



PARTICIPANT HANDOUTS

Region VIII Maternal Health Summit

Session Five

Closing Keynote: From Insights to Action

Addressing maternal health is a federal priority area, and many community, state, and federal partners are actively engaging in a variety of initiatives throughout Region VIII (CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY) aimed at improving maternal health outcomes. This online convening of health center and maternal health experts is intended to foster efficient cross-program collaborations and to share evidence-based models or promising practices that support improved maternal health.

Presented by:

Danielle Pendergras, DNP, APRN, WHNP-BC, [Eastern Utah Women's Health](#)

Live Session Date & Time:

Thursday, January 22, 2026

1:00–1:45PM Mountain Time | 2:00–2:45PM Central Time

Session Overview:

Grounded in the power of personal stories to shape health care, this session highlights how lived experience can drive creative programs, strengthen community partnerships, and inform policy solutions that improve access to perinatal care across our largely rural region. Participants will leave with a clear call to translate insight into action, leverage their individual and collective influence, and elevate real-world experiences to advance equitable, sustainable perinatal health systems across the region.

Maternal Health Landscape in RVIII Summary of Findings:

CHAMPS partnered with the University of Utah to conduct an environmental scan of maternal health programs in Region VIII. View the [Summary of Preliminary Findings](#) that will serve as the basis for Summit discussion.

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CHAMPS Archives

This event will be archived online. This online version will be posted within two weeks of the live event and will be available for at least one year from the live presentation date. For information about all CHAMPS archives, please visit <https://champsonline.org/events-trainings/distance-learning/online-archived-champs-distance-learning-events>.

Description of CHAMPS

Community Health Association of Mountain/Plains States (CHAMPS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting all Region VIII federally designated Community Health Centers so they can better serve their patients and communities. Currently, CHAMPS programs and services focus on education and training, collaboration and networking, workforce development, and the collection and dissemination of regional data. The Happenings box in the middle of the CHAMPS home page highlights the newest CHAMPS offerings. Staff and board members of [CHAMPS Organizational Members](#) receive targeted benefits in the areas of business intelligence, networking and peer support, recognition and awards, recruitment and retention, training discounts and reimbursement, and more. Be sure to take advantage of CHAMPS' programs, products, resources, and other services. For more information about CHAMPS, please visit www.CHAMPSonline.org.

Speaker Biography

Danielle Pendergrass

Dr. Danielle Howa Pendergrass, DNP, APRN, WHNP-BC, FAANP, MSCP, is a dedicated advocate for women's health and a leader in advancing equitable healthcare policy. Recognized for convening diverse stakeholders, Danielle drives collaborative solutions to complex challenges in women's health. In 2012, Danielle returned to her rural hometown and founded Eastern Utah Women's Health, now serving more than 20,000 under-resourced women across three rural and frontier counties.

The views and opinions expressed in this program are solely those of the speaker, based on their individual expertise, and do not necessarily reflect the views of CHAMPS.



REGION VIII MATERNAL HEALTH SUMMIT

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Danielle Pendergrass, DNP, APRN, WHNP-BC
Eastern Utah Women's Health



Impact to Action

REGION VIII MATERNAL HEALTH SUMMIT
JANUARY 22, 2026

Dr. Danielle Howa Pendergras, DNP, APRN, WHNP-BC, FAANP, MSCP



Disclosures

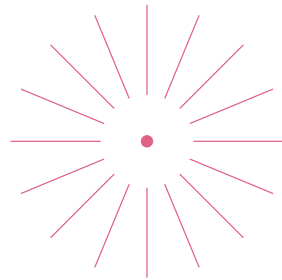
None

Pictures

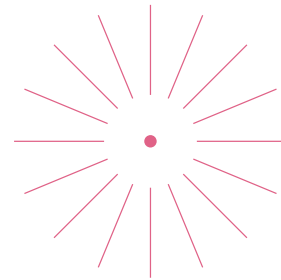


From Story to System Change

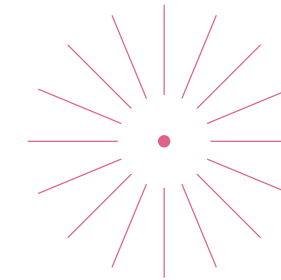
Impact to Action: The Power of Lived Experience



Personal stories as
catalysts for health
system
transformation



Why perinatal equity
in rural regions
demands action now



Insight must lead to
implementation



What We Learned Today



- Regional landscape and priority areas
- Mental health as central to maternal outcomes
- Integration and workforce as shared challenges





