



**COVID-19 Briefing Series Session #14**

***Veterans & Telehealth***

Date: Wednesday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Time: 7:00 pm – 8:15 pm ET

Platform: Zoom Webinar/Facebook Live

**7:00 PM ET**    **Moderator:**  
Elena Rios, MD, MSPH, MACP  
President & CEO  
NHMA

**7:05 PM ET**    **Speakers:**  
**AMA & Telehealth in the Latinx Veteran Community**  
Gerald E. Harmon, MD  
*President*  
American Medical Association

**Inclusive Care - Military and Veteran Caregivers.**

Coleton Whitaker  
*Director of Programs*  
Elizabeth Dole Foundation  
Washington, DC

**Bridging the Gap with Health Literacy**

Dr. Rebecca Vargas-Jackson, MD  
*Physician Manager*  
Department of Health  
Health Equity/Health Literacy  
Commonwealth of Virginia

**7:50 PM ET**    **Q & A**

**8:10 PM ET**    **Closing Remarks**

**8:15 PM ET**    **End**

### Bios



**Gerald E. Harmon, MD**, a family medicine specialist having practiced for more than 30 years in coastal South Carolina, became 176th president of the American Medical Association in June 2021. He was first elected to the AMA Board of Trustees in June 2013 and elected board chair in 2018. In addition, Dr. Harmon also served as the secretary of the AMA in 2016.

In South Carolina Dr. Harmon has held several leadership positions in the South Carolina Medical Association, including chairman of the board and president. Dr. Harmon serves as a clinical professor at two of South Carolina's medical schools and is a member of the clinical faculty for the Tidelands Health Family Medicine residency program while regularly precepting physicians in training.

In his hometown, Dr. Harmon is an adviser to the board of trustees for his community health system and is vice president in a multispecialty physician practice. He is a medical director for several organizations and volunteers as medical supervisor for his local school district's 23 schools. He has also been recognized with the Lifetime Achievement Award from his county's Chamber of Commerce. At the state level he has served as secretary for the State Aeronautics Commission.

Before his retirement from the military as a major general, Dr. Harmon served the nation in the Air Force Reserve, on Active Duty, and in the Air National Guard holding responsibilities as chief physician for the National Guard Bureau and assistant surgeon general for the U.S. Air Force. His military decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal and the Humanitarian Service Medal.

Dr. Harmon received his undergraduate degree in physics and mathematics from the University of South Carolina and, more recently, an honorary Doctorate of Public Service. He received his medical degree from the Medical University of South Carolina and completed his residency training program in family medicine with the U.S. Air Force at Eglin Air Force Base and is recognized as a fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians.

During the rare times when not actively practicing medicine, Dr. Harmon and his wife, Linda, enjoy spending time outdoors in their coastal hometown of Georgetown with their three married children and eight grandchildren.



**Coleton** is the Director of Programs for the Elizabeth Dole Foundation in Washington, DC, where he primarily manages the Campaign for Inclusive Care and other prominent campaign programs and initiatives for military and veteran caregivers. Before joining the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, Coleton was a Campaign Manager at the Center for American Progress (CAP) where he oversaw and managed rapid response advocacy campaigns on a wide range of prominent issues. Prior to CAP, Coleton worked alongside former congresswoman Gabby Giffords, on gun violence and suicide prevention efforts across the country. Other previous experience includes Quorum Analytics, a top public affairs software company based in Washington DC and the Naval History & Heritage Command.

A native of Longview, Texas, Coleton graduated from Texas A&M University with a degree in Political Science and Business.



**Dr. Rebecca Vargas-Jackson, M.D.**, is a surgeon, and infectious disease specialist. She is also bilingual, English and Spanish. Dr. Vargas-Jackson has been working for over 25 years as a subject matter expert for a variety of agencies and organizations developing assessments, and providing training, technical assistance, capacity building, and M&E, particularly but not exclusively on: cultural competency in health care, health related stigma, health literacy, culturally tailored communications, and messaging transcreation. Her principal focus has been underserved populations, racial/ethnic minorities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT), hard to reach, and new immigrant communities. She is a co-organizer of the annual “International Stigma Conference at Howard University.” Dr.

Vargas-Jackson was one of the co-writers of the DHHS ‘National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health Care (CLAS).’ She has been affiliated with George Mason University (GMU) as research faculty, College of Health and Human Services. At GMU, she was the first Executive Director of the Area Health Education Center (NVAHEC). Additionally at Mason, she taught courses on Principles of Global Health, and Health and Disease to graduate and undergraduate students, and has been instrumental in facilitating partnerships between the University and community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to develop alliances to apply for grants that target major health gaps and disparities affecting primarily new immigrant and/or disenfranchised communities throughout the United States. Dr. Vargas-Jackson was also Senior Vice President for Research at the National Association of People with HIV/AIDS (NAPWA). There she led projects whose goals were to increase awareness and knowledge of HIV prevention and treatment and develop community mobilization interventions geared toward increased participation in testing campaigns to facilitate access to health care, prevention, treatment, and follow-up services. Additionally, she served as Executive Director of Health and International Programs at WRMA, Inc. (a small business that provides M&E and implementation services to HRSA & CDC); and Co-Principal Investigator and Director of Research at Whitman Walker Clinic in Washington, D.C. Along with directing and leading a variety of programs and projects for public/private partnerships at a variety of groups and institutions such as Howard University Hospital, The George Washington University; Northern Virginia Community College; the Department of Health and Human Services; the Hispanic Committee of



Virginia; D.C. Tobacco Coalition; D.C. Asthma Coalition; the American Lung Association; National Latino Behavioral Health Association; and National Latino Council on Alcohol and Tobacco Prevention, she has in-depth knowledge of health care systems, lack of health professionals, and other gaps affecting a variety of countries in Africa, Eastern Europe, Central, and South America. Currently working at the Virginia Health Department on CLAS and health literacy programs

At Howard University, close to 25 years ago, she developed the first Office of Multicultural Services, to serve new immigrants and LEP populations; was Co-PI in the first AIDS clinical trials for minorities; developed summer programs for D.C. disenfranchised youth groups, with the participation of HU medical students and medical interns, to increase the youths' knowledge and understanding of health professions, and the shortage of ethnically and culturally diverse health providers.