

Dr. Gail Christopher is an award-winning social change agent with expertise in the social determinants of health and well-being and related public policies. She is known for her pioneering work to infuse holistic health and diversity concepts into public sector programs and policy discourse. Dr. Christopher recently retired from her role as Senior Advisor and Vice President at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), where she was the driving force behind the America Healing initiative and the Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation effort. She also served as Kellogg's Vice President for Program Strategy. From 2007-2017, she led 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 2015, she received the Terrance Keenan Award from Grantmakers in Health. She chaired the Board of the Trust for America's Health from 2012-2022. In 2019, she became a Senior Scholar with George Mason University's Center for the Advancement of Well-Being. Dr. Christopher also became the Executive Director of the National Collaborative for Health Equity (NCHE) in November 2019. NCHE is a national nonprofit based in Washington, DC. Since 2020, she has served as Director of the Transforming Public Health Data Commission, sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

She is the visionary for 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.

In August of 2017, Dr. Christopher left her leadership position with WKKF to launch the Maryland-based Ntianu Center for Healing and Nature; and to devote more time to writing and speaking on issues of health, racial healing and human capacity for caring.

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. In 2007, she received the Leadership Award from the Health Brain Trust of the Congressional Black Caucus for her work in reducing racial and ethnic health disparities; in 2009, she was named a Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) Honorary Fellow – the highest recognition given to a non-SOPHE member, who has made significant contributions to health education and public health; in 2011, she was awarded the "Change Agent Award" by the Schott Foundation for Public Education; in 2012, she was the recipient of 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; in 2022, she was a recipient of Casey Family Programs' Casey Excellence for Children Awards (CECA) for Leadership; in 2023, the American Journal of Health Promotion honored Dr. Christopher as one of the 10 Most Influential Women Scholars in Health Promotion.

A prolific writer and presenter, Dr. Christopher is the author or co-author of three books, hundreds of articles, presentations and publications, and contributed a monthly column in the Federal Times.

Her national print and broadcast media credits are numerous, and include The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Dallas Times, National Journal, Essence, "Good Morning America," "The Oprah Winfrey Show," National Public Radio and documentaries on PBS and CBS.

Prior to joining WKKF, she was vice president of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies' Office of Health, Women and Families in Washington, D.C. There, she led the Joint Center Health Policy Institute, a multi-year initiative created to engage underserved, racial and ethnic minorities in health policy discussions. Previously, she served as executive director of the Institute for Government Innovation at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government in Cambridge, Massachusetts and was a guest scholar in the governance studies department at The Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. She has held additional executive leadership positions at the National Academy of Public Administration, Howard University School of Divinity, Americans All National Education Program and Family Resource Coalition of America. Dr. Christopher has also launched, led and managed three public commissions. Under her sponsorship, the landmark Dellums Commission research into conditions faced by young men of color produced policy recommendations to reduce racial and ethnic health disparities.

She 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.