation in USC's Pipeline for Academic Leaders program (2017-2018) gave me greater clarity about the competencies of effective leaders and how to nurture and put them in practice. In a 360-degree evaluation, my supervisors, peers, students, and staff expressed strong confidence in my leadership and appreciated my management style. I am an effective facilitator, team builder, and leader when engaging people around critical public health and organizational issues. Nevertheless, I seek to learn new ways to contribute to the ASPH's education and research missions. Since I joined USC in 2007, I have worked on topics about which I am passionate, with significant public health impacts; built a highly successful research program with amazing collaborators from around the world; successfully mentored students, faculty and colleagues; and honed my leadership skills with a variety of groups, settings, and imperatives, including through co-founding and co-directing the ASPH Global Health Initiative. Now, I seek to strengthen my abilities to support the ASPH and USC as it responds to the challenges ahead. Among the specific leadership competencies that I would like to build are strategic thinking and vision setting. I aim to better understand how to work productively within the constraints of the current university system, while also helping develop and motivate others toward a broader, shared vision of an enterprise whose mission is clear. These skills – along with adaptability and resilience – will be critical in the image and raison d'être of public health, the scientific enterprise, and universities. Other leadership skills I purposefully cultivate could benefit from continued training (e.g., emotional intelligence, conflict navigation), and competencies around leading institutional change through challenging times are critical.