

# PRESS RELEASE

---



**MAY 20, 2019**

**Media contact:**  
Andrea Lyons  
216-436-2129  
alyons@unitedwaycleveland.org

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

---

### **Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha announced as keynote speaker for Lead Safe Home Summit**

CLEVELAND: United Way of Greater Cleveland has announced that Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha will be the keynote speaker at the inaugural Lead Safe Home Summit, which takes place on June 21, 2019. This free event is being organized by United Way in conjunction with the Lead Safe Cleveland Coalition.

The goal of the Lead Safe Home Summit is to convene parents, residents, landlords, advocates and local elected officials, learn about lead poisoning from national experts and peer cities, listen to stories of those impacted in our community, provide information on available resources, and build Cleveland's path forward.

Dr. Hanna-Attisha is a pediatrician, professor and public-health advocate credited with being the first to research and reveal lead in children's blood in Flint, Michigan. In 2016, she was named as one of the 100 most influential people in the world by TIME Magazine and was awarded the Freedom of Expression Courage award by PEN America for her dedication to prioritizing the health of her community.

"The story of Flint shines a spotlight on our unfinished work regarding the lingering legacy of lead," says Dr. Hanna-Attisha. "From Flint to Detroit to Philadelphia and Cleveland, too many of our nation's kids continue to disproportionately bear the burden of preventable lead exposure. I'm so excited to work with Cleveland partners to finally add lead poisoning to the list of eradicated diseases."

Dr. Hanna-Attisha is also the author of the environmental injustice book *What the Eyes Don't See*, and founded the Pediatric Public Health Initiative. The Health Initiative is a model program to mitigate the impact of childhood lead poisoning that combines clinical programs, childhood health policy, advocacy and evaluation to give children of Flint a better chance at lifelong success.

The summit will also feature a peer-city panel discussion on the lead crisis in cities such as Rochester, Detroit and Cleveland, and what can be done to combat it. The panel is comprised of local and out-of-state experts from various public-health and lead-prevention organizations.



Panelists include Elizabeth McDade, program manager for the Rochester Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning and the Rochester Safe and Efficient Homes Initiative in Rochester, New York; Aparna Bole, MD, FAAP, division chief of General Academic Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine and medical director of community integration at UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital; Thomas Muscarella, senior public health sanitarian for the Erie County Department of Health in New York and member of the New York State Governor's Lead Poisoning Advisory Council; and Monica Lewis-Patrick, cofounder, president, CEO and director of community outreach and engagement for We the People of Detroit, an organization that aims to educate and empower Detroit residents on issues surrounding civil rights, land, water, education and more.

"Dr. Hanna-Attisha and our panelists bring unsurpassed knowledge and expertise to the table and their dedication to the cause is unparalleled. Hearing from experts from around the nation about what has been successful in other communities will help craft a lead-safe Cleveland," says Augie Napoli, president and CEO of United Way. "We are eager to take the next steps with our coalition partners, public and private, and, as such, are optimistic about the future here in Cleveland."

The summit will run all day and, in addition to Dr. Hanna-Attisha's keynote address and the panel discussion, will feature breakout sessions, interactive ways to learn more about the issue of lead in the community, and a resource fair for residents and stakeholders. It will also provide the opportunity for stakeholders to immerse themselves in the work of the other committees that make up the Coalition.

The Lead Safe Home Summit will be hosted at the Huntington Convention Center of Cleveland (300 W. Lakeside Ave., Cleveland, Ohio, 44113). The convention center is easily accessible to residents via multiple bus routes, the Rapid stop at Tower City, downtown trolleys or vehicle self-parking.

United Way is anticipating over 350 Clevelanders will attend the summit. Registration for this free event can be completed at [unitedwaycleveland.org/leadsafesummit/](http://unitedwaycleveland.org/leadsafesummit/).

*Founded in 1913, United Way of Greater Cleveland is a local, independent nonprofit organization dedicated to fighting poverty in the Greater Cleveland area. The largest private-sector funder of health and human services, United Way is dedicated to addressing the core issues of poverty, including health, financial stability, developing children to their full potential, employment barriers, housing stability and other basic needs. Through donations, United Way funds 78 human service agencies in 13 areas of support to fight poverty from every angle and tackle both the root causes and symptoms of poverty that impact Greater Cleveland. For more information, visit [unitedwaycleveland.org](http://unitedwaycleveland.org)*

*The Lead Safe Cleveland Coalition is an inclusive public-private partnership founded to address lead poisoning through a comprehensive, preventive, and long-term approach. This approach protects Cleveland's children by merging smart, adaptable public policies; knowledgeable agencies willing to collaborate; proven community programs; and public and private sector accountability. With community voice embedded in all aspects, the Coalition is working toward an initial five-point action plan:*

1) create community goals; 2) develop lead safe policy legislation; 3) host the Lead Safe Home Summit; 4) create a Lead Safe Home Fund; and 5) advocate for state and federal resources. Initial support for the Lead Safe Cleveland Coalition came from the City of Cleveland, the Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, the Saint Luke's Foundation, The Cleveland Foundation, the Bruening Foundation, the Sisters of Charity Foundation, the Third Federal Foundation, and United Way of Greater Cleveland. Today, the Coalition has over 250 participants and five working committees and continues to grow. Everyone is encouraged to join by emailing a request to [info@leadsafecle.org](mailto:info@leadsafecle.org).

