



Kellogg Health Scholars

Connecting Academe, Community, and Policy

Thursday, June 10
Lunch Plenary Speakers
Biosketches

Cara V. James is the Director of the Race, Ethnicity and Health Care group and the Director of the *Barbara Jordan Health Policy Scholars Program* at the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. As director of the Race, Ethnicity and Health Care group, Dr. James is responsible for the Foundation's portfolio of work on a broad array of health and access to care issues for racial and ethnic minority populations. She is also the moderator for the Foundation's web series *Today's Topics in Health Disparities*, and lead author on the report *Putting Women's Health Care Disparities on the Map: Examining Racial and Ethnic Disparities at the State Level*. Dr. James is committed to assisting in the development the next cadre of leaders committed to eliminating racial and ethnic health disparities. As the director of the Foundation's Barbara Jordan Health Policy Scholars Program she has such an opportunity. Through this program, young adults are introduced to the health policy legislative process. Dr. James currently serves as a member of the Institute of Medicine's Roundtable on the Promotion of Health Equity and the Elimination of Health Disparities. Prior to joining the Foundation, Dr. James co-authored one of the background chapters for the Institute of Medicine's report *Unequal Treatment*, and was part of the Consumer Assessments of Health Plans (CAHPS) survey team that developed the ICH CAHPS, a national survey to measure patient assessments of care at dialysis facilities. Dr. James received her Ph.D. in Health Policy and her A.B. in Psychology, both from Harvard University. When not at work, Dr. James enjoys cooking for friends and family, volunteering, and going scuba diving.

Brian D. Smedley is Vice President and Director of the Health Policy Institute of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies in Washington, DC. In this position, Dr. Smedley oversees all of the operations of the Institute, which was started in 2002 with funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The Institute has a dual focus: to explore disparities in health and to generate policy recommendations on longstanding health equity concerns. Formerly, Smedley was Research Director and co-founder of a communications, research and policy organization, [The Opportunity Agenda](#), where he led the organization's effort to center equity in state and national health reform discussions and to build the national will to expand opportunity for all. To that end, Smedley is a co-editor, along with Alan Jenkins, of a book, *All Things Being Equal: Instigating Opportunity in an Inequitable Time*. Prior to helping launch The Opportunity Agenda, Smedley was a Senior Program Officer in the Division of Health Sciences Policy of the Institute of Medicine (IOM), where he served as Study Director for the IOM reports, *In the Nation's Compelling Interest: Ensuring Diversity in the Health Care Workforce* and *Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care*, among other reports on diversity in the health professions and minority health research policy. Smedley came to the IOM from the American Psychological Association, where he worked on a wide range of social, health, and education policy topics in his capacity as Director for Public Interest Policy. Prior to working at the APA, Smedley served as a Congressional Science Fellow in the office of Rep. Robert C. Scott (D-VA), sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Among his awards and distinctions, in 2004 Smedley was honored by the Rainbow/PUSH coalition as a "Health Trailblazer" award winner; in 2002 he was awarded the Congressional Black Caucus "Healthcare Hero" award; and in August, 2002, was awarded the Early Career Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychology in the Public Interest by the APA. Smedley holds an undergraduate degree from Harvard University and a Ph.D. in psychology from UCLA.