

# FAMILY

How will you cast your vote?



## 2012 U.S. Presidential Election Guide

Veteran Health Care  
Women's Health Care  
Family Immigration  
Homeownership  
Medicaid  
Affordable & Reliable Energy  
Child Development  
LGBT Rights  
Jobs  
Stem Cell Research  
Domestic Violence  
Higher Education  
Medicare

For a copy of the election guide to family and health policy issues, visit  
[www.sph.umd.edu/fmsc/fis/documents/FamilyElectionGuide2012.pdf](http://www.sph.umd.edu/fmsc/fis/documents/FamilyElectionGuide2012.pdf)

The way we vote influences our opportunities,  
informs our democracy,  
and shapes our collective future.

## Make an informed decision.

In an effort to inform voters where major presidential candidates stand on family-relevant issues, family policy doctoral students in the Department of Family Science at the University of Maryland School of Public Health compiled this family issues voting guide. We present an objective, non-partisan collection of information comparing candidates on important family and health policies. Readers will find this a useful tool in identifying candidate positions on an array of domestic, social, and health issues that affect families in the United States in order to make informed choices in the upcoming Presidential election. The information presented was taken from each candidate’s website during September 2012, from the Congressional Record, or other sources as cited.

### What’s inside:



<b>Affordable and Reliable Energy</b> , BreAnna Davis, MS.....	3
<b>Early Childhood Program and K-12 Education</b> , Yoonjoo Lee, MA .....	4
<b>Higher Education</b> , Hyeun Chung, MA.....	5
<b>Home Ownership</b> , John Hart, MS .....	6
<b>Immigration</b> , John Hart, MS .....	7
<b>Jobs and the Economy</b> , Ashley Munger, MS .....	8
<b>Marriage Equity and LGBT Family Rights</b> , Sherylls Y. Kahn, MS.....	9
<b>Medicaid</b> , Andrew D. Williams, MPH.....	10
<b>Medicare</b> , Hoda Sana, MPH .....	11
<b>Sexual Assault and Intimate Partner Violence</b> , Ronneal Mathews, MPH.....	12
<b>Stem Cell Research</b> , Sunhye Kim, MA.....	13
<b>Veterans Care</b> , Katheryne Downes, MPH.....	14
<b>Women’s Health Issues</b> , Kelly D. Brown, MA.....	15

Acknowledgements: Campaign comparisons included in this voting guide were prepared under the direction of Dr. Elaine Anderson by students in a graduate-level family and health policy course in the Department of Family Science at the University of Maryland School of Public Health. Doctoral students compiled the election guide for dissemination through the Maryland Council on Family Relations, a student chapter of the National Council on Family Relations, and the Maryland Family Policy Impact Seminar.

## Affordable and Reliable Energy

BreAnna Davis, MS

Most of the electricity in the United States is generated from fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas and oil. Using energy more efficiently through more efficient products reduces the amount of fuel required to produce a unit of energy output and reduces the corresponding emissions of pollutants and greenhouse gases<sup>1</sup>. Electricity from renewable resources such as solar, geothermal, and wind technologies generally does not contribute to climate change or local air pollution since no fuels are combusted in these processes. The benefits of clean energy include: 1) Reduced emissions of air pollution and greenhouse gases which can affect the health of citizens, 2) lower energy bills for consumers, and 3) enhanced state and local economic development and job creation which benefits families.



