Elizabeth Cope, PhD, MPH is Senior Director at AcademyHealth and oversees the portfolios for Health Systems Improvement as well as Public and Population Health. For nearly 15 years, Dr. Cope has been committed to creating a research-to-practice bridge that centers the well-being and resilience of communities and health systems and builds sustainable platforms for robust multistakeholder collaboration. With expertise in implementation, improvement, and engagement sciences, she has facilitated learning communities, training/technical assistance, coalition-building, and cross-sector collaborations focused on the translation of community-centered research into health systems improvement. She maintains a diverse portfolio that is national in scope and spans research and action-learning, with a focus on safety net and pediatrics settings. She currently serves as principal investigator (PI) for the Enhancing Systems of Care for Children with Medical Complexity Coordinating Center (HRSA). Dr. Cope received a MPH and PhD in epidemiologic science from the University of Michigan, and a BA in medical anthropology, medieval studies, and ancient Mediterranean civilizations from Rice University.

Sa’Brina Davis is a Charlotte, North Carolina resident who has dedicated over 20 years of her career to healthcare reimbursement and healthcare policy issues. She has been a committed advocate and volunteer for NPAF since 2007. Enthused by the opportunity to learn about healthcare matters, she remains abreast to the latest information by actively participating in webinars, campaigns, workshops and attending the annual Patient Congress. As the recipient of the 2019 NPAF Outstanding Volunteer award, she has leaned more into serving her community and continues to raise awareness and helps support patients and caregivers living with chronic illnesses. In her journey as an advocate, Sa’Brina has witnessed positive healthcare policy changes including the adoption of the Affordable Care Act and step therapy protections in North Carolina. She is committed to advocating alongside fellow advocates who are resilient, persistent, compassionate and urge state and fellow lawmakers to remove barriers to quality, affordable, equitable healthcare. As this message is delivered, Sa’Brina will reflect on a patient’s sentiment,"...as long as there is a possibility, I have hope."

Michael D. Fratkin, MD, FAAHPM, is a builder, an innovator and a dreamer and approaches life and the practice of medicine with love and respect. VyncaCare, (formerly ResolutionCare Network) was founded, built, and is now scaling to bring person-centered palliative care anywhere and everywhere. Through emerging economic models and the use of a technology enabled platform, VyncaCare brings the first distributed and inspired workforce in the field, powerful analytics capability, and state of the art digital Advance Care Planning technology. VyncaCare is creating capacity and access with dedication to delivering results to all stakeholders—the people we care for, the workforce providing care, the investors that believe in this mission, and the communities in which we live.
Mark Kantrow, MD, is thrilled to support the NPAF in its wonderful patient and caregiver affirming work. Residing in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Dr. Kantrow has been a palliative care physician for 17 years and has built palliative care teams in a large health system in the Gulf South, with the support of the Franciscan Sisters overseeing the health system’s priorities. Dr. Kantrow has spent his career trying to understand more deeply the special needs and circumstances that confront patients as well as their caregivers during serious illness. On a personal note, he enjoys his annual retreats to southern India where he can appreciate a deeper understanding of human interconnectedness, which he believes is the foundation of any good work.

Toni Kay Mangskau graduated from Winona State University with a degree in Social Work. She has worked at Mayo Clinic for the past 36 years. Her current position of Clinical Trials Referral Coordinator for the Mayo Clinic Cancer Center was created after a need was identified for providing clinical trial information and resources to internal and external patients, family members and referring healthcare providers. Ms. Mangskau coordinates the clinical trials referral office for the Mayo Clinic Cancer Center’s sites in Arizona, Florida, Minnesota and the Mayo Health System. Nationally, Ms. Mangskau has been involved in various initiatives to train research staff and improve communications with patients and their families about clinical trials. She is an active volunteer with the National Patient Advocate Foundation, AARP, Age Friendly Olmsted County, ISAIAH, Three Rivers Restorative Justice, her church, and her Neighborhood Association’s Safety, Security and Wellness committee. She enjoys the precious times with her nine grandchildren, Justice, Faith, Michael, Aaraiya, Nigel, Frank, Gianni, Grace Liberty and Molly Jane.

