

## SHP DEAN'S ADVISORY BOARD BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

### JASON ALEXANDER, MSHA, FACHE



Jason Alexander rejoined Ascension in March 2017 as President & CEO of Ascension St. Vincent's. After assuming additional responsibility for Ascension Providence in the Mobile market for 3 years, Jason's role was expanded in June 2020 to include serving as Executive Vice President for the UAB Health System / Ascension St. Vincent's Alliance. Jason is currently responsible for Ascension St. Vincent's 5 inpatient facilities, in addition to a network of physician practices, joint ventures and community partnerships. In his role with the Alliance, he coordinates governance and administrative responsibilities with UAB Health System leadership.

Jason was previously with Tenet Healthcare, where he served as Chief Executive Officer for East Cooper Medical Center and Tenet's other non-acute facilities in the Charleston, South Carolina Market. In 2013, 2014, 2016, & 2017, Jason and his leadership team received Tenet's Circle of Excellence Award, which is given to the highest performing health system within Tenet Healthcare.

Prior to leadership at Tenet, Jason served for over 5 years as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for Providence Health System, which is part of Ascension. His leadership experience has also included serving as Vice President for Singing River Health System on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and as Director of Business Development and Director of Physician Practice Operations at Tenet's Brookwood Medical Center in Birmingham.

Jason earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from the University of South Alabama and master's degrees in both Health Administration and Business Administration from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. In addition, he completed a post-graduate program on Strategy for Healthcare Delivery through the Harvard Business School Executive Education Program.

### ROCKY BARNES, PT



Rocky Barnes is the President and Co-Founder of PT Solutions, bringing over 30 years of experience in the physical therapy industry. Rocky currently serves the practice through clinic and hospital partnership development and also sits on the Board of Directors. Prior to PT Solutions, Rocky founded a private rehabilitation company in 1983, growing the practice to over 50 facilities operating in 10 states, ultimately selling the company to a strategic acquirer in 2001.

Rocky is a graduate of the University of Alabama at Birmingham with a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Therapy. Rocky has served the Alabama Physical Therapy Association as Legislation Chairperson, State Delegate to National American Physical Therapy Association Convention, APTA Governmental Affairs Chairman, and Private Practice Network President. Locally, Rocky has served on the Alabama Golf Association Board of Directors and is an active member of his local church serving on the Administrative Board and numerous committees. Rocky has actively served on medical and relief missions teams to Haiti, and personally led an initiative bringing Haitians to the USA for critical medical care.

## GIGI CARTER



Like many executives in her generation, Gigi Carter successfully orchestrated a mid-career pivot in her 40s. Blessed with a secure, fulfilling family life and a successful career, she too often found herself feeling run down and fatigued. These were physical manifestations—caused by a poor diet and chronic high cholesterol—of an overall lifestyle that failed to represent her true self.

A strategist by profession and tenacious by nature, Gigi didn't want to rely solely on pharmaceuticals to solve her health issues. Instead, she completely overhauled her lifestyle. She adopted a whole-food, plant-based diet, and has since made it a practice to transform traditional recipes into healthy, vegan-friendly alternatives. Her lifestyle changes triggered equally profound changes to her professional life, since it was impossible to deny the interconnection between physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being. She made the challenging decision to turn away from a successful corporate career she'd built for 22 years. After earning a master's degree in Nutrition Sciences from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, she founded a socially conscious wellness coaching and consulting practice appropriately named My True Self. Gigi has been featured in *The New York Times*, *GreenBiz*, *Forbes*, and *Vegconomist*.

Healthier and more fulfilled than she's ever been, Gigi now devotes her career to helping individuals, families, businesses, and organizations establish goals and create customized action plans to achieve sustainable wellness. Gigi is co-founder of Daniel Fast: A Bridge to Healthy Living, an online course and coaching program that connects faith and plant-based nutrition education. She co-created Daniel's Plate whole food, plant-based vegan recipe website. To date, Gigi has authored or co-authored three books. Her first book, *The Plant-Based Workplace*, a well-received guide for companies to use wiser nutrition choices to improve their employees' health and their company's bottom lines, and to leave a lighter footprint on the planet.

Gigi Carter provides institutional consulting services to help diverse clients improve the health of their employees, students, and members while helping to save the planet by transitioning to a plant-centered diet. In addition, this published author and recognized industry expert is available to address colleges, organizations, and corporations about the interconnection between physical, mental, social, and spiritual wellbeing—and how what we eat affects how we perform, which impacts the bottom line.

