

Meet the Steering Committee



Jillian Angell

Youth and Young Adults Coordinator,
Tobacco Control Program
Rhode Island Department of Health

Jillian Angell has worked as an employee of the State of Rhode Island for nearly 10 years. She joined the Tobacco Control Program in September of 2021. In this capacity, she supports and implements programs and policies that encourage and support youth and young adults to make behavior choices consistent with tobacco-free norms through collaboration and partnership with state agencies, health care systems, and community organizations. Jillian conducts educational outreach to prevent initiation of commercial tobacco and nicotine products as well as inform on evidence-based strategies to engage youth and young adults while reducing health disparities in Rhode Island.

Jillian enjoys gardening, spending time with her family including their 4 dogs, and March through to November spends any free time on a softball field with her daughter who plays for both her school and a competitive travel team.

Angela Butler works as a respiratory specialist Health Advocate at an acute care hospital in Providence, RI. She educates patients at the bedside and explains the pathogenesis of pulmonary disease process with understanding, risks factors, identify signs and symptoms, and triggers along with smoking cessation. Community outreach is essential to quality care and outcomes for her patients. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, she facilitated a Better Breather Club with monthly meetings and enjoyed participating in Harmonicas for Health with her members, pending future meetings based on COVID spread. Angela is a member of the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) and a member of the RI Respiratory Society for Respiratory Care (RISRC) as well as the delegate who represents RI on a national level.

Prior to her position as a respiratory specialist Health Advocate, she spent 30 years in leadership roles, such as clinical educator, but most dear to her heart is connecting with her patients at the bedside with follow-up calls to their home.

Angela has participated in many events with the American Lung Association and LUNG FORCE in the past and now serves on the Local Leadership Board to continue her path of dedication and passion towards lung health. In 2019, the Lung Association presented Angela with the LUNG FORCE Health Advocate Award.



**Angela Butler, BIS, RRT-NPS,
CPFT, AE-C, NCTTP**

Health Advocate RRT/COPD,
Ambulatory Care Transitions/
Clinical Integration, Lifespan,
Rhode Island & Miriam Hospitals

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Carolyn James

Community Outreach, Prevention Liaison,
Tobacco Cessation Program Coordinator,
CODAC Behavioral Healthcare

Carolyn James found her way to Tobacco Cessation somewhat serendipitously. After several years doing volunteer immigrant advocacy work in San Francisco, she moved to RI in 2001 and began her career in Substance Use Prevention. In 2005, she was hired by CODAC Behavioral Healthcare to oversee a federal Prevention grant and has been with the organization ever since, doing community outreach and serving as liaison to RI's Substance Use Prevention community.

In 2012, CODAC launched the first evidence-based tobacco treatment program in the US for patients with mental health and substance use disorders and Carolyn, an early advocate for tobacco cessation services in behavioral health settings, enthusiastically accepted the role of program coordinator. CODAC's team of Tobacco Treatment Specialists subsequently expanded cessation services and established CODAC as RI's sole provider of certification track TTS training.

Over the years, Carolyn was a freelance writer and screenplay editor, was the co-owner of 2 restaurants in San Francisco, and even worked briefly as a marketing rep at IBM. She ultimately found her vocation in the field of Substance Use Prevention and Tobacco Cessation advocacy, Carolyn is pleased to be a co-chair and a founding member of Tobacco Free Rhode Island's Cessation Workgroup, as well as a co-chair of the Tobacco Cessation Leadership Academy's Systems Change subcommittee.

A New Jersey native. Carolyn is a graduate of Brown University and after living in Boston, San Francisco and New York City, is happy to be back in Rhode Island.

Astrid Meijer, MEd, CPS

Coordinator, West Warwick Prevention Coalition

Astrid Meijer first entered the world of Prevention in 2009, serving the communities of Pawtucket, Charlestown, Richmond and Hopkinton, and now works for the better health of the town of West Warwick in the role of Coordinator of the West Warwick Prevention Coalition. Her passions include working for the expansion of opportunities for young people, collaborating with enthusiastic colleagues on creating heart-centered programming, and infusing every conscious decision with a lens of equity, inclusion, and compassion. Astrid also enjoys walks in the woods, snuggling with her cats, cooking up a storm, laughing out loud, and dancing til the cows come home.



Heidi is committed to developing community driven policy, systems, and environmental strategies addressing health disparities through an equity lens involving the social and environmental determinants of health. She earned her B.A. at Siena College, M.A. at Bowling Green State University and M.A. in Teaching at Johnson and Wales University.



Heidi Hartzell, MA

Policy & Partnership
Specialist
Tobacco Control
Program,
Rhode Island
Department of Health

Administration, collaborative policy and systems development, health education, prevention, task force leadership, prevention and response for sexual assault, relationship violence, discrimination, and bias incident/hate crimes, and individualized case management related to substance use are foundations throughout Heidi's approximately 25 year career. Providing support and services for at risk populations and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives are a priority. She has professional experience in areas such as public health, higher education, advising student multicultural organizations, teaching, special education, student conduct and restorative justice systems, Title IX, and compliance. Further related to tobacco and nicotine initiatives prior to starting at RIDOH in 2021, Heidi assisted in conducting research on tobacco and nicotine use perceived and actual norms, developed new policies and education connected to electronic nicotine delivery systems and hookah, and participated in the Smoke-Free Campus Task Force during her work at Roger Williams University.