Mary Stabile has volunteered with NPAF for over 15 years and works tirelessly to help meet the unmet needs of people in her community. She also runs her own non-profit, Living For a Cause. Mary spends much of her days guiding people to the support or resources they need —whether it’s sharing information about Patient Advocate Foundation (PAF) with her dear friends or making sure limited-resource families with pets have access to pet food. She consistently participates in NPAF’s community campaigns and has been instrumental in bringing NPAF and PAF resources to local hospitals, doctors’ offices and other community organizations. Mary serves as an advisor on multiple NPAF and PAF initiatives, and never shies from an opportunity to engage with policymakers to improve health care for patients. She is most proud of the opportunities she’s had through NPAF to participate in legislative outreach to change policies that affect the wellbeing of patients.

Julie Wallace is from Grand Rapids, MI. She was drawn to patient advocacy when in January of 2003, her two sisters were diagnosed with breast cancer and her mother was hospitalized for double pneumonia and a blood disorder. The experience was daunting and drew Julie to seek involvement with her healthcare system as a patient and caregiver. Her search resulted in an invitation from Spectrum Health of West Michigan to join their newly formed Executive Patient and Family Advisory Committee where she spent the next 10 years including two terms as council chair. During that time, she was also invited to serve on the system’s Ethics Committee where she still holds a seat today 13 years later. Over the years, Julie has added the patient voice to several Advance Care Planning initiatives in her community and brought the patient perspective to a number of healthcare gatherings, conferences and grand rounds as a speaker and panelist. Julie became a volunteer with NPAF in 2019 because of her interest in making an impact on a national level. She has participated in several initiatives and is a Volunteer Lead for the state of Michigan and a participant in several of the organization research projects.
Sharon Alexander, MIS, CP is originally from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and is a proud mother to five sons, including two teenagers, who all currently reside in Charlotte, North Carolina with her and her husband. She serves as an Expert by Experience (ExE) with Patient Insight Institute (PII) and brings her experience as a community advocate, facilitator, and advisor to various independent and collaborative PII projects. Sharon is happy to lend her voice encouraging researchers to work hard and help apply a racial equity lens to social care research and practice, with the end goal of strengthening the health equity impacts of social care.

Rebekah Angove, PhD, is responsible for the design and management of PAF’s comprehensive evaluation and patient experience program. In her role as executive vice president of research and evaluation, she helps PAF to identify patient needs, translate those needs to direct services and policy recommendations, and evaluate the impact of these programs and services on patients and the patient community. Her work includes the development of a research infrastructure to deploy validated screening tools, quality measures and patient reported outcome measures. Dr. Angove is driven by her passion to advance the field and promote patient engagement in care, policy and research. In her previous role at the Louisiana Public Health Institute, she served as Associate Director of Health Services Research and Engagement Director of REACHnet, a PCORnet Clinical Data Research Network. Dr. Angove’s expertise spans numerous clinical research programs and advisory groups including service on the PCORnet Engagement committee and the Tulane Preventive Medicine Residency Advisory Committee. She received her PhD in Public and Community Health in 2014 from the Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI.

Melissa Beauchemin, PhD, RN, is an Assistant Professor of Nursing at Columbia University and the Cancer Care Delivery Co-Lead for the Minority-Underserved NCI Community Oncology Research Program at the Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center at Columbia University. As a nurse scientist and pediatric oncology nurse practitioner with over 15 years of clinical experience, her overarching career goal is to enhance delivery of high-quality cancer care for children, adolescents, and young adults while addressing inequities in care delivery. The premise of her research rests on the belief that delivery of care can be both evidence-based and implementable through acceptable and sustainable strategies as perceived by the health care team, patients, and their families.

