

Speaker Biographies

Philip W. Johnston, Chairman, The Massachusetts Health Policy Forum

Philip W. Johnston is the President and Founder of Johnston Associates, LLC, a communications and public affairs consulting firm founded in 1996. Phil began his career by founding and serving as Executive Director of the Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps, one of the top juvenile justice and social services agencies in the country. In 1984, Governor Michael S. Dukakis appointed Phil the Secretary of Health and Human Services in Massachusetts. In 1991, Phil served as the Executive Director of Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, in Washington, D.C. In 1992, he was appointed by President Clinton to serve as the New England Administrator of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. He served in that role until 1996 when he became a Democratic candidate for the US Congress in the 10th District of Massachusetts. In 2002, he was appointed to Chair the Board of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation. He has served on many Boards including Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, University of Massachusetts and Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights. Phil is the Board Chair of the Massachusetts Health Policy Forum, an organization funded by Massachusetts health providers and payors, which serves both as a health policy research organization and as a convener of key players in the health field to address health policy issues confronting the state and the nation. The Forum is affiliated with Brandeis University. Phil received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Massachusetts at (Honors in History) and a Master of Arts degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Sean Collins, CEO, EO Care

Sean Collins is a co-founder and CEO of EO Care. He is a Boston-based startup founder and investor in data-driven guidance platforms that help people make important decisions in the context of uncertainty. His expertise lies in attracting the talent and capital required to solve hard problems, commercialization of solutions, and strategic partnerships enabling growth. Prior to founding companies, Sean worked in management positions at large financial companies.

Sean holds an AB from University of California, Berkeley, and an MBA from the Wharton School. Originally from Northern California, Sean is now a long-time resident of the Boston area, having raised two daughters with his wife, Dr. Ann Collins, Ph.D., a medievalist and academic author.

Michael Doonan, PhD, Executive Director, The Massachusetts Health Policy Forum, The Heller School, Brandeis University

Michael Doonan, PhD, is Professor and Associate Dean for Academics and Online Learning for The Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University. He is the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Health Policy Forum. Michael founded the Heller School's Master's in Public Policy (MPP) program and served as Program Director for sixteen years. His Ph.D. from Brandeis is both in Political Science and Health Services Research. His research and publications focus on issues related to access to health care reform, federalism, Medicaid, federal/state relations, public health and the politics and economics of health system change.

He speaks widely on state and national health care reform. He is author of *American Federalism in Practice: The Formulation and Implementation of Contemporary Health Policy*, published by the Brookings Institute Press in 2013. Michael worked as program specialist for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), in the area of Medicaid managed care and state health care reform. He served as a member of President Clinton's Health Care Taskforce working primarily on the Low-Income and Working Families work group, and as a member of the Taskforce Speakers Bureau. Michael also worked as a fellow for the U.S. Senate Finance Committee as they considered national reform in 1994. He began his career as a legislative aide for Senator John Kerry where he worked on health and environmental issues.

Alexandra F. Kritikos, PhD
NORC at the University of Chicago

Dr. Alexandra Kritikos is a health economist specializing in behavioral health and drug policy, with a focus on cannabis regulation, commercialization, and health outcomes. At NORC at the University of Chicago, she leads quantitative research and policy evaluations, applying advanced econometric methods to assess health outcomes and program effectiveness. Dr. Kritikos has led state and federal research projects on substance use, regulatory policy, and social determinants of health. Her work explores how policies in illegal or imperfect markets shape behavior and public health outcomes, with a particular focus on cannabis regulatory frameworks, youth cannabis use, and advancing data methodologies for substance use assessment and policy evaluation.

Before joining NORC, Dr. Kritikos was a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Southern California's Schaeffer Center for Health Policy & Economics and a fellow at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). She has contributed to NIH-funded research on cannabis policy, opioid treatment, and payment reform, leveraging her expertise to drive policy solutions in substance use and healthcare economics.

Brooke Worster, MD, FACP,
Associate Professor of Medicine,
Enterprise Director Supportive Oncology
Medical Director, MS in Medical Cannabis
Science and Business, IEHP
JeffersonHealth.org/SKCC
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Dr Brooke Worster completed her internal medicine and chief residency at Temple University and fellowships in both pain management and palliative medicine at MGH and Dana Farber Cancer center. She is an associate professor of medicine in the Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center and the director of the Division of Supportive Oncology. She is happy to be a clinician-researcher – practicing Supportive Medicine and cancer pain management for cancer patients. She has federal and private grant funding to study the use, impact, and perceptions of cannabis in various complex patient populations. Additionally, she serves as program director for the Master's in Cannabis Medicine, Science and Business at Jefferson College of Emerging Health Professions.

**Robbie Goldstein, MD, Commissioner
Massachusetts Department of Public Health**

Robbie Goldstein, MD, PhD, was appointed Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) by Governor Maura Healey in April 2023. A physician specializing in infectious diseases, Dr. Goldstein oversees a workforce of more than 3,200 individuals committed to health equity and dedicated to promoting the health and well-being of people across the state, preventing illness and injury, and maintaining strong and vibrant communities. This work is carried out through a network of bureaus and offices responsible for priorities that include maternal and child health, nutrition, infectious diseases, injury prevention, climate and environmental health, substance use disorders, emergency preparedness and response, and problem gambling. In addition, DPH licenses health professionals and health care facilities, and operates the state public health laboratory and four public health hospitals.

Dr. Goldstein previously served as Senior Policy Advisor at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, where he focused on public health emergency response, infectious diseases, and strategic policy initiatives. Prior to his work at CDC, he founded and was Medical Director of the Massachusetts General Hospital Transgender Health Program, a clinical resource offering a safe and affirming environment for the transgender and nonbinary community. His clinical interest involved caring for those living with and at risk for HIV, an experience that continues to drive his passion to identify and eliminate barriers to equitable access to care. Dr.

