

Philadelphia's Gun Violence Crisis: Deepening the Conversation

Speaker Bios



Dr. Ruth Abaya is a Stoneleigh Fellow, an Attending Physician in the Emergency Department at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and the Senior Director of Health Systems and CVI Integration at the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention. As a Fellow, Dr. Abaya's work has focused on integrating health systems and public health departments into the work of the community violence intervention ecosystem.



Jos Duncan Asé is the Founder and CEO of Love Now Media, an empathy-centered media company that uses storytelling to amplify acts of love at the intersection of social justice, wellness, and equity. Jos uses her voice and her platforms to empower diverse communities to create and tell their own stories.



Dr. Jay Breneman is a Stoneleigh Fellow with the CeaseFirePA Education Fund. In this role, he is developing a comprehensive approach to preventing firearm suicide in Pennsylvania, including highlighting the risks and realities across the Commonwealth, shifting understanding of the crisis, and helping legislators recognize all of the ways in which gun violence impacts their constituents.



David Irizarry is a Stoneleigh Fellow and the Director of Gang Reduction and Youth Development at the Philadelphia Police Department. In this role, he is studying, adapting, and implementing a Gang Reduction & Youth Development model in Philadelphia, which will focus on improving the health and well-being of families and communities, prevent violence, and promote prosocial decisions and behaviors among youth and emerging adults.



Adam Garber is the Executive Director of CeaseFirePA, the leading statewide organization dedicated to ending the epidemic of gun violence in Pennsylvania. Since 2020, Adam has led CeaseFirePA's advocacy efforts, including securing more than \$200 million in funding for violence prevention programs, moving gun safety bills through the PA House for the first time in years, and developing the *Common Agenda to End Gun Violence* with 130+ stakeholders.



Dr. Desmond Upton Patton is a Public Interest Technologist, who is a pioneer in the use of social media and artificial intelligence in the study of gun violence. He is the founding director of SAFELab and the Brian and Randi Schwartz University Professor at the University of Pennsylvania. He has conducted groundbreaking research on the relationship between social media and gang violence, including how communities constructed online can influence harmful behavior offline.

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Matt Rader is the 37th President of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), a nearly 200-year-old organization that uses horticulture to advance health and well-being in Greater Philadelphia. Specifically, PHS works to: create healthy living environments, increase access to fresh food, expand economic opportunities, and build meaningful social connections.



Dr. Vincent Reina is a Stoneleigh Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania Stuart Weitzman School of Design and the Founder and Faculty Director of the Housing Initiative at Penn. As a Fellow, Dr. Reina's work has focused on strengthening public understanding of the impact of housing on youth outcomes and developing a new model for housing policy decision-making.



Emily Seeburger is the Data Analytics and Strategy Manager at the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Health Justice. The Center seeks to advance health justice by examining and repairing power structures, rooted in the knowledge and experiences of communities harmed by social, political, and economic systems.



Dr. Daniel Semenza is a Stoneleigh Fellow with the New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center at Rutgers University. In this role, he is partnering with the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia to study how direct and indirect exposure to gun violence influences the mental health of youth in Philadelphia, including risks for suicidal ideation and self-harm behaviors.



Andre Simms is the Founder and CEO of DayOneNotDayTwo, a youth-centered, intergenerational movement to dismantle oppressive institutions and inspire and empower communities of color to manifest true liberation. He coordinated the first-ever White House Youth Policy Summit, introduced restorative alternatives to youth incarceration in Delaware County, and is working to transform the culture of hip-hop across Philadelphia.



Kempis "Ghani" Songster is the Transformative Healing and Restorative Justice Manager at The Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth. Since his release in 2017 after thirty years in prison, Ghani has emerged as an outspoken voice and visionary in Philadelphia's movement to end mass human caging and to create transformative responses to harm and violence.



Arturo Zinny is a Stoneleigh Fellow and the Executive Director of the Center for Nonviolence and Social Justice at Drexel University. In this role, he is researching the impact of evidence-based trauma-specific practices on the mental health needs of violently injured young people, with a focus on racial/ethnic minorities and LGBTQ youth.