Ari Bell-Brown, MPH, is a project manager for the Hutchinson Institute for Cancer Outcomes Research (HICOR) at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center. She has 12 years of experience in healthcare and public health research; and has overseen and implemented research projects focused on cancer care delivery, financial navigation for cancer patients, and improving colorectal cancer (CRC) screening for minority populations. In addition to her research portfolio, Ms. Bell-Brown currently oversees a population health CRC screening program that works in partnership with the University of Washington (UW) medical center that aims to improve screening rates for UW Medicine patients while decreasing racial, ethnic and socioeconomic disparities in CRC screening. Ms. Bell-Brown earned her Master of Public Health from the University of Washington.
Caitlin Biddell is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Health Policy and Management at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) Gillings School of Global Public Health. Her PhD concentration is in Decision Sciences and Outcomes Research, and her current research focuses on understanding and addressing patient financial barriers to healthcare as a means to promoting more equitable cancer care outcomes. This work includes partnerships with the Patient Advocate Foundation and the Cancer Patient Assistance Fund at the North Carolina Cancer Hospital. Other prior and ongoing research endeavors have focused on HIV medication adherence, HPV vaccination, cervical cancer screening, organizational Covid-19 pandemic response, and oncology financial navigation implementation. Caitlin is a North Carolina native and currently lives in Durham, NC. Following PhD completion, Caitlin plans to pursue a career in health services research, leveraging available data and resources to support equitable policy development and program implementation. Caitlin earned her Master of Science in Public Health from UNC in 2020 and her Bachelor of Science in Biology from UNC in 2015.

Nicole Braccio, PharmD, is the policy director at NPAF and elevates patient and caregiver voices to put people at the heart of health care. Nicole brings leadership, enthusiasm, and strategic focus to advance NPAF’s equity-first policy agenda which promotes a healthcare system that matches treatments and services with patient and family values. She develops and drives evidence-based solutions through legislative, regulatory, and community outreach channels to promote person-centered practices and minimize health disparities in access to care and coverage. Prior to NPAF, Nicole supported clients at Avalere Health with reimbursement strategy, focusing on access to oncology and specialty medications for people with Medicare and commercial insurance. She began her career as a community pharmacist with over a decade of clinical experience serving people from high-volume urban centers to the Navajo Nation. Nicole is passionate about connecting with diverse leaders in the public health and policy sector and served as the Chair for the Society of Health Policy Young Professionals where she cultivated its growing community in Washington, DC. She also volunteers with the Waves of Health, a medical outreach organization that provides primary and pharmacy care to rural communities in the Dominican Republic. Nicole currently maintains her registered pharmacist status in New York. She earned her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy at Rutgers University.

Wanda Clevenger, MM, BSN, BCPA has over 40 years of health care experience in patient care, regulatory compliance, patient safety leadership and advocacy. She is now dedicated to teaching the power of human connection to improve our health and healthcare. In addition to being a nurse, Wanda is also a board certified patient advocate and has additional certifications in End-of-Life care and Just Culture. In practice, these certifications emphasize self agency and the importance of engaging and informing patients and staff. She recently started WE Bridge the Gaps, a healthcare education and consulting practice built on the power of human connection. A resident of Richmond, VA, Wanda obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Loyola University in Chicago, Illinois and her Masters in Management from Northwestern University’s J. L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management.
Lisa Hamlett is from Willingboro, New Jersey and serves as an Expert by Experience (ExE) with Patient Insight Institute (PII). Lisa enriches the body of PII with her 20 years of experience in public education, and 10 years of experience in banking and finance. These experiences offered her the opportunity to connect and communicate with diverse audiences and navigate sensitive and complex conversations, a highly valued skill in the patient engagement space. Outside of her advisory role, Lisa is a novice birder, appreciates cultural anthropology, simple physics and enjoys all types of music.

Kathleen Gallagher, MPH, is the Vice President of Health Services Research at Patient Advocate Foundation (PAF) and the Managing Director of Research at PAF’s Patient Insight Institute. She is an epidemiologist and health services researcher with 20 years of experience working in the public, private, academic and non-profit sectors. Ms. Gallagher has implemented and overseen patient driven research projects for the New York City Department of Health, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Columbia University Medical Center, GMHC and LIM Innovations. Prior research endeavors have focused on traditional and non-traditional underserved patient populations and the links between health care access, service utilization and barriers to care. Her current research focus at PAF centers around the science of social needs navigation, patient centered research engagement and identifying unmet needs in low-income chronically ill patients. Kathleen lives in Atlanta, Georgia and earned her Bachelor of Science in Public Health from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in Environmental Science & Engineering and her Master of Public Health in Epidemiology from Emory University in Atlanta.

