

2019 PROFILES IN LEADERSHIP



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Profiles in Leadership is an interview series with several Chronic Disease Directors that provides a glimpse into the leadership theories, influences, and approaches that help them to corral, encourage, and support their teams. Learn more, and view and other supplemental materials on leadership in public health at www.chronicdisease.org.

Shamarial Roberson, DrPH, MPH is the Interim Division Director for Community Health Promotion division for the Florida Department of Health. She has five years of public health experience and leads the daily operations of a 36-person Chronic Disease Unit.

What is the biggest workplace challenge you have faced as a division leader?

One of biggest challenges is not being able to serve every at-risk community in the state. We are aware that there are many inequities in Florida, and we are actively working to advance health equity with traditional and nontraditional partners.

How were you able to overcome this challenge to find the win-win?

We are using a data-driven approach to prioritize activities to ensure we are reducing disparity gaps, and we are actively working with partners to address the social determinants of health.

What external sources or influences inspire you to strive to be a great leader?

My hometown influences me to become a better leader. I was born and raised in a rural county in Florida. This experience has humbled me to appreciate the small things in life, as there are many inequities as well as the prevalence of chronic diseases and related risk factors.

What leader, past or present, or mantra have you most patterned your leadership style after and why?

My leadership style is influenced by my life experiences. I lead with passion, love, and the understanding that the world is ever changing. Leadership styles should continuously change, as the people around you are ever evolving.

One critical responsibility of a leader is to remove impediments for your team to help them accomplish their goals. If you could change one thing about the work your team does to ensure their success, what would you change and why?

We actively engage employees in surveys and various tools to assess workplace satisfaction. If I could change anything, I would remove all time constraints to ensure that employees could work on as many projects as they would like in addition to grant or state requirements. Additionally, I would have an unlimited budget to continuously provide ongoing professional development.

Job crafting provides employees the opportunity to customize their jobs by actively changing their tasks and interactions with others. How often are your team members able to implement job crafting when developing work plans, individual development plans, etc.?

Employees are encouraged to have an individual development plan (IDP) and must share them with their supervisor. Employees are encouraged to describe the objectives and activities for their career development. The IDP is tailored to each employee and identifies competencies that the employee currently has, as well as the skills that need development. The IDP should be updated quarterly or biannually.

For information on how to participate in the Profiles in Leadership campaign, contact Tamika Smith at tsmith@chronicdisease.org



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