	 <b>Mitt Romney (R)</b> <a href="http://www.mittromney.com">www.mittromney.com</a>	 <b>Barack Obama (D)</b> <a href="http://www.barackobama.com">www.barackobama.com</a>
<b>Major Goal</b>	Make America an energy superpower, rapidly and responsibly increasing our own production and partnering with our allies in Canada and Mexico to achieve energy independence on this continent by 2020.	To further cut oil imports in half by 2020, by developing all of our resources; this will create jobs and make America more energy independent.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open offshore areas for energy development and empower states to control this development – and set minimum production targets to increase accountability.</li> <li>• Plans to approve a North American Energy Partnership to expand regulatory cooperation with Canada and Mexico and institute fast-track regulatory approval processes for cross-border pipelines and other infrastructure.</li> <li>• Ensure accurate assessment of energy resources to determine the true extent of our resource endowment .</li> <li>• Pursue measured reforms of environmental laws and regulations to strengthen environmental protection, which is thought to benefit the development of both traditional and alternative energy sources, and encourage the use of a diverse range of fuels including natural gas in transportation.</li> <li>• Facilitate private-sector-led development of new energy technologies by focusing the federal government on research and development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue doubling fuel efficiency standards, which will save consumers at the pump, create jobs in the American automobile industry, and save 12 billion barrels of oil.</li> <li>• Maintain the production and promotion of a safe supply of natural gas, which could support more than 600,000 new jobs by the end of the decade.</li> <li>• Help expand domestic oil production by offering millions of acres of land for development—including opening up 75% of our oil and gas resources in the Gulf and Arctic while improving safety measures to prevent future spills.</li> <li>• Continue to increase the generation of electricity from clean energy sources like wind and solar which has supported nearly a quarter million jobs.</li> <li>• Continue to invest in clean coal to follow the more than \$10 billion in private investments, which impacted employment in the coal sector (reaching its highest level since 1996 in 2011).</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> United States Environmental Protection Agency (November, 2008). Retrieved from <http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-and-you/index.html#impact>

## Early Childhood Program and K-12 Education

Yoonjoo Lee, MA

The mission of the Department of Education is to serve America's students – to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.<sup>1</sup>



	 <b>Mitt Romney (R)</b> <a href="http://www.mittromney.com">www.mittromney.com</a>	 <b>Barack Obama (D)</b> <a href="http://www.barackobama.com">www.barackobama.com</a> <a href="http://www.whitehouse.gov">www.whitehouse.gov</a>
<b>Early Childhood Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring federal spending below 20% of GDP by the end of his first term.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest over \$8 billion for Head Start and Early Head Start to serve approximately 962,000 children and families in his 2013 budget proposal.</li> <li>Support implementation of new regulations to strengthen Head Start by requiring low-performing programs to compete for funding for the first time.</li> <li>Invest over \$6 billion for the Child Care and Development Fund, and additional \$825 million, to support 1.5 million children with child care subsidies.</li> </ul>
<b>K-12 Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow low income and special needs students to choose which school to attend by making Title 1 and IDEA Funds portable.</li> <li>Provide incentives for states to increase choices for parents and develop quality.</li> <li>Build on the success of effective charter and digital schools.</li> <li>Expand the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship program to serve as a model for the nation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New funding for the successful Race to the Top program to continue driving comprehensive reform at the state and district level.</li> <li>Expand educational options by helping grow effective charter schools, magnet schools, and other innovative and autonomous public schools that achieve positive results and give parents more choices.</li> <li>No funding for the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship program in his 2013 budget proposal.</li> </ul>
<b>No Child Left Behind</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen No Child Left Behind by reducing federal micromanagement while redoubling efforts to provide transparency and accountability.</li> <li>Provide better information for parents through straightforward public report cards and empower them to hold districts and states responsible for results.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Granted waivers from No Child Left Behind to 33 states and the District of Columbia before fall 2012.</li> <li>States receiving flexibility also must implement accountability system that recognizes and rewards high-performing schools and those that are making significant gains, while targeting rigorous and comprehensive interventions for the lowest-performing and largest achievement gap schools.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Retrieved September 30, 2012, from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/mission/mission.html?src=ln>

## Higher Education

Hyeeun Chung, MA

With growing tuition and fees for college, about one out of five (19%) of the nation's households owed student debt in 2010, more than double the share two decades earlier and a significant rise from the 15% that owed such debt in 2007.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, in 2011, unemployment among college graduates under age 25 has averaged 8.5 percent, an improvement from 9.5 percent a year earlier, but still much higher than 5.4 percent in the year before the recession began at the end of 2007.<sup>2</sup>

