

RAISING THE VOLUME – ENDING THE SILENT EPIDEMIC OF STILLBIRTH

Speaker Bios

Marjorie Vail

Marjorie has devoted her life to helping others. After going through a devastating loss, she realized that the only way to get through hardship is to help others. Since that decision, Marjorie has done missionary work abroad and has volunteered for New York Cares, Propelled Media, NYC Book Through Bars, American Heart Association, and Star Legacy Foundation, which culminated in a citation as a “Woman of Excellence” from Brooklyn’s Borough President Eric Adams.

After Marjorie and Roman’s son Aleksei was born still at 37 weeks, she made a decision to be a megaphone in the fight against stillbirth. She is currently the Co-Director of Awareness for PUSH for Empowered Pregnancy fighting the good fight to eradicate stillbirth.

In addition to her volunteer and charity work, Marjorie is a licensed esthetician, the Sergeant at Arms with the L.A.C.E. Toastmasters, and pageant queen; having held the titles of Mrs. New York International 2015 and Mrs. New York American 2020 with stillbirth as her platform.

Personally, Marjorie loves to hang out with her “boys” (husband and son), read books, watch period pieces, and speaking publicly. Marjorie holds a Master of Arts in Childhood Education from New York University with Kappa Delta Pi honors, a Master of Science in School Counseling from Alfred University, and an MEd in Education Leadership from College of Saint Rose. Marjorie resides in Brooklyn with her husband of 18 years, Roman and their 14-year-old son Amaelian.

Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler

Jaime Herrera Beutler was first elected to Congress at the age of 31 to represent Southwest Washington’s 3rd District. Both Democrat and Republican presidents have signed Jaime’s legislation into law, helping her earn the ranking as Washington state’s most effective Member of Congress. She is also the first Hispanic in history to represent Washington state on the federal level.

Jaime’s record of success comes from her ability to work productively with both Republicans and Democrats on solutions that protect the way of life in Southwest Washington. She was ranked the 15th most bipartisan member of the U.S. House by Georgetown University and the Lugar Center. As a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee, Jaime has successfully secured federal support for vital priorities in her district.

She also co-founded the bipartisan Maternity Care Caucus, the first of its kind in Congress, and has been a champion for maternal and child health. Most notably, Jaime successfully spearheaded legislation that was signed into law to address maternal mortality, the largest step Congress has taken to prevent moms from dying during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum. When her bipartisan ACE Kids Act became law, it allowed more than 300,000 children with complex medical conditions to access life-saving treatment – regardless of their family’s income or their zip codes. And thanks to her leadership and advocacy through the caucus, the Food and Drug Administration made a critical change to help prevent fatal birth defects in Hispanic communities.

Jaime, her husband Daniel Beutler, and their children Abigail, Ethan and Isana, reside in Battle Ground.

Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard

In 1992, Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard became the first Mexican-American woman elected to Congress. She has distinguished herself throughout her congressional career as a dedicated advocate for the dignity and well-being of all Americans. The congresswoman is the first Latina to serve as one of the 12 “cardinals,” or chairs, of a House Appropriations Subcommittee, as well as the first Latina to serve on the House Appropriations Committee. She is also the first woman to chair the Congressional Hispanic Caucus; the first woman to chair the California Democratic congressional delegation; and the founder of the Women’s Working Group on Immigration Reform.

From her position on the House Appropriations Committee, she has spearheaded many federal projects that have created jobs and improved the lives of her constituents. As chairwoman of the House Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee, the congresswoman continues to fight to ensure our homeland security personnel have the resources and guidance they need to keep our country safe against all threats, manmade and natural, and to treat immigrants humanely and with dignity and respect.

The congresswoman has been at the forefront of the fight to improve the quality and affordability of health services, and has successfully secured funding for local needs including infant and child care, prenatal health, dental care, HIV testing, substance abuse, diabetes treatment, and telehealth services. She has been equally successful in obtaining federal dollars for local education and labor projects, including job training and placement services, arts and vocational education, afterschool care, early education, magnet schools, and English literacy programs. She also ranks highly as a vocal congressional supporter of veterans, the rights of women and children, civil liberties, and animal rights.

Adam Goldberg

Adam Goldberg is an actor, director, producer and musician, best known for his roles in the feature films Dazed and Confused, A Beautiful Mind, Saving Private Ryan, The Hebrew Hammer, Deja Vu, 2 Days in Paris and Zodiac.

Goldberg also wrote, directed, produced and starred in the feature film No Way Jose. He lent a combination of those same skills to the films I Love Your Work, Running with the Bulls and Scotch and Milk.

Goldberg currently stars in the TV show The Equalizer and has starred in the series Taken, The Jim Gaffigan Show, The Unusuals and The Street. He has had memorable recurring roles in series such as Fargo and Entourage. On the Network, he starred in the police procedural NYC 22 and recurred in the family drama God Friended Me.