## CHRIS COMPTON, MSHI



Chris Compton has forged a 30-year career spanning public safety, public service and informatics. He is a 2018 graduate of the Master of Science in Health Informatics program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), School of Health Professions and has served on the UAB Graduate Programs in Health Informatics Advisory Board since 2017.

In 1992, he started his career as an Emergency Medical Technician and was a computer programming hobbyist without any intention of making a career out of software development. After graduating from Athens State College with a degree in Justice Studies in 1997, he started his next chapter in Washington, DC with the U.S. Department of Justice, and quickly put his technical skills to use within the agency.

Chris later joined NOAA's National Weather Service as an Information Technology Officer and became deeply involved in the field of cybersecurity with the SANS Institute and the Global Information Assurance Certification Organization. He served as an advisory board member, practical grader, and certification test author before joining the organization as a consultant and Senior Software Engineer.

In his most recent decade, he worked in clinical systems and informatics roles for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as a part of the VHA Office of Connected Care, as well as the architecture of clinical and genetic research informatics systems for the non-profit HudsonAlpha Institute of Biotechnology and the Clinical Services Laboratory. He is currently an informatics architect for the UAB Heersink School of Medicine, Informatics Institute. He is also the Founder of Informaticists in Public Service ([informaticist.org](http://informaticist.org)), a site dedicated to the promotion of public service and the profession of Informatics.

## FORREST A. DANIELS, MPA, DSC, FACHE



Forrest A. Daniels, MPA, DSc, FACHE has been with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) since 2019, currently serving as CEO of the Eastern Shore Hospital Center, an 84 bed, Joint Commission accredited forensic psychiatric hospital located on the beautiful Eastern Shore. Prior to his appointment at MDH, Dr. Daniels served as Deputy Director for Operations in the District of Columbia Department of Health (DC Health), Health Regulation and Licensing Administration. He also previously served as the Health Systems Administrator at the D.C. Department of Corrections (DOC) where he and his team oversaw the \$84 million-dollar inmate medical services contract. Additionally, Dr. Daniels and his team established an on-site medical clinic in the Metropolitan Police

Department's (MPD) former Central Cell Block; allowing arrestees to receive timely quality medical care while also allowing MPD officers to spend more time on community relationship building and policing.

Dr. Daniels began his career in healthcare as an Administrative Fellow at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago under the tutelage of president & CEO Gary Mecklenburg (Retired). Since then, and with an emphasis on serving the nation's most vulnerable, he has held various senior management positions in various community-based (e.g., hospital and federally qualified health centers) and a national chronic disease organization. Among his varied accomplishments, Dr. Daniels created and launched the nation's first Spanish-language help-line in the renal community while he and his team developed and launched the American Kidney Fund's Minority Intervention and Kidney Education (MIKE) Program in three (3)

major U.S. cities: District of Columbia, Chicago and Atlanta. Dr. Daniels also established and served as founding executive director of the Loretto Hospital Foundation in one of Chicago's largest communities.

Dr. Daniels' experiences include: general administration & management, strategic planning, fund development/grant writing, community relations, web-design/strategy, operational enhancements, staff development, corporate compliance, governance and marketing. A graduate of Howard University (BBA-Accounting) and Indiana University (MPA-Health Services Administration), Dr. Daniels earned his Doctor of Science in Healthcare Leadership from The University of Alabama-Birmingham. He is board certified in healthcare management, a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and a 2015 recipient of the ACHE Chairman's Service Award for his contribution to healthcare management excellence through his volunteer service to the profession and College.

Conversant in Spanish, Dr. Daniels enjoys serving as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), sailing, traditional & Brazilian jazz, gospel, triathlons and ethnic foods.

## GORDON B. FERGUSON, MSHA, FACHE



Gordon Ferguson serves as the president & CEO of Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital. He received a bachelor's degree in business administration with honors from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and earned a master's degree in hospital and health administration from the University of Alabama, Birmingham. In 2007, Ferguson became a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives, and previously served as president of the Healthcare Executive Forum of Middle Tennessee.

Following the completion of his residency in 1984 at Baptist Medical Center Princeton in Birmingham, Alabama, Gordon served as director of planning at this facility. In 1986, he became vice president of corporate services for The Baptist Health System of East Tennessee. In 1990, Gordon joined Clarksville Memorial Hospital (now Gateway Medical Center) as vice president for operations. In 1998, he joined Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital as senior vice president of support services and subsequently served as senior vice president of operations. In 2004, Gordon was named chief operating officer, and in 2006 accepted the role of president and chief executive officer. Gordon oversaw the construction of the \$267 million Middle Tennessee Medical Center (now Ascension Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital) on Medical Center Parkway, facilitated the establishment of joint ventures and completed a master facility plan as part of the hospital's overall strategic plan.

