



WashU Medicine

29th Annual

Homer G. Phillips

Public Health

Lecture Series

Friday, October 10, 2025

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Eric P. Newman Education Center (EPNEC)

320 South Euclid Avenue

Saint Louis, MO 63110

“Why health? What we need to think about when we think about health.”

Welcome

Will Ross, MD, MPH

*Associate Dean for Diversity
Office of Diversity Programs*

Opening Remarks

Sherree Wilson, PhD

*Associate Vice Chancellor and Associate Dean of
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*

Remarks & Introduction of Sandro Galea, MD, DrPH

Eva Aagaard, MD

*Carol B. and Jerome T. Loeb Professor of Medical
Education, Senior Associate Dean for Education,
Vice Chancellor for Medical Education*

“Why health? What we need to think about when we think about health”

Sandro Galea, MD, DrPH

*Margaret C. Ryan Dean of the School of Public
Health, Eugene S. and Constance Kahn Distinguished
Professor in Public Health, Vice Provost for
Interdisciplinary Initiatives*

Closing Remarks

Will Ross, MD, MPH

*Associate Dean for Diversity
Office of Diversity Programs*



Homer G. Phillips and the Legacy of Public Hospitals in St. Louis

In 1905, Dr. John Green, President of the St. Louis Medical Society, with a keen understanding of the plight of public hospitals in other cities, issued this charge to St. Louis physicians on the eve of opening a new City Hospital:

“Will it vouchsafe to the pauper a medical care equivalent to that which his pecuniarily more fortunate fellow citizens receive? Will it fulfill to the utmost its function of providing instruction in practical medicine to the undergraduate student? And will our hospital be thoroughly in accord with the spirit of medical enlightenment?”

*Presidential Report, St. Louis Medical Review
January 14, 1905*

A succession of public hospitals failed in that charge -- City Hospital No. 1 (Max C. Starkloff), City Hospital No. 2, and St. Louis County Hospital, despite their professed missions, opened as segregated facilities. Only under duress, and toward the twilight of their existence, did they admit and treat irrespective of race, creed, or color. There is one bright exception, the Homer G. Phillips Hospital. It opened its doors as a truly “public” facility in 1937, still shrouded in intrigue after the mysterious assassination of its main advocate and benefactor, attorney Homer Gilliam Phillips. At a time in American society when people of color were restricted from most medical training programs, the Homer G. Phillips Hospital became the premier training ground for African American medical professionals – many of whom remained to deliver high-quality health care in the St. Louis area and who later assumed prestigious positions throughout the nation. The successes of its subsequent years of operation (as well as the complex issues surrounding its closure) became legendary in the annals of public hospitals. It closed its doors on August 17, 1979, followed by St. Louis City No. 1 in 1985, St. Louis County Hospital in 1987, and St. Louis Regional Hospital in 1997. While we cannot now walk the halls of Homer G. Phillips Hospital, we can learn much from its history, presented by the very people who strived diligently to provide culturally sensitive care to the patients who so deeply trusted and loved them and their hospital. This lecture series is named in honor of the historic Homer G. Phillips Hospital in St. Louis.

Sandro Galea, MD, DrPH

Margaret C. Ryan Dean of the School of Public Health, Eugene S. and Constance Kahn Distinguished Professor in Public Health, Vice Provost for Interdisciplinary Initiatives



Sandro Galea, a physician, epidemiologist, and author, is the Margaret C. Ryan Dean of the School of Public Health, the Eugene S. and Constance Kahn Distinguished Professor in Public Health, and Vice Provost of Interdisciplinary Initiatives at Washington University in St. Louis. As dean of WashU's first new school in 100 years, Galea leads the building of a world-class academic institution that works in a myriad of ways to advance solutions to pressing, real-world issues involving infectious disease; mental, global, and environmental health; dissemination and implementation science; and other key areas of public health.

Galea's scholarship lives at the intersection of social and psychiatric epidemiology, with a focus on the behavioral health consequences of trauma. His work has been principally funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and several foundations. Further, he has been engaged in more than \$100 million of extramurally funded research. He previously held academic and leadership positions at Boston University, Columbia University, the University of Michigan, and the New York Academy of Medicine.

He has published extensively in peer-reviewed literature and is a regular contributor to a range of public media, about the social causes of health, mental health, and the consequences of trauma. He has been listed as one of the most widely cited scholars in the social sciences.

He is past chair of the Boston Board of Health, of the board of the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health, and past president of the Society for Epidemiologic Research and of the Interdisciplinary Association for Population Health Science. He is an elected member of the National Academy of Medicine. Galea has received several lifetime achievement awards. Galea holds a medical degree from the University of Toronto, graduate degrees from Harvard University and Columbia University, and honorary doctorates from the University of Glasgow and the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

Previous Lectures

Year	Speaker
2010	Frank Richards Jr., MD, FAAP
2009	Harriet Washington
2008	Joan Reede, MD, MPH, MS
2007	Deborah Prothrow-Smith, MD
2006	Andy Ziskind, MD
2005	Kristy Woods, MD, MPH
2004	L.D. Britt, MD, MPH
2003	Vanessa Northington Gamble, MD, PhD
2002	Beverly Coleman Miller, MD
2001	Audrey Forbes Manley, MD, MPH
2000	Levi Watkins Jr., MD
1999	Clive Callendar, MD, FACS
1998	Henry W. Foster, MD
1997	Henry Hampton Jr.
1996	LaSalle Leffall Jr., MD

Previous Lectures

Year	Speaker
2025	Sandro Galea, MD, DrPH
2024	Geoff K. Ward, Ph.D, B.A.
2023	Brenda Battle, RN, BSN, MBA
2022	Donald Suggs, D.D.S.
2021	Candace O'Connor
2019	Consuelo H. Wilkins, MD, MSCI
2018	Viewing of <i>The Color of Medicine: The Story of Homer G. Phillips Hospital</i>
2017	Georges C. Benjamin, MD
2016	Carol Camp Yeakey, PhD
2015	John Wright, PhD
2014	Ira Kodner, MD
2013	Michael Drake, MD
2012	Mark Clanton, MD, MPH
2011	John Rich, MD, MOH



Homer G. Phillips

“In 1922 Phillips joined with other black leaders in an effort to persuade the city of St. Louis to issue bonds for the construction of a hospital that would serve the black community. Although he did not live to see the fruition of this endeavor, a hospital that was named to honor his memory was completed in 1937.”

Ware, Leland. “Homer G. Phillips (1880–1931).” Missouri Encyclopedia, State Historical Society of Missouri. Published July 14, 2020. Accessed August 18, 2025



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