



**2023 CHEAC Annual Meeting**  
**Workshop Session Biographies**  
**Power of Digital Media in Health Equity**

**Salomeh Wagaw, MPH, Health Equity Program Director**

Salomeh Wagaw is the first Program Director of Health Equity for Riverside University Health System-Public Health, managing over 27 million dollars dedicated to address health disparities among underserved and under-resourced communities county wide. Previously, she served as an Epidemiologist for over 8 years focusing on communicable disease surveillance, reducing rates of chronic disease, incorporating data to action, uplifting health equity and driving policy development. She served as the Chief Equity Officer for the COVID-19 Vaccine and Monkey Pox Incident Management Team, working to disseminate vaccines and promote testing to the most vulnerable and disproportionately impacted community members. Ms. Wagaw's passion for addressing social determinants of health has appointed her the co-chair of the Southern California Regional Health Equity Workgroup, collaborating on regional approaches to eliminate inequities and improve overall health outcomes. Ms. Wagaw earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of California Riverside and a Master of Public Health in Research Epidemiology from Loma Linda University.

**Gregory Mercado, MPH, Health and Media Communications Coordinator**

Gregory Mercado is the Health and Media Communications Coordinator for Riverside University Health System - Public Health (RUHS-PH). Over the past 8 years, Mr. Mercado has been deeply engaged in various projects that have allowed him to explore the synergy between the public health sector and media. From developing targeted health campaigns to collaborating with media outlets, harnessing the potential of social media, educational music videos, and implementation. Mr. Mercado is currently the co-host of the RUHS-PH podcast, EquiTEA, a podcast that highlights health disparities and social injustices for those who live, work, learn, pray, play, and visit Riverside County. Mr. Mercado earned a Bachelor of Science in Health Promotion and Bachelor of Arts in Gender Ethnicity Multicultural Studies from the University of Cal Poly Pomona, and a Master of Public Health from the University of Azusa Pacific.