



# THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION SYMPOSIUM

An annual gathering around a topic of importance.

2020  
VIRTUAL

2020 Focus: HEALTH STATUS

Tuesday, September 1, 2020 | 3:00-4:30 p.m.

Virtual Symposium format via Zoom

**JOIN US FOR THE SEVENTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM** – for the first time in a virtual format – as we focus on how community health status can be improved by addressing behavioral and social determinants of health. In support of its mission to improve the health status of Central Louisiana, The Rapides Foundation recognizes that addressing the risk factors and underlying causes which impact community health status requires a broader definition of health than strictly the absence of disease. Please plan to attend this important virtual presentation about improving health status – a challenging goal during the best of times, which has been made even more difficult for vulnerable populations in the face of a worldwide pandemic.



Regina Benjamin, M.D., MBA  
18th U. S. Surgeon General

## Combating Health Disparities: Narrowing the Gap

**FEATURED SPEAKER: Regina Benjamin, M.D., MBA**  
**18th U. S. Surgeon General**

As a rural family doctor serving poor communities, Dr. Benjamin has spent her career seeing the impact of healthcare disparities and the social determinants of health on several generations of patients in her community. As Surgeon General and founder/CEO of the Bayou Clinic and its partner organization, the Gulf States Health Policy Center in rural Alabama, she has been the driving force behind research and policies to promote equity and access. Taking a public and population health perspective, Dr. Benjamin reviews the range of social determinants, and explores practices and policies that will narrow the health gap.



This program is free, but registration is required.  
Visit [www.rapidesfoundation.org/symposium](http://www.rapidesfoundation.org/symposium) to register.

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## 2020 Focus: HEALTH STATUS

### FEATURED SPEAKER:

#### **Regina M. Benjamin, M.D. MBA**

18th U.S. Surgeon General, Healthcare Disparity  
Expert and Preventative Medicine Advocate



**A** leader in preventative medicine, fighting health disparities and developing innovative community-based health strategies and systems for low-income and rural communities, Regina Benjamin, M.D., MBA, is best known for her service as U.S. Surgeon General from 2009-2013. Dr. Benjamin's notable career has spanned leadership roles in government, higher education, research and healthcare, and honors ranging from being the first African American woman on the board of the American Medical Association to the Nelson Mandela Award for Health and Human Rights. She has also served on numerous corporate and nonprofit boards, including current service on the boards of healthcare companies on the cutting edge of digital health, telehealth and telemedicine.

Throughout her career, Dr. Benjamin has specialized in prevention policies that elevate health and wellness above a focus on treating sickness and disease. As Surgeon General [a.k.a. "America's Doctor"], Dr. Benjamin was a passionate and pioneering advocate for making prevention the foundation of public health. After leaving public office, Dr. Benjamin continued to champion preventative policies and use her voice for health promotion. She founded both the Bayou Clinic and its partner organization, the Gulf States Health Policy Center in rural Alabama. Both have become national and international models for community health and improving health outcomes. As CEO, Dr. Benjamin leads the clinic's community-based approach to integrated primary care for the area's low-income residents, emphasizing preventative health and patient responsibility. She also created the Gulf States Health Policy Center (GS-HPC), a comprehensive community, education and research center working alongside communities in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida and Texas. A recipient of numerous grants from the National Institutes of Health, GS-HPC identifies pressing health issues and opportunities for policy change that will improve health outcomes.

Dr. Benjamin is a member of the Institute of Medicine and a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians. She currently serves as the NOLA/Times Picayune Endowed Chair of Public Health Sciences at Xavier University of Louisiana. Dr. Benjamin has been chosen as a Kellogg National Fellow and Rockefeller Next Generation Leader. Her past board memberships include the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Kaiser Family Foundation Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, Catholic Health Association and Morehouse School of Medicine. She earned a BS in chemistry from Xavier University, New Orleans, attended Morehouse School of Medicine, earned an MD from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and an MBA from Tulane University. She is also the recipient of 25 honorary degrees.



## THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION

Working together for healthier communities

[www.rapidesfoundation.org/symposium](http://www.rapidesfoundation.org/symposium)