



## Leadership North Carolina

### Class 33 Blue Cross Blue Shield North Carolina Health and Human Services Session

March 10 – 12, 2026  
Charlotte

[#LNC33]

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**Leadership North Carolina**  
**Class 33 Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina**  
**Health and Human Services Session**  
March 10-12, 2026  
Charlotte

**Base Hotel**

Residence Inn Charlotte Uptown  
404 South Mint Street  
Charlotte  
(704) 340-4000  
[Residence Inn Charlotte Uptown](#)

**Session Goals**

1. Present an overview of basic healthcare and human services systems, highlighting key issues, challenges, and innovations.
2. Provide a comprehensive view of drivers of health, looking beyond medical care and employing an equity lens.
3. Offer experiential learning opportunities through an interactive poverty simulation.
4. Highlight examples of "every person" leadership in healthcare and HHS sphere.
5. Explore how health and human services connect to and intersect with government, education, economic development, the environment, and inclusive leadership in North Carolina.

**Planning Committee**

**Chris Rivera, Program Chair**

EMD Division Director, Department of Community Resources  
Mecklenburg County  
*Mecklenburg*

**Shirnetta Harrell, Co-Chair** *Johnston*  
Founder and Executive Director  
The No Woman, No Girl Initiative

**Hetal Patel** *Guilford*  
Program Director  
MDC

**Zac Long, Co-Chair** *Wake*  
CEO and General Counsel, Well Care Health  
President, Long Family Ventures

**Alicia Stokes** *Durham*  
Vice President and Head of Core Insurance  
Group Strategy & Performance Execution  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina

**Diana Baker** *Forsyth*  
Associate Director of MFP  
North Carolina Department of Health and  
Human Services

**April Thornton** *Randolph*  
Director of Communications  
UnitedHealthcare

**Caroline Collier** *Durham*  
Associate Director of Continuing Professional  
Development  
North Carolina Area Health Education  
Centers

**Scarlett Tyner** *Johnston*  
Director of Communications and Corporate  
Affairs  
Pepsi Bottling Ventures

**Waqiah Ellis** *Durham*  
Vice President, Nursing  
WakeMed Health and Hospitals

**Ralph Wilson** *Mecklenburg*  
Assistant Vice President - Endoscopy Service  
Line  
Atrium Health

**Kerry Grace Heckle** *Wake*  
Executive Director, Brand Strategy and  
Engagement  
UNC Health

## Tuesday, March 10, 2026

E2D Tour Address: 920 Hamilton Street. Free parking before 6 pm.

The Pearl Tour Address: The Pearl, Center for Education Building, 915 Pearl Park Way, Charlotte. Photo ID required.

The Pearl Tour Parking: 235 Innovate Lane, Charlotte.

Reception: Foundation For The Carolinas, 220 North Tryon Street, Charlotte. Business casual attire.

12:00 – 1:30 pm	Lunch and Tour of E2D (Bonus Optional Activity) <i>Advance RSVP required.</i>	Pat Millen <i>President/Co-Founder E2D, Inc. LNC Class 33 Member</i>
1:45 – 2:00 pm	Arrival, Parking, and Check-In for the Pearl Tour	
2:00 – 4:00 pm	Tour of the Pearl (Optional) <i>Advance RSVP required. Photo ID required. No arrivals after 2:30 pm.</i>	Kate Burgess <i>District Programming and Ecosystem Development Manager Advocate Health</i>  Dr. Richard Cox, Jr. <i>Director of Districts Education and Innovation Partnerships The Pearl/Atrium Health</i>  Amaya Daniel <i>Senior Business Analyst The Pearl</i>
5:30 – 7:00 pm	Session Reception (Optional) <i>Advance RSVP required.</i>	Foundation For The Carolinas

## Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Breakfast and Session: Duke Energy Plaza, 525 South Tryon Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor Auditorium, Charlotte. Business casual attire. Photo ID required.

Class Dinner: 204 North Kitchen and Cocktails, 204 North Tryon Street, Charlotte. Casual attire.

**Duke Energy Plaza Security Protocol:** Photo ID required. Check in at the first-floor security desk to present ID and get a badge. Call or text Brian Etheridge at (919) 609-1113. He will coordinate the required Duke Energy escort to meet you in the lobby and guide you to the 7<sup>th</sup> floor. Please allow time to navigate this process.