	 <b>Mitt Romney (R)</b> <a href="http://www.mittromney.com">www.mittromney.com</a>	 <b>Barack Obama (D)</b> <a href="http://www.barackobama.com">www.barackobama.com</a>
<b>Student Loans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidate duplicative and overly complex programs within the Department of Education. Focus the Department on giving students and families with financial need the appropriate information about degree completion, loan repayment rates, future earnings, and other indicators to assess the risks and benefits of the many options available to them.</li> <li>• Put private lenders back in the business of issuing federally backed student loans, let companies compile data about lending and colleges for consumers, and help families save for higher education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevent federal student loan interest rates from doubling by capping federal student loan repayments at 10% of income.</li> <li>• Established the American Opportunity Tax Credit which helped 9.4 million students and families in 2011 afford higher education.</li> <li>• Doubled funding for Pell grants to help low income undergraduates pay for college.</li> </ul>
<b>Youth Jobs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce burdensome regulations on businesses, and to institute pro-growth economic policies that free companies to hire young entrepreneurs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invested increased funds in community colleges to provide education and career-training programs.</li> <li>• Introduced the new internship program for students in high schools, colleges, trade schools and other qualifying educational institutions to have paid work opportunities in agencies and explore Federal careers while completing their education.<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Pew Research Center (2012, September 26). *A record one-in-five households now owe student loan debt*. Retrieved September 28, 2012, from <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/09/26/a-record-one-in-five-households-now-owe-student-loan-debt/>



<sup>2</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012). *Employment status of the civilian population 25 years and over by educational attainment*. Retrieved September 28, 2012, from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t04.htm>

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Office of Personnel Management. Retrieved October 2, 2012, from <http://www.opm.gov/hiringreform/pathways/>

## Home Ownership

John Hart, MS

Discussion about homeownership often begins with reference to owning one’s own home and being a part of “The American Dream.” One statistic of the recent home-buying surge is the accompanying rise in the number of homeowners who are leveraged. Loans with zero-down payments were readily available, with some mortgage companies offering mortgages greater than the equity value of the house, providing cash to cover the transaction and moving costs. Forty percent of first-time borrowers put down 10 percent or less; 16 percent of all borrowers put down 5 percent or less on their mortgages in 2000. Homeowners owe almost \$5.7 trillion on mortgages, an increase of 50 percent in just the past four years, which is greater than the federal government or corporate sector debt.<sup>1</sup>



	 <b>Mitt Romney (R)</b> <a href="http://www.mittromney.com">www.mittromney.com</a>	 <b>Barack Obama (D)</b> <a href="http://www.barackobama.com">www.barackobama.com</a>
<b>Candidates’ Perspectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan to responsibly sell the 200,000 vacant foreclosed homes owned by the government.</li> <li>• Wants to facilitate foreclosure alternatives for those who cannot afford to pay their mortgage.</li> <li>• Plans to replace complex rules with smart regulation to hold banks accountable, restore a functioning marketplace and restart lending to creditworthy borrowers.</li> <li>• Wants to protect taxpayers from additional risk in the future by reforming Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wants to expand access for homeowners to refinance their homes at today’s low rates (even if they are underwater).</li> <li>• Plans to establish a quick and hassle-free process for homeowners who are current on their mortgage payments and want to refinance—no more tax forms, and no more appraisals—just a lower interest rate, and lower payments each month.</li> <li>• Feels that whether your home has fallen in value or your credit was harmed, as long as you've been paying your bills on time in recent months and your loan is backed by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac, you should be able to refinance.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University. (2002). *The State of the Nation’s Housing 2002*. Retrieved September 27, 2012 [www.jchs.harvard.edu/publications/markets/Son2002.pdf](http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/publications/markets/Son2002.pdf).

