

Short Bio

Gelise Thomas

Gelise Littlejohn Thomas (she/her) is an unrelenting advocate for health equity, with emphasis on diversifying the biomedical research enterprise. An attorney by trade and storyteller by nature, her ability to mesh strategy, innovation, and coalition-building frame her curiosity-laden, relationship-first approach to solving for some of society's most urgent problems. With a decade of experience in multiple sectors, including: government relations, law, economic and community development, healthcare/research, and communication, she appreciates growth opportunities rooted in unconventional collaboration.

In 2022, Gelise joined the Clinical and Translational Science Collaborative at Case Western Reserve University as their inaugural Assistant Director, Strategic DEI & Health Disparities. Prior to that, she led diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy for University Hospitals Clinical Research Center and worked in economic development at MidTown Cleveland, Inc. Gelise served on the NIH RECOVER Cohort Health Equity, Patient Reported Outcomes, and Community Engagement task force.

Gelise earned a J.D. and M.S. in Health Sciences with a certificate for advanced graduate study in bioethics from Cleveland State University and a B.A. in Political Science from The Ohio State University. She is licensed to practice law in California and D.C. Gelise is a 2022 Crain's 40 Under Forty honoree and David J. Akers Leadership Award recipient.