



Monica L. Ponder, MS, MSPH, PhD^(ABD)
“The Public Health Unicorn”

**Health Communicator. Social Epidemiologist.
Chemist. Community Activist.**

“My personal mission is to demonstrate creative leadership that inspires others to be unafraid of disrupting tradition in order to bring innovative solutions to our nation’s most complex social, public health, & healthcare challenges.”

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Trained professionally as a chemist, epidemiologist, and health communicator, Monica has worked for nearly 15 years advancing public health and social progress. This lens uniquely positions her to approach public health challenges strategically – offering solutions informed by bench science, health system-level influencers, and everything in between. Using her expertise as a scientist, Monica translates data into accessible health information; and, conversely, as a health communicator, she shares “people-centric” stories that impact community health and wellness. As a highlight, she has cultivated her talents at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Fulton County Department of Health and Wellness, and the Atlanta-based television station, WAGA/Fox 5.

An accomplished community activist compassionate social justice advocate, Monica led development of a social media campaign to bring lactation rooms to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport; raised \$2 million in private sector funds to help African American men in south Atlanta control high blood pressure and prevent heart disease – a leading cause of death among Black men; co-founded the Cascade Civic Alliance, which represents Atlanta’s oldest and historic African American neighborhood; and she serves as Board Chairman for Georgians for a Healthy Future, a state-wide health advocacy organization that works to ensure that every Georgian has access to the healthcare they need and deserve. She has been recognized by the Atlanta Business Chronicle as a “40 under 40” honoree for her community activism.

A life-long learner, Monica is dedicated to teaching and scholarship. She received her B.S. and M.S. degrees in chemistry from Clark Atlanta University, and a M.S.P.H. in epidemiology from Emory University. She will receive her Ph.D. in communication from Georgia State University in 2019. Her dissertation bridges the sociology, health communication, and public relations disciplines and proposes a new model for crisis communication (for application by public health and health care organizations). Most importantly, she is the proud mother of Lindsey Ponder (12) – a creative soul, athlete, and entrepreneur in her own right.

The Public Health Unicorn Manifesto: Authenticity matters. Creativity heals. Remain aspirational. Follow the data. Act with compassion. Be entrepreneurial. Discover everything, but your limits. Trust your journey.

www.monicalindseyponder.com