Goldstein is a graduate of Tufts University, where he also earned his MD and PhD.

**Ethan Zohn, 2x Cancer Survivor, Winner of
“Survivor”; Patient Advocate**

Winning CBS Survivor: Africa’s 1-million-dollar prize, was the springboard to an exceptional life of entrepreneurship, social purpose and advocacy. It was also the prelude to an incredible story, one of perseverance, accomplishment, and enduring spirit in the face of once unthinkable challenges.

A fit, active, 35-year-old former professional soccer player who had traveled the world on behalf of the international health community through his foundation, Grassroot Soccer, which he co-founded with the winnings from Survivor, Ethan became an unlikely face of cancer. While helping to launch programs that would educate 18 million youth in 60 countries, Ethan was diagnosed not once but twice with CD20+ Hodgkin’s Lymphoma. In the span of several years, Ethan endured aggressive treatment, including two stem cell transplants. Never losing optimism, spirit, or humor despite extraordinary rigors and setbacks, Ethan used his journey and considerable platform to connect with others and offer much-needed inspiration, advice, and comfort. His inspiration to help heal the world stems from being taught at an early age the importance of kindness, community and a connection to social good.

A New Chapter - Cannabis Advocacy: The severities of both Ethan’s illness and its treatment, coupled with the debilitating anxiety of his cancer coming back post-treatment, led Ethan to explore cannabis and CBD as a form of palliative care.

The relative scarcity of safe, controlled options for cancer patients and other sufferers of acute illnesses, compounded by the overwhelming misinformation in a fast-growing legalized marketplace about use of CBD and cannabis, spurred Ethan to go public with his story and advocate for common sense use, regulation and education.

He shared his story with worldwide, also creating an original short film that documents how medical Cannabis helped him through his treatment and how CBD became the cure for his crippling anxiety. Since 2023, Ethan has worked closely with EO Care, the first medically guided cannabis company, working in both the tech and product space, as a spokesperson and consultant.

In 2022, Zohn partnered with Trulieve Cannabis as the official ambassador of Momenta, Trulieve's in-house wellness brand. To celebrate 10 years cancer free, Ethan ran the 2022 Boston Marathon representing Momenta and supporting patient education and community outreach initiatives. In addition, Zohn raised funds for AKTIV Against Cancer, an exercise oncology organization with a mission to make exercise an integral part of cancer treatment. Trulieve is the leading and top-performing cannabis company in the U.S with 160 dispensaries in 11 states.

In 2021, Ethan was named Chief Purpose Officer of MONTKUSH Farms, a 116-acre USDA certified organic hemp farm in Plainfield VT. As an investor and global ambassador for MONTKUSH, Zohn leads the programs to help educate and support industry initiatives while creating partnerships with research institutions and

charitable organizations that best align with the overall purpose and goals of the company. Ethan was a featured character in VICE TV's hit reality show Kings of Kush that follows the incredible journey of Anthony Sullivan and Dave Christian as they work to build this cannabis farm and brand from seed to sale.

Zohn's personal experience in battling cancer and advocacy for smart drug policy reform, as well as his demonstrated concern for the public good and expertise in philanthropy puts him at the center of a powerful evolution in the industry. This inspired Zohn to launch **Safe Roots Foundation**, a non-profit organization that seeks to support and scale innovative teenage substance misuse prevention programs for adolescents. Safe Roots Foundation is responding to America's current drug crisis by supporting the growth of sensible prevention programming for young people that is compelling and delivered by credible role models. Safe Roots Foundation draws from Ethan's more than 19 years of experience in developing and scaling health educational programs for young people globally with Grassroot Soccer.

Ethan is passionate about using both his personal experience and his professional expertise to be a megaphone for sharing honest and evidence-based information, including helping those who may benefit from CBD and cannabis safe use and practice.

Nicolas Schlienz, PhD, HRI Scientist, Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Dr. Schlienz is a research scientist in the Department of Health Behavior at Roswell

Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, located in Buffalo, NY. He earned his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology in 2015 from the University at Buffalo, followed by clinical training in the treatment of substance use disorders at the Bedford Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Bedford, MA. Dr. SchlienZ completed a postdoctoral research fellowship in the human behavioral pharmacology of cannabis and cannabinoids at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, MD. At Hopkins, his work included the study of cannabis pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics, cannabis withdrawal, novel pharmacotherapies for cannabis use disorder, and the development and implementation of an international observational research registry to examine the longitudinal health effects of cannabis and cannabinoid products. Dr. SchlienZ's current interests include the development of a cannabis educational curriculum to increase cancer care providers' knowledge of cannabis for improved patient-provider discussions. He currently serves on the scientific advisory board for the NIDA-funded National Cannabis Study (PIs: Drs. Vandrey & Thurl).

**Shawn Duhamel, Chief Executive Officer
Association of Retired State, County, and
Municipal Employees of MA**

After beginning his career as a legislative assistant with the Massachusetts House of Representatives, Shawn joined Mass Retirees as legislative liaison in 1994. He has gone on to become a nationally recognized expert on public retirement, Social Security and healthcare policy. Prior to his current role, Shawn served as the Association's Legislative Director, where he was responsible for government relations at the

federal, state and local level. Shawn previously served as a trustee on the Town of Plymouth Retirement Board. He is a member of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Mass Labor Advisory Board. Shawn was also appointed to the Special Commission on Retiree Healthcare Reform by former Governor Deval Patrick. Shawn is a sought after public speaker on retirement, health care and coalition building. Registered lobbyist.