Gordon has more than 30 years of healthcare experience and in 2009 was named one of Business Tennessee Magazine's top 25 hospital operators in Tennessee. In 2010, he was named one of Nashville Business Journal's Healthcare Heroes and the Daily News Journal (DNJ) Person of the Year. He was named the American Academy of Emergency Medicine's Administrator of the Year in 2015, the UAB GPHA Alumnus of the Year in 2018 and was honored by the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce as the Business Legend of the Year in 2019.

Gordon and his wife, Cindy, are members of First United Methodist Church. They have two sons, Robbie and Andy, who are both University of Tennessee graduates. Gordon enjoys cycling, swimming, boating and UT athletics.

## DEBORAH GRIMES, RN, JD, MSHQS



Deborah Grimes received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from UAB worked as Registered Nurse for 10 years. She graduated from the Birmingham School of Law with a Juris Doctor Degree.

Deborah worked at UAB Risk Management as a Healthcare Attorney. In 2004, she returned to Hospital Administration as the Director of Joint Commission/ Quality Resources. She was promoted to VP of Quality/Regulatory Affairs named Chief Compliance Officer for UAB Hospital. During this tenure she received a certification as a Healthcare Quality Professional, Certified Healthcare Compliance, completed leadership fellowship training with Momentum Inc. and graduated with Master's in

Science Degree in Quality and Patient Safety.

Effective April 1, 2017 she was appointed as UAB Health System first Chief Diversity Officer. Named by Savoy magazine 2019 one of the Most Influential Women in Corporate America. In March of 2020 was hired as Ochsner Health's first VP Chief of Diversity and Inclusion.

## ELLEN HILLER HOLLADAY, MBA



A seasoned C-Suite leader and Chief Information Officer, Ellen has more than 35 years of experience helping companies achieve operational and digital excellence. Beginning her career as Senior Manager, Consulting Services for Ernst & Young, Ellen led technology initiatives in the manufacturing, distribution, engineering, and healthcare sectors. She recently retired after 24 years as Senior Vice President, Chief Information Officer and Operational Excellence Officer of Motion Industries, a leading industrial distributor with over 500 locations across North America and Australia.

Having served in many professional and industry associations as officer and board member, Ellen is also a past recipient of the Alabama CIO of the Year (Global Category), the Bearing Specialists Association Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Power Transmission Distributors Association Wendy B. McDonald Award which recognizes females who are critical contributors to the PT/MC industry.

Ellen currently serves as an independent board director for Crescent Electric, a leading electrical distributor, where she also serves on the Governance and Compensation committees. She volunteers as a C-Suite Advisor to Bronze Valley, an early-stage venture investment platform that supports underrepresented technology innovation founders, and as a mentor for Momentum Leaders, which helps women develop leadership capabilities. She is an active member of Canterbury Methodist Church where she serves on the Staff Parrish Relations Committee and as a Sunday School leader. She also serves on the Executive Leadership Team of American Heart Association "Go Red for Women" campaign.

Ellen earned her B.S in English Education from Auburn University and her MBA at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

## DREW HONEYCUTT, MBA



Drew Honeycutt, CEO of Innovation Depot, is passionate about growing a vibrant startup ecosystem in Alabama. A longtime entrepreneur, he brings the blueprint and experience needed to build a high-growth business community. He has a track record of starting and growing businesses but he finds great passion in helping others convert their ideas into scaling businesses. Drew is a member of the Rotary Club of Birmingham and on the boards of TechBirmingham, Birmingham Business Alliance, and BioAlabama; Leadership Council to Birmingham Bound; and angel investor in some of Birmingham's promising tech startups. He received a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance and Economics and a Master of Business

Administration (Executive MBA) from the University of Alabama. Drew resides in Birmingham, AL with his wife, Kristen, and 3 young daughters.

## JAMES RICK KILGORE, PHD, PA-C, DFAAPA



Dr. Kilgore has served as a physician associate since graduating from the Emory University Physician Associate Program in December 1981. He has practiced in Nephrology, Oncology, Emergency Medicine, Internal Medicine and Military Medicine. His experience has covered a wide variety of practice settings from outpatient clinics, large medical centers, multispecialty practices and complex dialysis centers. Dr. Kilgore has spent almost his entire career participating in clinical research, and he served as President and Chief Executive Officer of a Pharmaceutical Research Company for over 14 years.