# Immigration

John Hart, MS

Prosperous nations such as the United States, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom will always attract immigrants that are in search for a better life. The United States has an immigration challenge as immigrants enter the country illegally by crossing the border between the United States and Mexico, or they enter legally but overstay their visas. With more than a million legal and illegal immigrants settling in the United States each year, immigration has an impact on education, health care, government budgets, employment, the environment, crime and countless other areas of American life.<sup>1</sup>



	 <b>Mitt Romney (R)</b> <a href="http://www.mittromney.com">www.mittromney.com</a>	 <b>Barack Obama (D)</b> <a href="http://www.whitehouse.gov">www.whitehouse.gov</a>
<b>Securing the Border</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Believes that completing a high-tech fence and having officers on the ground will enhance border security.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Believes that federal enforcement resources (e.g., boots on the ground, surveillance, etc.) should be focused on preventing those who would do our nation harm from entering our country.</li> </ul>
<b>Discouraging Illegal Immigrants (via employment)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plans to develop an effective, mandatory employment verification system that will enable employers to be sure that those they hire are eligible to work. According to Romney, this will discourage illegal immigrants from coming to America to seek jobs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Believes that employers who deliberately hire and exploit undocumented workers must be held accountable. He feels that the U.S. must give employers who want to play by the rules a reliable way to verify that their employees are here legally.</li> </ul>
<b>Immigration &amp; the Economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Believes that Congress should raise the caps on visas for highly skilled immigrants (from certain countries) and feels that every foreign student who obtains an advanced degree in math, science, or engineering at a U.S. university should be granted permanent residency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Believes that immigration laws should continue to reunify families and encourage individuals we train in our educational institutions to stay and develop new technologies and industries in the United States rather than abroad.</li> </ul>
<b>Immigration – The Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Believes illegal immigrants who apply for legal status should not be given any advantage over those who are following the law and waiting their turn.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Believes that those living here illegally must register and undergo national security and criminal background checks, pay taxes and a penalty, and learn English before they can get in line to become eligible for citizenship.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Federation for Immigration Reform. (2012, September 27). Retrieved from <http://www.fairus.org/issues>.

## Jobs and the Economy

Ashley Munger, MS

In 2008, the United States faced the greatest economic downturn since the great depression. The national unemployment rate is approximately 8.1%. Out of the 12.5 million unemployed Americans, 5 million are long-term unemployed (27 weeks or more).<sup>1</sup>