Rebecca Kirch is EVP of Policy and Programs for the National Patient Advocate Foundation (NPAF) based in Washington, DC. As a leading health policy expert and advocate in her field, Rebecca is dedicated to advancing person-centered policies and practices that put people at the heart of healthcare. A frequently invited speaker on patient engagement and person-centered care, Rebecca has authored numerous articles and book chapters, including publications in the New England Journal of Medicine, Archives of Internal Medicine, Health Equity, JAMA Oncology, Health Affairs, Circulation and other professional journals. She is the recipient of numerous national awards, has been featured in multiple media outlets and serves on National Quality Forum’s Consensus Standards Approval Committee (CSAC) as well as the Institute for Clinical and Economic Review’s (ICER) New England Comparative Effectiveness Public Advisory Council. Among other advisory committees and advocacy coalitions, Rebecca is currently an active participant of the National Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine’s (NASEM) Quality Care for People with Serious Illness Roundtable, policy advisor for the Patient Advocate Foundation’s Patient Insight Institute, and a board member for children’s oncology Care Camps.

Jacquelyn Lambert-Davis, RN, DNP, is from Montgomery, AL, and serves as an Expert by Experience (ExE) with Patient Insight Institute. She became an ExE because of the growing need to explore social needs and equity within healthcare. Jacquie has worked in the health care system since her high school years— learning, training and eventually becoming a nurse’s aide. Through her experiences as a patient, she gained deep empathy for people who stand to benefit from social determinants of health screenings and how it affects patient outcomes. Dr. Lambert-Davis is proud to apply her learnings to help her friends, family and community achieve health equity by addressing their social needs and identifies social interventions research as an area of personal and professional interest.
Michael McNear is from Atlanta, GA and serves as an Expert by Experience (ExE) with Patient Insight Institute. He is the Former President-CEO of McEnergy S. AM LLC, Atlanta, Georgia and is recognized as a “scientific problem solver.” Over the years, Michael has held various research positions with USA fortune 500 chemical firms as an R&D chemist and was requested to help design a bio-Jet fuel “Green” ecosystem model for several Airlines. In 2012, his organization was requested to be a key provider of biodiesel fuel for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Michael shares that his life’s mission is to help reduce the carbon emission footprint as it relates directly to global climate change. Michael also has a passion for people empowerment and social equity having supported his late parents in their journey with Dementia and Alzheimer’s disease for over 30 years.

Laurie McWright is the Deputy Director for the Seamless Care Models Group in the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Her group houses the integrated payment and care delivery models such as Primary Care First Model, Accountable Care Organization/Direct Contracting Models, and the kidney models supporting vulnerable populations. Her group also manages the health plan innovation models for Medicare Parts C and D including the Value Based Insurance Design Model with the Hospice Benefit Component and the Part D Senior Savings Model. Laurie has been in federal service for over 20 years serving in a number of leadership roles including serving as Director of the Medicare Parts C and D Legislative Analysis Group at the CMS Office of Legislation, the Director of the Payment Policy and Financial Management Group within the CMS Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight and as a Division Director overseeing the National Health Service and Nurse Corps participants at the Health Resources and Services Administration.

Mary Mukira is the manager of grassroots advocacy at National Patient Advocate Foundation (NPAF) and serves as the engagement coordinator on various projects under the Patient Insight Institute (PII). In her role at NPAF, she manages, sets strategy, and mobilizes the grassroots program and its campaigns, to advance the organization’s mission and policy goals. Her current work under PII is focused on building and engaging different cohorts of patients/caregivers who identify as “under-resourced,” to collaborate on different internal and external health-related projects informing research, care and policy, thereby advancing health equity. Mary’s previous work encompasses both local and statewide campaigns, focusing on civic and community engagement. As the former national organizing director for a youth coalition organization, she oversaw voter registrations, managed hundreds of active youth leaders nationwide and drove voter turn-out in the 2018 midterm elections. Following her success, she worked as the senior director for a policy institute focused on solution-driven advocacy, designing and implementing pilot programs in telehealth and economic development. As part of her work, she created and led an inter-generational coalition focusing on educational equity, culminating in the successful passage of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future, a state education bill. Mary is passionate about the power of grassroots organizing, engaging historically under-represented communities, and the ability to affect systemic change. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Communication from the University of Maryland, College Park, and her Associate of Arts in International Businesses from Montgomery College.
Maria Pisu, PhD, is a Professor in the Division of Preventive Medicine of the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). She received a PhD in Economics from the Pennsylvania State University and post-doctoral training at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dr. Pisu is a health economist whose research focuses on cancer outcomes and health services research across diverse and older populations. Her studies address financial hardship of cancer and its treatment, disparities in access and utilization of recommended health care services, and disparities in recruitment to cancer studies. In addition, Dr. Pisu has expertise in economic evaluation of interventions beneficial to the health of survivors, such as behavioral and supportive care interventions. Her work is currently funded by the NCI, NIMHD, and NCCIH.

