



Monica Lindsey 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 micro- and macro-level 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, 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 and compassionate social justice advocate, Monica organized lactation support services for the 2017 National Women’s March (Washington, DC) which drew more than 200,000 participants. She also led development of a health communication 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 consumer 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, *The Henrietta Hypothesis*, for application by women’s health 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.

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