	 <b>Mitt Romney (R)</b> <a href="http://www.mittromney.com">www.mittromney.com</a>	 <b>Barack Obama (D)</b> <a href="http://www.barackobama.com">www.barackobama.com</a>
<b>Individual Tax Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain marginal rates at current levels in an effort to foster economic growth, savings and investment.</li> <li>• Make the lower tax rates on investment income implemented during the Bush Administration permanent, and eliminate taxes on capital gains, dividends and interest for those who make an adjusted gross income of less than \$200,000.</li> <li>• Eliminate the federal estate tax.</li> <li>• Long-term goal: work toward a simpler and more-efficient tax system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower tax rates and simplify the tax system.</li> <li>• Cut inefficient and unfair tax breaks, including high-income tax preferences, oil and gas company special tax breaks, and loopholes.</li> <li>• Cut the deficit through tax reform, including letting the tax breaks for single taxpayers making over \$200,000 or married taxpayers making over \$250,000 expire.</li> <li>• Lower taxes for the middle class and provide tax credits for families, such as the American Opportunity Tax Credit and The Child Tax Credit.</li> <li>• Initiate the Buffet Rule, a minimum of 30% tax rate on those who make over \$1 million a year.</li> </ul>
<b>Regulation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeal the Affordable Care Act and the Dodd-Frank Act.</li> <li>• Reform environmental regulation, making regulations subject to a cost assessment before implementation and giving companies multi-year lead times before compliance with the regulation is enforced.</li> <li>• Cap new regulatory costs for government agencies at zero dollars. During the first term of the Romney Administration, government agencies must go through a budget process to identify and offset costs that arise from any new regulation.</li> <li>• Require Congress to approve all major regulations (i.e., those with an economic impact greater than \$100 million).</li> <li>• Reform legal liability system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiated the ‘Campaign to Cut Waste,’ which paired back unnecessary and costly regulations via government agencies regulatory reform plans. Savings are estimated to total over \$10 billion during the next five years.</li> <li>• The purpose of the Campaign to cut Waste includes developing rules that take costs and burdens for American businesses into account; increasing public participation and opportunity for public comment in the development of regulations; making rules more simple and accessible; and ensuring regulations are driven by scientific findings.</li> <li>• Developed plans for each agency can be found at <a href="http://www.whitehouse.gov/21stcenturygov/action/s/21st-century-regulatory-system">http://www.whitehouse.gov/21stcenturygov/action/s/21st-century-regulatory-system</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Labor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give workers the right to decide, by secret ballot, whether or not they unionize after hearing from the union and the management about potential benefits and costs of unionizing.</li> <li>• Encourage states to embrace the Right-to-Work legislation.</li> <li>• Ensure union dues cannot be contributed to political campaigns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed the U.S. Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which supported job creation.</li> <li>• Encourage companies to bring manufacturing jobs to the United States through tax incentives, and eliminate tax breaks for companies that outsource labor.</li> <li>• Invest in domestic clean energy manufacturing, and provide tax credits for advanced energy manufacturing.</li> <li>• Invest in education and training programs for U.S. workers via the Community College to Career Fund.</li> </ul>



<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012). Economic news release: Employment situation summary 9/7/2012. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/emnsit.nr0.htm>



## Marriage Equity and LGBT Family Rights

Sherylls Y. Kahn, MS

According to estimates from the 2010 Census, there were 131, 729 same-sex married households and 514,735 same-sex unmarried partner households in the United States<sup>1</sup>. In the last decade, there has been extensive debate over the definition of marriage, and whether marriage benefits should be extended to gay and lesbian couples and their families.

	 <b>Mitt Romney (R)</b> <a href="http://www.mittromney.com">www.mittromney.com</a>	 <b>Barack Obama (D)</b> <a href="http://www.barackobama.com">www.barackobama.com</a>
<b>Same-Sex Marriage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wants to preserve traditional marriage – the union between one man and one woman. Plans to appoint an Attorney General who will defend the Defense of Marriage Act. He also plans to pass a Federal Marriage Amendment to the Constitution defining marriage as between one man and one woman.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicly announced his support for marriage for same-sex couples.</li> </ul>
<b>Medical Rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No information available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Believes in equal rights for LGBT Americans. He issued a memorandum requesting that hospitals ensure hospital visitation and medical decision-making rights to LGBT couples and families.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, all hospitals participating in Medicare or Medicaid must allow LGBT couples the same visitation and medical decision-making rights as straight couples.</li> </ul>



<sup>1</sup> [http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/2010\\_census/cb11-cn181.html](http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/2010_census/cb11-cn181.html)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/presidential-memorandum-hospital-visitation>

# Medicaid

Andrew D. Williams, MPH

Medicaid is a state-federal partnership program that mostly covers low-income adults with children and people with certain disabilities. As part of the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid eligibility requirements will change in January 2014, and will allow low-income adults without children to be covered by Medicaid.<sup>1</sup>