Stuart Portman serves as Senior Health Policy Advisor on the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance for Ranking Member Mike Crapo. In this capacity, he handles all policies related to Medicaid and CHIP, and in the past has led policy development on issues related to the ACA Exchanges, health taxes, and health information technology. Previously, he served as the Senior Healthcare Legislative Assistant and Legislative Correspondent for Senator Orrin G. Hatch, where he focused on Medicaid, FDA-related policies, and issues affecting individuals with disabilities. Stuart received his Master of Public Health degree specializing in health policy from the Milken Institute School of Public Health at The George Washington University and his Bachelor’s in Biology and Political Science from the University of Denver.

Emmy Potter is a third-year biology and political science double major at Grinnell College. She was an intern with NPAF this past summer and is currently interning at Families USA in the federal relations department where she continues to work towards improving care for patients. Following her undergraduate studies, she hopes to pursue a Master of Public Health to continue working in health policy in order to improve access to care and patient outcomes.

Ellie Proussaloglou, MD, is the Breast Surgical Oncology fellow at Yale University. Ellie earned her Bachelor of Science from Duke University in Biology (Genomics), where she developed a passion for understanding the policy and financial implications of healthcare. She explored this interest further as a healthcare consultant for two years before attending medical school at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine. Dr. Proussaloglou completed her Residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Brown University/Women & Infants Hospital of RI. Her research focuses on decisions facing patients undergoing surgery or high-risk screening, with an emphasis on the financial side effects of care. She has led interdisciplinary research focused on survivorship, quality of life, and sexual health after cancer diagnosis, including novel research on financial toxicity in BRCA carriers and has local and national advocacy experience as the Legislative Chair for District 1 (New England) of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.
Becky Shipp has over 20 years of senior level experience developing public policy and enacting those policies into law. Prior to establishing Becky Shipp Consulting, LLC, Becky was Vice President at The Sheridan Group. During her time at The Sheridan Group, Becky advised clients on health, welfare and tax policy. She secured key provisions into legislation, provided strategic advice and counsel and helped form and manage successful coalitions to advance client’s policy goals. Prior to joining The Sheridan Group, Becky served as lead negotiator and policy advisor for the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee on health and human service issues under both Chairman Charles E. Grassley (R-IA) and Chairman Orrin G. Hatch (R-UT). In this role, Becky worked directly with Members of Congress, including House and Senate Committee Chairs and Leadership, as well as White House officials, on health and social impact financing and human services policies. Becky holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Virginia and master’s degrees from the University of Iowa Writer’s Workshop and Boston University. She is also a published poet who has taught literature and writing at the University of Iowa, Northeastern University and Boston College. She has also taught as a Lecturer at the University of Texas at Dallas D.C. based Archer Center.

Stephanie Stinson is a native of Atlanta, GA. She obtained her B.S. in Biology from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Her God chosen path has made her the true definition and example of resilience. As a Crohn’s Disease patient for over 30 years, Stephanie has endured multiple life-altering surgeries and setbacks; however, she has chosen to turn her pain into purpose as a patient advocate. Her advocacy work has reached many and along with other advocates and organizations resulted in the passage of Georgia’s Step Therapy Reform in 2019. Currently, she advocates for the federal passage of the Safe Step Act and the Medical Nutrition Equity Act and is fighting locally for the passage of the Restroom Access Act in Georgia. Stephanie serves on many boards and committees for the Crohn’s and Colitis Foundation including Day on the Hill Planning Committee, Atlanta Take Steps Walk Executive Board and others. She is extremely dedicated to bringing awareness to disparities and inequities in the healthcare system in efforts to bridge racial and socioeconomic divides. Stephanie recently started Intentionally Grateful, Inc, a non-profit organization that provides support and resources that unite intentionality with gratitude to promote a healthier lifestyle both mentally and physically for chronically ill patients and their caregivers; recently launching Melanin Poppin’ - an initiative to not only put a face to invisible illnesses, but add some color to them as well; so all patients of all colors are seen and heard.