8:00 – 8:30 am	Breakfast (Optional) <i>Advance RSVP Required</i>	
8:00 – 8:30 am	William Garrett Fund Committee Meeting	
8:30 – 9:00 am	Setting the Stage	Chris Rivera <i>EMD Division Director, Department of Community Resources Mecklenburg County LNC Class 32 Alumnus and Class 33 Program Chair</i>  Shirnetta Harrell <i>Founder and Executive Director The No Woman, No Girl Initiative LNC Class 32 Alumna and HHS Session Co-Chair</i>  Zac Long <i>CEO and General Counsel / President Well Care Health / Long Family Ventures LNC Class 32 Alumnus and HHS Session Co-Chair</i>

9:00 – 9:10 am	Local Welcome Video	The Honorable Vi Lyles <i>Mayor City of Charlotte</i>
9:15 – 10:10 am	State of the State in Health and Human Services	The Honorable Devdutta Sangvai <i>Secretary North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services</i>
10:10 – 10:30 am	Morning Break <i>Snack and beverages will be provided</i>	
10:30 – 11:00 am	Class Business	LNC Team
11:00 – 11:55 am	Building a Healthy North Carolina: Our Path Towards Better Health	Michelle G. Ries <i>President and CEO North Carolina Institute of Medicine LNC Class 25 Alumna</i>
11:55 am – 12:40 pm	Lunch	
12:40 – 1:25 pm	The Public Benefits Cliff	LaRita Barber <i>Chief Advancement Officer Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont LNC Class 31 Alumna</i>
		Hannah Beavers <i>Executive Director Freedom Communities</i>
		Danielle Young <i>Family Case Manager and Program Operations Coordinator Freedom Communities</i>
1:25 – 1:50 pm	Afternoon Break with Paired Conversations	LNC Class 33
1:50 – 3:50 pm	Poverty Simulation Facilitated by Crisis Assistance Ministry	Bonnie Tiernan <i>Director of Community Engagement Crisis Assistance Ministry</i>
3:50 – 4:00 pm	Wrap Up and Adjourn	LNC Team
6:30 pm	Class Dinner <i>Casual attire</i>	204 North Kitchen and Cocktails

Thursday, March 12, 2026

Breakfast and Session: Duke Energy Plaza, 525 South Tryon Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor Auditorium, Charlotte. Business casual attire. Photo ID required.

**Duke Energy Plaza Security Protocol:** Photo ID required. Check in at the first-floor security desk to present ID and get a badge. Call or text Brian Etheridge at (919) 609-1113. He will coordinate the required Duke Energy escort to meet you in the lobby and guide you to the 7<sup>th</sup> floor. Please allow time to navigate this process.

8:00 – 8:30 am	Breakfast (Optional) <i>Advance RSVP Required</i>	
8:30 – 8:50 am	Morning Reflections	Chris Rivera <i>EMD Division Director, Department of Community Resources Mecklenburg County LNC Class 32 Alumnus and Class 33 Program Chair</i>
8:50 – 10:05 am	From Challenge to Action: Community-Driven Solutions	Keisha Lewis <i>Occupational Therapist/Program Manager For The Struggle</i>  Teresa Cochran <i>Director of Nursing Atrium Health Anson</i>  Brittany Kearney <i>Director of Community Outreach and Enrollment Senior TLC</i>  Caroline Collier, Moderator <i>Associate Director of Continuing Professional Development North Carolina Area Health Education Centers LNC Class 32 Alumna and HHS Session Committee Member</i>
10:05 – 10:25 am	Morning Break <i>Snack and beverages will be provided</i>	
10:25 – 11:25 am	Bringing Innovation to Life: Leveraging AI, Technology, and 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Tools	Sanjay Gupta <i>Executive Vice President and Chief Transformation Officer Novant Health</i>
11:25 am – 12:10 pm	Lunch	
12:10 – 12:20 pm	Kudos	LNC Class 33
12:20 – 1:20 pm	Mental and Behavioral Health in NC: Needs, Resources, and Culturally Appropriate Services (working title)	Dr. Luke Smith <i>Executive Director El Futuro</i>
1:20 – 1:30 pm	Stretch Break	
1:30 – 2:20 pm	Leadership Profile	Rev. Richard Joyner <i>Founder, Conetoe Family Life Center Pastor, Conetoe Chapel Missionary Baptist Church</i>
2:20 – 2:30 pm	Wrap Up and Adjourn	LNC Team