	 <b>Mitt Romney (R)</b> <a href="http://www.mittromney.com">www.mittromney.com</a>	 <b>Barack Obama (D)</b> <a href="http://www.barackobama.com">www.barackobama.com</a>
<b>Candidates' Perspectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favors reducing the amount of money the federal government spends on Medicaid.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Opposed to the expansion of Medicaid to nearly 17 million additional Americans.<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports the expansion of Medicaid eligibility to low-income adults.</li> </ul>
<b>States' Involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Block grant Medicaid along with other payments to states.</li> <li>• Limit federal standards and requirements on both private insurance and Medicaid coverage.</li> <li>• Favors states deciding their own health insurance plans.<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is in favor of states receiving federal funding to expand Medicaid to low-income adults.<sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Favors a federal-state Medicaid partnership. The federal government would pay most of the cost initially, with states picking up more cost as times goes on.<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Retrieved September 20, 2012 from <http://medicaid.gov/AffordableCareAct/Affordable-Care-Act.html>

<sup>2</sup> Retrieved September 28, 2012 from <http://www.medpagetoday.com/Washington-Watch/Washington-Watch/34061>



<sup>3</sup> Retrieved September 20, 2012 from <http://www.npr.org/2012/08/20/159341491/medicare-and-medicare-how-the-campaigns-differ>

<sup>4</sup> Retrieved September 21, 2012 from <http://nationalpriorities.org/en/blog/2012/09/24/election-2012-fact-check-medicare-and-medicare/>

## Medicare

Hoda Sana, MPH

By 2020, 12 million older Americans will need long-term care. Most will be cared for at home; family and friends are the sole caregivers for 70 percent of the elderly. A study by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services states that people who reach age 65 will likely have a 40 percent chance of entering a nursing home.<sup>1</sup>



	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Mitt Romney (R)</b> <a href="http://www.mittromney.com">www.mittromney.com</a></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Barack Obama (D)</b> <a href="http://www.barackobama.com">www.barackobama.com</a></p>
<b>Transparency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase transparency to the public about quality of care and costs of medical bills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Affordable Care Act is holding insurance companies accountable, putting an end to abuses such as capping or dropping ones coverage when you get sick.</li> </ul>
<b>Candidates' Perspectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No change for current seniors or those nearing retirement.</li> <li>• Medicare will be reformed as a premium support system (existing spending is repackaged as a fixed-amount benefit to each senior that can be used to purchase an insurance plan).</li> <li>• All insurance plans must offer coverage at least comparable to what Medicare provides today.</li> <li>• If seniors choose more expensive plans, they will have to pay the difference between the support amount and the premium price; if they choose less expensive plans, they can use any leftover support to pay other medical expenses like co-pays and deductibles</li> <li>• “Traditional” fee-for-service Medicare will be offered by the government as an insurance plan (seniors can purchase that form of coverage if they prefer it; however, if it costs the government more to provide that service than it costs private plans to offer their versions, then the premiums charged by the government will have to be higher and seniors will have to pay the difference to enroll in the traditional Medicare option).</li> <li>• Lower income seniors will receive more generous support to ensure that they can afford coverage; wealthier seniors will receive less support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medicare will cover preventative services free of charge such as mammograms, bone density screenings, flu shots, breast cancer screenings, blood pressure and cholesterol checks, colon cancer screenings.</li> <li>• Lower Medicare costs and premiums.</li> <li>• Supports closing the "doughnut hole" in the Medicare Part D prescription drug program so everyone will receive similar coverage.</li> <li>• Ended insurance companies' power to cancel policies, deny coverage, or charge women more than men, and established new rights to appeal insurance company decisions.</li> <li>• No American will be denied care or charged more due to a pre-existing condition as of 2014.</li> <li>• Preventive care is covered by insurance companies and Medicare with no co-pay or cost sharing--including mammograms for women and wellness visits for seniors.</li> <li>• A 50% discount for prescription drugs applies to those within Medicare’s coverage gap. Consequently, 5.4 million seniors [since 2010] save an average of \$768 each on the cost of their prescription drugs after hitting the prescription coverage gap.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.medicare.gov/longtermcare/static/home.asp>

