

Center for Women in Government & Civil Society
University at Albany, SUNY
2009 Fellows on Women and Public Policy



ELIZABETH (LIBBY) A. BECKER,
CENTER FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH,
NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Libby Becker is pursuing a Master of Public Health at the University at Albany's School of Public Health. Her academic training in Women's Studies and Globalization Studies ignited her passions for influencing inclusive global health policies, and cemented her commitment to reproductive justice. By focusing her graduate education on Social Behavior and Community Health, Libby paved a career path in developing and analyzing health policies that serve the needs of the disenfranchised, and research that informs bridging the healthcare disparity gap. At the Center for Community Health, Libby is examining evidence-based consumer education and outreach; an initiative which will address gaps in perinatal health and identify evidence-based model programs to address those gaps.



JILLIAN (JILL) FAISON,
BUREAU OF REFUGEE & IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE, NEW YORK
STATE OFFICE OF TEMPORARY & DISABILITY ASSISTANCE

Jill Faizon holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Women's Studies from the University at Albany and a Juris Doctor from Pennsylvania State University's Dickinson School of Law. Jill's academic and professional paths were shaped by a yearning for public service on behalf of the marginalized. Jill sought opportunities that directed her energies to, and fulfilled her passion for social justice; including providing legal assistance to low income persons in the areas of social security, landlord/tenant, and debtor/creditor issues. Winning a citizenship case on behalf of an immigrant who was in removal proceedings by the Board of Immigration Appeals strengthened Jill's determination to dedicate her professional life to influencing positive change through advocacy and socially-conscious public policy. At the Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance, Jill is making strides toward that goal.



**CHRISTINA (TINA) HANSEN,
AMERICAN COLLEGE OF OBSTETRICIANS & GYNECOLOGISTS**

Christina Hansen is pursuing a Master's degree in Public Health from the University at Albany's School of Public Health. She holds a B.A. in Biology from the University of Northern Iowa, where she graduated Cum Laude. Her work with local and state health departments in Iowa and New York awakened her passion for researching, analyzing and developing sensible maternal and child health policies. Her professional experience at the American Cancer Society grounded her in advocacy work and sharpened her policy influencing knowledge and skills. At the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Christina is researching patient safety policies and examining the interplay between advocacy and women's health issues. Christina is the elected treasurer of the School of Public Health's Graduate Student Organization. She continues to volunteer for the American Cancer Society and the local Humane Society.



**LAURA IBAÑEZ,
NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

Laura Ibañez is pursuing a Master of Science in Urban Policy Analysis and Management at Milano, The New School University. She has pursued varied professional experiences that positioned her to fulfill her passion of advocating for the rights of disconnected youth and immigrants. After receiving her B.A. in Psychology, she worked at the Santa Barbara Rape Crisis Center as a trainer, counselor, and advocate. As a United States Peace Corps volunteer, she worked in the Dominican Republic to identify appropriate intervention strategies which address the comprehensive needs of exploited youth. Laura's experiences underscored the role of responsive policies in empowering women, youth and families to reach their full potential. At the New York State Department of Labor, she is exploring her interest in workforce development which she believes is a critical cornerstone to ensure social and economic security for individuals and communities. Laura was a team consultant for Milano's Community Development Practicum; the team developed a *Volunteers of America* real estate project that was awarded 2nd place in 2008 JP Morgan Chase Community Development Competition in New Orleans.



**MARY OLUSHOGA,
NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

A native of Nigeria, Mary Olushoga's interest lies in examining educational policies and issues related to community and economic development. Mary has worked with two economic development focused organizations where she gained critical knowledge and skills related to small business growth, strategic counseling, business plan development, training, and financial advice. She has taught classes on entrepreneurship and small business strategies. A certified NYC Small Business Counselor, Mary has provided one-on-one strategic counseling and client-driven consultation to pre start-up and start-up clients. She has also volunteered as a teacher guiding Bronx residents on how to start and operate a successful business. Mary's interests encompass philanthropy, the arts, and public health. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Union College and is pursuing a Master of Science in Higher Education Administration at Baruch College. She is a member of the New York Urban League for Young Professionals and has served as a judge at the Allan Houston Foundation Business plan competition.



**TRINA SCALZA,
OFFICE OF ASSEMBLY MEMBER BARBARA CLARK**

Trina Scalza is currently pursuing a Master of Social Work from the School of Social Welfare at the University at Albany. Driven by a conviction that every youth must be given access to educational opportunities that empower them to reach their full potential, Trina sought clinical work experiences in special education and child welfare, providing case management and direct client services. At Assembly Member Barbara Clark's office, Trina is analyzing and evaluating education and child welfare policies which will strengthen the educational system and close the disparity gap. Trina graduated summa cum laude from Union College in Schenectady, NY with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology. She also has significant experience conducting educational outreach to students to increase their opportunities to receive higher education.