Heidi is a member of the Rhode Island Public Health Association. She is involved with volunteer service organizations in the community, particularly Special Olympics Rhode Island, and is a native Rhode Islander

Maureen Mulligan, MA

Rhode Island FDA/SYNAR Program Coordinator,
Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Health
Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals



Maureen Mulligan has worked in Prevention for over 25 years; focusing on youth prevention education and training as a certified trainer in Project Northlands, Strengthening Families and Project Adventure focusing on life skills training and capacity building for youth aged 12 through 20. She is currently working in Underage Tobacco Prevention Education and Tobacco Retail Underage Inspections for the FDA and Rhode Island at BHDDH.

Sean Palumbo, APS

Youth Coordinator,
East Bay Regional Coalition



Sean Palumbo has been involved in prevention for almost 10 years, since starting a Students Taking Actions Against Negative Decisions (STAAND) group in Kickemuit Middle School in the Fall of 2013. Continuing his involvement with the High School's STAAND group, he held the title of President of Mt. Hope STAAND from 2017-2020. Since then, Sean has been involved in the Tobacco-Free Rhode Island Youth Ambassadors program, Policy Workgroup and Steering Committee. Outside of the tobacco control field, Sean remains actively involved with MADD RI through the Youth Driven Youth Traffic Safety Program. He was also a 2020 SADD SPEAKS Student

After High School, Sean obtained his Associate Prevention Specialist (APS) certification and started working as a Youth Leader with the East Bay Tobacco Youth Council. Later, moving into the Youth Coordinator of the now East Bay Regional Youth Council. In his time away from working in Public Health, he volunteers for the Bristol Fire Department's Div. of EMS and Defiance Hose Co. 1, working towards earning his EMT-b license and Fire and Hazmat Operations certification.

Kirsten Skelly, MPA

Program Manager,
Tobacco Control Program
Rhode Island Department of Health



Kirsten Skelly has been with the Rhode Department of Health (RIDOH) for nearly 10 years and became the Program Manager for RIDOH's Tobacco Control Program in December 2021. The program works within communities alongside community partners to help educate providers, retailers, decision-makers, and the public, especially youth, on the harmful effects that tobacco and nicotine can have on health. Program activities focus on the prevention of starting to use tobacco and nicotine and help those that are looking to quit. As Program Manager, Kirsten oversees budget development, monitors the program's performance, and works with the team and community partners on strategic planning.

Kirsten became interested in the intersection of Public Health and addressing health inequities in Rhode Island during her graduate studies. Shortly after earning her MPA, she looked to move into a program leadership position to support RIDOH's efforts in this area. Since tobacco and nicotine use can attribute to many health inequities seen in chronic diseases, substance use and treatment, and so much more, it was a great fit for her to further efforts in making widespread change.

In her free time, she looks to spend time outside with her family, enjoying all that Rhode Island has to offer from the bountiful beaches to beautiful hiking trails.

Shannon Spurlock has over 28 years of experience in the fields of health education, behavioral health, and prevention and has worked for JSI for over 22 years. She has successfully managed state and community-based projects focusing on capacity building, strategic planning, evaluation, training, and other technical assistance initiatives. As a subject matter expert, she provides regional, state, and national consultation and training services in a variety of content areas including tobacco control, coalition development, peer recovery supports, HIV prevention, substance misuse prevention, and violence prevention. With expertise in adult learning theory, health behavior change principles, and organizational development methodology, Ms. Spurlock specializes in training and technical assistance to ensure health information and data can be understood and applied by adult and youth participants, healthcare providers, educators, community organizations, and policymakers.



Shannon Spurlock, MA, CPS

Associate Director, RI
JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc.
Rhode Island Prevention
Resource Center



Megan Tucker

Senior Region Lead,
State Government Relations
American Heart Association

Megan Tucker has over 25 years of experience in public policy and advocacy. She joined the American Heart Association in 2007 and currently serves as Senior Region Lead, State Government Relations, for RI, DE, NJ and CT. In this role, Megan spearheads the Association's legislative and regulatory initiatives in RI and DE, and oversees directors in NJ and CT. Her priorities include eliminating tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke; ensuring access to high quality, affordable healthcare that includes benefits needed to prevent and treat heart disease and stroke; improving the food and physical environments to support healthy living; creating inclusive and coordinated acute systems of care to improve the early recognition, treatment and rehabilitation of stroke, heart attack and cardiac arrest patients; and assuring all Americans can equitably achieve optimal health and well-being. She has worked collaboratively with state and community partners and grassroots advocates to advance many successful policy campaigns in these areas.

Megan holds a BA in Political Science from American University in Washington, DC. Her previous roles include Government Relations Director (RI) and Senior Government Relations Director (RI, NH, ME) for the American Heart Association; Regional Manager of Congressional & Public Affairs for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; Manager of Legislative & Political Affairs for the American Waterways Operators; and Legislative Assistant for the American Farm Bureau Federation.

In her free time, Megan enjoys hiking with her husband and two dogs. She is also a CrossFit enthusiast.

Kristen Westmoreland, MD, MPH, ACPS

Co-Director, East Bay Regional Coalition

Kristen Westmoreland has worked in prevention since 2008, first with the Barrington prevention coalition (The BAY Team) and then with the East Bay region when Barrington was awarded oversight of the region containing Barrington, East Providence, Warren, and Bristol.

Prior to working in prevention, Kristen earned her MPH from Brown University and MD from the University of Vermont having previously worked as a meeting planner and sales associate in the ski resort industry. She is also a graduate of Smith College.

Kristen is passionate about public health and enjoys strategic and data driven work that benefits communities. In her spare time, she enjoys being with family, hiking, skiing, and creating in both kitchen and garden.



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