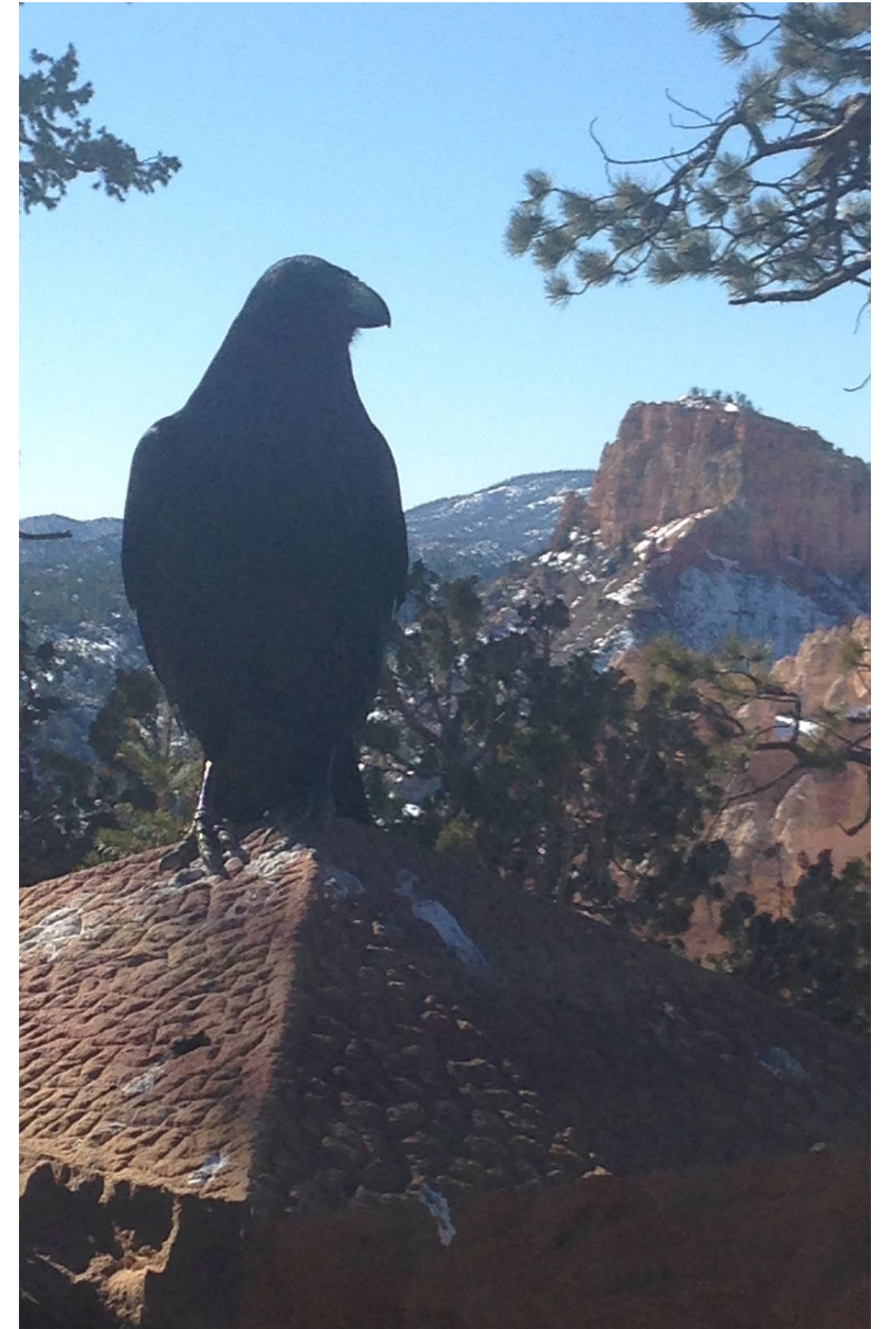
Why Stories Matter in Health Care

- Data shows trends; stories explain barriers
- Stories humanize policy, funding, and care delivery decisions
- Rural and frontier voices are often underrepresented



Perinatal Mental Health: Stories Behind the Statistics

- Mental health and substance use are central
- Screening without systems fails patients
- Wraparound support saves lives





Rural Beginnings Regional Vision

My Story...



NOTICE
THIS IS A WEAPON
FREE AREA
No Weapons beyond this point!
UCA 76-B-3112

OPEN



Danielle Howa Pendergrass
DNPc, APRN, WHNP-BC



When Stories Reach Policy

- Four Corners Behavioral Health
- SUPeRAD
- Family Planning Elevated (Assent)
- Teen Sexual Health Program
- Nurse Practitioner Owned Clinic



Integration Is Not Optional in Rural Health

- Primary care + public health collaboration
- Title V and community partnerships
- Navigation extends capacity



Partnerships as Force Multipliers



Convening diverse stakeholders across sectors



Health systems, policymakers, community leaders, and advocates



Shared ownership of solutions strengthens sustainability

Innovations in OB Care and Workforce Development

- Training where care is delivered
- Workforce pipelines rooted in community
- Innovative models that support rural practice
- GME partnerships that sustain access





Region VIII's Collective Advantage

- Shared challenges across states
- Cross-state learning accelerates impact
- Regional alignment strengthens outcomes



Individual Influence to Collective Impact

- Every role carries influence: patient, clinician, administrator, policymaker, advocate
- Collective action accelerates change beyond any single organization
- Regions succeed when collaboration replaces silos





Translating Insight Into Action



- A Call to the Action

- Elevate stories in decision-making spaces
- Align programs and policies with real-world experience
- Commit to equity as a measurable outcome, not an aspiration

The Charge Forward

Advancing Equitable, Sustainable Perinatal Systems



- Keep lived experience at the center of reform
- Build systems that work for rural families—not around them
- The opportunity is collective. The responsibility is shared.



Thank You & Acknowledgements

- CHAMPS for convening and leadership
- University of Utah: Dr. Sharon Talboys & Dr. Shahpar Najmabadi
- Panelists and speakers across today's sessions
- Health centers, public health leaders, and community partners across Region VIII





Stay Connected

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Open to collaboration across Region VIII



Thank you for participating in the Region VIII Maternal Health Summit!



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CHAMPS events, visit:

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Please evaluate any of
today's sessions here:



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