Born in Santa Monica, Calif., Goldberg resides in New York with his wife and two sons.

Debbie Haine Vijayvergiya

Debbie Haine Vijayvergiya's daughter Autumn Joy was born still in July 2011. Since then, Debbie has become a powerful advocate at both the state and national level. She's been working tirelessly over the past few years to improve stillbirth outcomes and to raise stillbirth awareness.

In 2013 Debbie co-founded the national organization Action for Stillbirth Awareness and Prevention Coalition (ASAP). The mission of ASAP is to raise awareness of stillbirth, unify voices, and accelerate prevention efforts in the United States.

In 2013, Debbie assisted in drafting New Jersey's first-ever stillbirth legislation and in June 2014, Governor Chris Christie passed The Autumn Joy Stillbirth Research & Dignity Act. Later in 2014, Debbie founded The 2 Degrees Foundation, a NJ-based organization dedicated to giving every family in the state a fighting chance against stillbirth. She is also a member of the Stillbirth Advocacy Working Group (SAWG) co-chaired by the International Stillbirth Alliance and London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

Debbie resides in New Jersey with her husband and two children.

Lauren Christiansen-Lindquist, PhD, MPH

Dr. Christiansen-Lindquist is a Maternal and Child Health epidemiologist, with particular expertise on stillbirth in the United States. Her research interests include stillbirth prevention and improving both stillbirth reporting and the care that families' receive around the time of a loss. Dr. Christiansen-Lindquist led the first study to create a new surveillance system for stillbirth in the United States. She is well known for her classroom teaching, and also serves as the Director of Graduate Studies for MPH and MSPH programs in Epidemiology.

Nneka J. Hall

Nneka Hall is a Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness advocate with a primary focus on infant and maternal mortality within the African American Community. Nneka is the founder of the Quietly United in Loss Together Campaign which is a pregnancy and infant loss awareness campaign designed to raise awareness of all types of loss from conception through a child's first two years of life. Quietly United in Loss Together Campaign teaches healthy fertility through womb health education, provides support to families who suffer these losses, and provides support for memory programs so they won't close due to inability to afford supplies.

Nneka is the mother of four: Two sunshines (Jelani and Symone), one angel (Annaya Marie stillborn at 39 weeks gestational age on August 27, 2010), and one rainbow (Bradleigh).

Following the stillbirth of her daughter, she sought out ways to aid others in having a positive birth outcome. She is a full spectrum doula, holding certifications as a birth, bereavement and postpartum doula. Nneka is a certified International Bereavement Specialist, a Certified Community Centered Herbalist, Trained Womb Health Specialist, Trained Preconception Health Doula, Trained Menopause Doula, Trained End of Life Doula, Crystal Healer and Childbirth educator.

In June 2016, Nneka had the pleasure of being selected to participate in the US of Women's Summit, which was hosted by former First Lady Michelle Obama and Oprah Winfrey, as a Nominated Change Maker due to her work in pregnancy and infant loss.

Jasmine Abraham

Jasmine Abraham is the Cleveland, Ohio Ambassador for the Count the Kicks stillbirth prevention campaign. Jasmine became a Count the Kicks Ambassador after the loss of her son Qasem in the summer of 2020, wanting to support other families and protect, to the extent possible, the preventable loss of a baby.

Count the Kicks is an evidence-based stillbirth prevention program that educates and empowers expectant parents to track their baby's movements daily in the third trimester of pregnancy, which has helped lead to a 32 percent stillbirth rate reduction in Iowa in the past decade. Research shows a change in a baby's movements can be an early warning sign that there might be an issue with a pregnancy. There are 47 Count the Kicks Ambassadors working to prevent stillbirths across the U.S. Learn more at CountTheKicks.Org.

Thomas Westover, MD

Dr. Thomas Westover is board certified in maternal fetal medicine and obstetrics and gynecology and has almost 30 years of experience as a specialist in Maternal Fetal Medicine diagnosing, monitoring, and treating complications for expectant mothers and their unborn babies during high-risk pregnancies.

Throughout the course of his career, Dr. Westover has been principal investigator and co-investigator for a number of maternal fetal medicine studies. He has published research in web-

based publications for the New Jersey Department of Health and numerous peer-reviewed medical journals and abstracts. Dr. Westover's commitment to advancing maternal fetal medicine is also demonstrated by his involvement in professional committees on the national, state and local levels for the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the New Jersey Hospital Association, the New Jersey Department of Health, and others. He is a member of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the Society of Maternal Fetal Medicine, the New Jersey Maternal Fetal Medicine Society, and the International Society of Ultrasound in OB/GYN. He is currently the Chair of the New Jersey section of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the President of the New Jersey OBGYN Society and Co-Chair of the New Jersey Hospital Association Statewide Perinatal Safety Collaborative.

Dr. Westover has been married to his wife Betsey for more than 30 years, and they have three children and one grandchild. He is an amateur guitarist and tennis player and loves music, travel, cartography and Beatles trivia.