Dr. Kilgore has a long and distinguished career in education including serving as the Program Director of the University of Alabama at Birmingham Physician Assistant Program. While serving in this role he led the development of the coordinated Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies and Master of Public Health (MSPAS/MPH) dual degree program within the program. He established the Firehouse Homeless Shelter medical screening clinic that provided both medical screening and education to the clients of the shelter. He led the PA program to a significant increase in student capacity leading to more primary care physician assistants to serve in rural and medically underserved areas.

He has served in many leadership positions within the Physician Assistant profession. This includes serving in many of the positions within the Alabama Society of Physician Assistants. He served as President of that organization twice. He has served nationally within the American Academy of Physician Assistants including roles on the Board of Directors, Chair of the Political Action Committee and as President of the Physician Assistant Foundation. He recently co-authored a chapter on "PA Education: Origins, Advancements and Challenges" in a forthcoming book on the profession from the PAHx Society.

Dr. Kilgore currently practices as a volunteer medical provider and the Medical Director of a free medical clinic for indigent and disadvantaged individuals primarily in the Hispanic community. He serves on multiple boards for the homeless, aviation and the Alabama Area Health Education Centers focusing his experience on assisting to conduct COVID-19 testing and provide vaccinations in rural and underserved areas through the AHEC Network. He serves as Director of Operations for the COVID-19 Vaccination efforts. He served on the Jefferson County Alabama Unified Command (JCUC) on COVID-19 within his state.

## JAMES A. NIXON, MSHA, FACHE



James A. Nixon, FACHE, is an innovative operations executive, business architect and brand strategist. He applies simple principles he's learned and cultivated from his life-long experiences of growing up in small businesses and from leading complex corporate enterprises, healthcare specifically. His vast and demonstrable background include hospital and system level strategy & operations, mergers & acquisitions (M&A), growth, development, and entrepreneurship including turnarounds, crisis management, business line development, market entry & defense, growth-to-scale, and navigating complex environments, to name a few.

In his career, he has worked for, led and advised organizations with capital reserves and net revenues in the hundreds of million dollar category with employees in the thousands to those with no budget, no cash flow and no hope. James credits his sustained successes and continued wins to building meaningful relationships, developing infrastructure - systems & processes and creating cultures of accountability all while having fun. He marries his experiences with a proprietary approach to growth strategy that he developed using principles learned during his journey of becoming a pilot.

While formally trained, his real world experience speaks for itself. James holds a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) in Finance from the Mercer University Stetson School of Business and Economics and a Master of Science in Health Administration (MSHA) from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) School of Health Professions. He is also Board Certified in Healthcare Management as a Fellow by American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE). James has been featured in and honored by the likes of Georgia Trend Magazine's "Forty Under 40", 21st Century Leaders and the American College of Healthcare Executives. In seasoning his skillet, a reference to his "Cast Iron Skillet Philosophy" he's also coined, James has taken on and further provides seasoning to his ecosystem - the communities, lives and environments that he lives in, serves and touches.

James is a native of Tifton, Georgia. He currently serves as the Chief Operating Officer of Meadows Health in Vidalia, Georgia where he and his wife, Angeanette, reside with their Golden Retriever, Nevaeh.

## TANVEER PATEL



Recently named by *Upstart Business Journal* one of the nation's Top 100 Influential Thinkers, Tanveer Patel brings to ConcertCare two decades of successful business ventures partnering healthcare with information technology.

She founded and managed CircleSource, a healthcare software development company, until its acquisition in 2010 by a fellow healthcare business. She's also mentored numerous successful entrepreneurs—and has served as an investor and advisor for companies. Tanveer's business acumen—and her expertise in growing companies, managing risk and developing international relationships—are keystones to ensuring ConcertCare's long-term commitment to its clients, and to the excellence of its services.

A dedicated servant of the community, Tanveer co-founded (and served as President of) the Red Crescent Clinic of Alabama, a non-profit in Hoover. She is a past two-time President of the Birmingham Venture Club's Board of Directors, and the 2015 Vice-President of the Birmingham International Center. She also serves as a Board member of Tech Birmingham and two for-profit corporations. She is an alumna of the Leadership Birmingham class of 2010 and Leadership Hoover class of 2020.