## Sexual Assault and Intimate Partner Violence

Ronneal Mathews, MPH

Sexual assault and intimate partner violence are serious public health issues with both long-term and short-term effects on the physical and emotional health of those who experience it. According to the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, nearly 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men in the United States has been raped in their lifetime. Nearly 3 in 10 women in the United States (28.8% or approximately 34.3 million) have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner and reported at least one measured impact related to experiencing these or other forms of violent behavior in that relationship.<sup>1</sup>



	 <b>Mitt Romney</b> <a href="http://www.mittromney.com">www.mittromney.com</a>	 <b>Barack Obama</b> <a href="http://www.barackobama.com">www.barackobama.com</a>
<b>General Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A statement released by Andrea Saul, a representative of the Romney campaign indicates that he supports the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The statement did not specify whether he supports an updated version of the Act which includes protections for LGBT, transgender and immigrant victims.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supports reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Supports inclusion of LGBT and transgender victims and expanded authority of tribal governments to prosecute offenders.</li> <li>In 2010, Obama signed the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, which included reauthorization of the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA). FVPSA funds shelters and service programs for victims of domestic violence and their children. It also supports the National Domestic Violence Hotline.</li> <li>Passed the Affordable Care Act allowing women to receive free preventive health services including domestic violence screening and counseling.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Black, M.C., Basile, K.C., Breiding, M.J., Smith, S.G., Walters, M.L., Merrick, M.T., Chen, J., & Stevens, M.R. (2011). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## Stem Cell Research

Sunhye Kim, MA

Stem cells are distinguished from other cell types by two important characteristics. They are unspecialized cells capable of renewing themselves through cell division, sometimes after long periods of inactivity and under certain physiologic or experimental conditions. They can be induced to become tissue- or organ-specific cells with special functions. Given their unique regenerative abilities, stem cells offer new potential for treating diseases such as diabetes, and heart disease. However, research on one kind of stem cell—human embryonic stem cells—has generated much interest and public debate.<sup>1</sup>

	 <b>Mitt Romney (R)</b> <a href="http://www.mittromney.com">http://www.mittromney.com</a>	 <b>Barack Obama (D)</b> <a href="http://stemcells.nih.gov/policy">http://stemcells.nih.gov/policy</a>
<b>General Positions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agrees with the importance of stem cell research. “Stem cell research is a great scientific frontier, and it must be pursued with respect and care.”<sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Focus his energy on laws and policies that promote this kind of research to unlock the medical breakthroughs that many need.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed an Executive Order (March 9, 2009). “When government fails to make these investments, opportunities are missed. Promising avenues go unexplored. Some of our best scientists leave for other countries that will sponsor their work, and those countries may surge ahead of ours in the advances that transform our lives.”<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Embryonic Stem Cell</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports adult stem cell research as an alternative method instead of using embryos. “I am in favor of stem cell research. I am not in favor of creating new human embryos through cloning.”<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• Vetoed a bill that would have allowed the cloning of human embryos as governor of Massachusetts.<sup>5</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believes human embryonic stem cell is necessary for treatment of disabling diseases and conditions.</li> </ul>
<b>Federal Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opposed to the use of federal funds for embryonic stem cell research.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports through the EO, that human embryonic stem cell research should be funded by the federal government.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> <http://stemcells.nih.gov/index.asp>

<sup>2</sup> March 9, 2009, President’s speech on the signing of Executive Order

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.mittromney.com>



<sup>4</sup> May 1, 2005, National Review Online

<sup>5</sup> As governor of Massachusetts

## Veterans Care

Katheryne Downes, MPH

As of July 2012, there were over 22 million veterans in the US population, with roughly 8.6 million in the VA health care system and over 346,000 rated as 100% disabled. With increasing numbers of soldiers returning home from the most recent war, concerns over homelessness, employment and health care loom heavily over this growing population.<sup>1, 2</sup>

