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Maryland Native Dr. Gail C. Christopher Keynotes
Parents as Teachers 2020 Virtual International Conference Oct. 5 – 8

Baltimore, Maryland – Sept. 11, 2020 – Baltimore native Dr. Gail C. Christopher, founding president of The Ntianu Center for Nature and Healing, and former senior advisor and vice president at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, will deliver the keynote address at the opening session of the 2020 Parents as Teachers (PAT) Virtual International Conference on Oct. 5 – 8.

Parents as Teachers, a leader in the national on-ground and virtual home visiting field, is a 35-year-old non-profit organization specializing in early childhood development and parenting education through home visiting.

More than 1,800 early childhood development professionals and social services experts have registered for the virtual conference under the theme of Listen, Learn, Lead. The conference brings together home visiting professionals to learn how to optimize home visiting as a strategy to support parents in developing their parenting capacities and helping their children to reach their full potential.

“We are excited and honored to have Dr. Christopher as our keynote speaker,” said PAT President, and CEO Constance Gully. “The work she has done in reducing racial and ethnic health disparities will surely resonate with our audience, as we explore ways to position home visiting as a viable strategy in mitigating inequities in health and wellness for the children and families we serve.”

About Dr. Gail C. Christopher
Dr. Christopher is an award-winning social change agent and the visionary and architect of the WKKF led Truth Racial Healing and Transformation (TRHT) effort for America. TRHT is an adaptation of the globally recognized Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) model. TRHT evolved from the decade-long WKKF America Healing: Racial Equity and Racial Healing initiative, designed and led by Dr. Christopher.

Over the last 10 years, she has been a leader in several other areas of foundation programming. These include Food, Health and Well-Being, Leadership, Public Policy, Community Engagement, and place-based funding in New Orleans and New Mexico.
In August of 2017, Dr. Christopher left her leadership position with WKKF to launch the Maryland-based Ntianu Center for Healing and Nature, in order to devote more time to writing and speaking on issues of health, racial healing, and the human capacity for caring. She currently chairs the Board of the Trust for America’s Health, a non-partisan public health policy, research, and advocacy organization.

Dr. Christopher is a nationally recognized leader in health policy, with extensive expertise in integrative health and medicine, social determinants of health, health inequities, and public policy issues of concern to the nation’s future. Her distinguished career and contributions to public service were honored in 1996 when she was elected as a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration.

Throughout her impactful career, she has received many awards and accolades including the Leadership Award from the Health Brain Trust of the Congressional Black Caucus for her work in reducing racial and ethnic health disparities. She was also named a Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) Honorary Fellow – the highest recognition given to a non-SOPHE member—for her significant contributions to health education and to public health.

She was awarded the “Change Agent Award” by the Schott Foundation for Public Education; the Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP) John C. MacQueen Lecture Award for her innovation and leadership in the field of maternal and child health, and most recently in 2015, the Terrance Keenan Award for Grantmakers in Health.

Dr. Christopher holds a doctor of naprapathy degree from the Chicago National College of Naprapathy in Illinois and completed advanced study in the interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in holistic health and clinical nutrition at the Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities at Union Graduate School of Cincinnati, Ohio.

**About the Parents as Teachers Virtual Conference**

The conference will encourage the exchange of ideas, all focused on early childhood home visiting, facilitated through more than 60 workshops and panel discussions. Presenters and workshops will focus on topics and themes such as community engagement, collaborations and partnerships, diversity, equity and inclusion, health and wellness, parenting and child development, serving multi-cultural groups, and parenting in a digital world. For a complete line-up of conference activities, visit [www.parentsasteachersconference.org](http://www.parentsasteachersconference.org).

**About Parents as Teachers**

Parents as Teachers builds strong communities, thriving families and children that are healthy, safe and ready to learn by matching parents and caregivers with trained professionals who make regular personal home visits during a child’s earliest years in life, from pregnancy through kindergarten. The internationally-recognized evidence-based home visiting model is backed by 35 years of research-proven outcomes for children and families. PAT currently serves nearly 200,000 families in all 50 U.S. states, 115 Tribal organizations, six other countries, and one U.S. territory. Parents as Teachers National Center, Inc., is a non-profit organization headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri.

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