Jamie Stokley is the Founder and CEO of Helping Harvest Foundation inc, a non-profit organization, advocating for the disabled and aging communities in North Carolina. Jamie is also the owner of Helping Hands of the Cape Fear, a licensed home care agency that provides quality in-home care in the Cape Fear Region. Born and raised in the Wilmington area, she graduated from North Brunswick High and holds dual degrees in Healthcare Administration and Business Management from Mount Olive. She serves as a subject-matter expert for Cape Fear SCORE and represents NC SENATE in the advocacy arena with National patient advocacy foundation. She is quick to serve anyone in need, never lets a problem go unsolved, and will work hard for every opportunity she earns.
Brittany Sullivan graduated from Florida State University (FSU) in May 2017, with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology as well as Minors in both General Business and Hospitality Management. Brittany is also an Alumnus of the Master of Applied American Politics and Policy program at FSU. After graduation, Brittany was employed with the Department of Health as an Executive Assistant to the Director of a newly established office. After a year and a half with the Department, she was offered positions to work for the Florida Legislature during the 2019 and 2020 General Sessions. In her free time, Brittany volunteers with NPAF to advocate for the health needs of thousands of patients and caregivers. Brittany began volunteering for NPAF in 2021 after seeing the hardships patients and families experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. She currently resides in Tallahassee and has access to the Florida State Capitol. Her goal is to connect with legislators and staff as well as utilize her network that she built while working for the legislature to highlight key issues and policies that need to be addressed to improve our healthcare system. Her biggest accomplishment thus far was meeting with one of her favorite legislators and providing him with information about his county and NPAF’s Health Needs Navigation Campaign.

Jamie Trotter is the associate director for patient advocacy and engagement at NPAF. In this critical role, she ensures initiatives address and impact the real-world experience of historically marginalized populations and patients who cannot afford basic health and social needs.Forging partnerships with a broad and diverse group of stakeholders—from community partners and grassroots organizations to cancer centers and health system leaders, Jamie is committed to dismantling the structural determinants of health while helping patients, families and communities become advocates and change-makers of their own health and on behalf of others. Jamie’s passion is promoting patient-centered care, ensuring that community voices are always heard when developing and assessing health care delivery systems. Prior to NPAF, Jamie was program associate for the Healthcare Delivery and Disparities Research program at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). At PCORI, she managed projects that examined health disparities exacerbated by social policies and systems and compared patient-centered approaches to improve the equity, effectiveness, and efficiency of care. Jamie graduated from Georgetown University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Health Administration, and later earned a Master of Public Administration from Villanova University.

Courtney Williams, PhD, is a health services researcher focused on understanding cancer-related affordability and care access issues. She is specially interested in financial toxicity and associations with treatment decision-making, clinical trial participation, and rural patient populations. Dr. Williams came to UAB from the National Cancer Institute, where she was a Cancer Prevention Postdoctoral Fellow in the Healthcare Delivery Research Program. She completed her DrPH in Healthcare Organization and Policy and MPH in Epidemiology from the UAB School of Public Health. During and prior to receiving her doctorate, Courtney worked as a research statistician in the UAB Medicine Divisions of Hematology & Oncology and Gerontology, Geriatrics, & Palliative Care.
Melissa Williams, MPH, is the director of grassroots advocacy and partnerships at National Patient Advocate Foundation (NPAF) where she oversees the volunteer program and leads all grassroots advocacy initiatives that advance the organization’s policy goals. Melissa also serves as the co-chair of the organization’s health equity affinity group and was recently selected as a fellow with Families USA Health Equity Academy. A passionate patient and public health advocate, Melissa’s contribution to NPAF began as a volunteer a decade ago while she was the lead assessor reviewing health and wellness programs for Job Corps. Impassioned by NPAF’s mission and her previous experience working directly with patients in both emergency, primary care, and community health settings, she formally joined NPAF in 2015. Melissa earned her Master of Public Health degree in health management and policy from Eastern Virginia Medical School and her Bachelor of Science in biology from the College of William & Mary.