Tanveer and her husband, Dr. Maqbool Patel, have two sons. Tanveer and her family's core cornerstone has been giving back to the community.

## ALLISON STEPHENS



As a young athlete and self-proclaimed tomboy, Allison Stephens was naturally drawn to a career involving athletics, coaching, exercise, and recreation. But it wasn't until she was in college at Samford University, studying Exercise Science and Sports Management, while also playing collegiate Women's Volleyball, that she began thinking of these disciplines in the context of physical rehabilitation.

Allison's college roommate suffered a serious accident leading to a high-level spinal cord injury. As her friend went through the rehabilitation process, Allison wanted to learn more, and ultimately completed an internship at Lakeshore Foundation. That early exposure to the benefits of exercise and recreation for people with physical disabilities led Allison to a fitness and aquatics instructor position at St Vincent's Bruno Rehab Center. She later returned to Lakeshore Foundation as Coordinator of Fitness Programs, as well as Employee Wellness Coordinator for HealthSouth Lakeshore Rehabilitation Hospital and Southern Progress Corporation. This allowed her to oversee the fitness facility, and to coach wheelchair basketball, teach aquatics, and assist with outdoor adventure and recreational programs.

Allison moved to California in 1999 where she worked as a personal trainer, but ultimately returned to Birmingham and started Functional Fitness, a personal training practice for clients with and without disabilities, including some from Lakeshore Foundation programs. Among those clients was Michael E. Stephens, the founder of Lakeshore Foundation, who had suffered a spinal cord injury early in his career. Mike's vision for the Foundation created a continuum of care to serve individuals with disabilities at every stage of recovery, providing much-needed exercise, recreation, and competitive athletic opportunities for those dealing with physical challenges. The like-minded pair eventually became a couple and were married from 2011 until Mike's death in 2017.

Allison joined the Lakeshore Foundation Board of Directors in 2019 and is committed to continuing and helping to expand upon Mike's vision. She was co-chair of the Steering Committee for Lakeshore's recent \$17 million Capital Campaign. She serves on the Executive Committee and chairs the Strategic Planning Committee, where her experience as a trainer, coach, friend, and family member of individuals with disabilities continues to reap benefits for Lakeshore and its constituents. Allison also served on the Leadership Transition Committee as Lakeshore Foundation searched for a successor to their longtime CEO. In her free time Allison enjoys travel, reading, and raising Sebastopol geese and monarch butterflies.

## ELLEN R. STRUNK, PT, MS, GCS, ACEEA, CHC, RAC-CT



Ellen R. Strunk has worked in various roles & settings as both clinician & manager/director. Ellen is an expert at helping customers understand the CMS prospective payment systems in the skilled nursing facility and home health setting, as well as outpatient therapy billing for all provider types. For the past 13 years, Ellen has worked with dozens of clients as principal consultant and founder of Rehab Resources and Consulting, Inc. Her experience in both the home and community aspects of the post-acute care continuum gives her a unique perspective in finding solutions while insuring a patient-centered approach is not lost in translation.

In addition to assisting clients meet their operational & clinical goals, Ellen lectures nationally on the topics of regulatory compliance in the post-acute care space and coding/billing/documentation to meet medical necessity guidelines and payer regulations, as well as pharmacology for rehabilitation professionals, clinically appropriate exercise for older adults, and the importance of functional outcomes to value-based payment. Ellen is a published author, having contributed to the 4th edition of *Guccione's Geriatric Physical Therapy* with a chapter on Health Policy for Physical Therapists and Older Adults.

Volunteerism and advocacy are an important part of her life. As an advocate for issues to advance the care of the older adult, Ellen has served on a number of CMS Technical Expert Panels, served as co-project lead on obtaining National Quality Forum endorsement of a functional outcome measure, and personally advocated to Congress and CMS on a number of policies affecting physical therapy.

Ellen is an active member of the American Physical Therapy Association, having served on the Payment Policy and Advocacy Committee where she advanced the agenda of physical therapy in post-acute care. As a long-time member of the APTA Academy of Geriatric Physical Therapy, the APTA Home Health Section and the APTA Health Policy & Administration Sections, she has served in senior leadership positions as well as authored multiple articles and educational tools for the sections. She serves on a state level as the Practice & Reimbursement Chair for the Alabama Physical Therapy Association. She is a member of the American Health Care Association (AHCA), the National Association of Rehab Agencies and Providers (NARA), and the National Association for the Support of Long-Term Care (NASL).