

Michelle A. Larkin, BSN, MS, JD

“Nursing as An Act of Justice: How Our Profession Can Disrupt Racism & Build a Culture of Health”



Session description: In this session, participants will learn about the nature of structural racism, the barriers it poses to health and well-being, and how nurses and the nursing profession can come together to disrupt it. They'll also have the opportunity to hear about RWJF's approach to disrupting structural racism, and how nurses can play a role. Those attending will have time to discuss and reflect on their own organizations and experiences, and what they can do to take action.

Key takeaways:

- Our nation will never achieve a Culture of Health unless we disrupt and dismantle structural racism.
- The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is committed to partnering with others to develop a Culture of Health rooted in equity that provides every individual with a fair and just opportunity to thrive.
- Nurses and nursing are uniquely positioned to disrupt structural racism and advance a Culture of Health; to do so nurses and nursing need to reckon with the injustices in our history to move forward.

Biography:

Michelle A. Larkin, vice president, Program Management, joined the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) in 1999. With more than 27 years as a leader in health policy and practice, and as an attorney committed to using law and policy to improve health, she works with the executive vice president, the Foundation's leadership team, and staff on strategy across our programming, program operations (staffing, budgeting, and equitable practice), and oversees RWJF's Grants Management and work in New Jersey to dismantle structural barriers to health. In this role, she helps advance the Foundation's vision to build a Culture of Health in America, where everyone has a fair and just opportunity for health and well-being.

Larkin earned a BSN from the University of Pennsylvania and an MS in nursing/health policy from the University of Maryland. As an oncology nurse at the University of Maryland Medical System in Baltimore, M.D., she experienced firsthand the opportunities, challenges, and rewards of bedside nursing. Later, Larkin expanded her expertise by earning a JD from Seton Hall University School of Law.