	 <b>Mitt Romney (R)</b> <a href="http://www.mittromney.com">www.mittromney.com</a>	 <b>Barack Obama (D)</b> <a href="http://www.barackobama.com">www.barackobama.com</a> <a href="http://www.whitehouse.gov">www.whitehouse.gov</a>
<b>Mental Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant VA patients access to TRICARE network for mental health evaluation and treatment.</li> <li>Increase number of mental health providers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand suicide prevention efforts.</li> <li>Enhance access to mental health care- mandating 24hr response time for crisis.</li> <li>Increase number of mental health providers.</li> </ul>
<b>Health Care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a single military health record that follows from boot camp through retirement.</li> <li>Create an expedited claims process for commonly incurred injuries.</li> <li>Expand access to VA healthcare through internet-based consultations &amp; tele-medicine.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research into PTSD and TBI; expanded training for nurses &amp; physicians for combat related injuries.</li> <li>Joint Virtual Lifetime Electronic Initiative (All information stored continually from boot camp through retirement).</li> <li>Expand FMLA to caring for veterans with serious injury/illness.</li> </ul>
<b>Jobs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Common credentialing and licensing standard across states.</li> <li>Credentialing organizations should recognize and grant credit for military training.</li> <li>Expand military.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Veteran's Skills to Jobs- transfer military training to credentials/licensing, develop common credentialing.</li> <li>Veterans Job Corps.</li> <li>Expanded tax credits/grants for businesses that hire veterans.</li> <li>Reverse boot camp easing transition back to civilian life, including training/education for jobs.</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modify Post 9/11 GI Bill to grant in-state tuition, regardless of residency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modify Post 9/11 GI Bill to include transferability to spouses or children.</li> </ul>



<sup>1</sup> [http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/Quickfacts/Summer\\_12\\_sharepoint.pdf](http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/Quickfacts/Summer_12_sharepoint.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/Quickfacts/Stats\\_at\\_a\\_glance\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/Quickfacts/Stats_at_a_glance_FINAL.pdf)

## Women's Health Issues

Kelly D. Brown, MA

Current issues impacting women's health include but are not limited to breast cancer, breast feeding, fitness and nutrition, menopause, mental health, pregnancy, and violence against women. The Office on Women's Health (OWH) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) was established in 1991 to improve women's health, with a desire for U.S. women and girls to be healthier and have a better sense of well-being. OWH educates and motivates individuals to live healthier lives by giving them trustworthy and accurate health information through innovative programs. Three major goals guide OWH: 1) To develop and impact national women's health policy; 2) To develop, adapt, evaluate, and replicate model programs on women's health; and 3) To educate, influence, and collaborate with health organizations, health care professionals, and the public.<sup>1</sup>

	 <b>Mitt Romney (R)</b> <a href="http://www.mittromney.com">www.mittromney.com</a> <sup>2</sup>	 <b>Barack Obama (D)</b> <a href="http://www.barackobama.com">www.barackobama.com</a> <sup>3</sup>
<b>Health Insurance for Women</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On his first day in office, Romney will issue an executive order that paves the way for the federal government to issue [Affordable Care Act] waivers to all fifty states. He will then work with Congress to repeal the full legislation as quickly as possible.</li> <li>• Will pursue policies that give each state the power to craft a health care reform plan that is best for its own citizens. The federal government's role will be to help markets work by creating a level playing field for competition.</li> <li>• States will have both the incentive and the flexibility to experiment, learn from one another, and craft the approaches best suited to their own citizens. Federal standards and requirements on both private insurance and Medicaid coverage will be limited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passed the Affordable Care Act, guaranteeing that women will not be denied coverage based on their health or charged higher rates because of their gender.</li> <li>• Ensured that the cost of contraception is fully covered by most health plans.</li> <li>• Ended the health insurance practice of charging women more than men for the same coverage.</li> <li>• Supported health insurance companies cover recommended preventive care like birth control, mammograms, and other cancer screenings.</li> <li>• Improved Medicare—helping seniors save on prescription drugs and get access to free preventive care like annual wellness visits and cancer screenings.</li> </ul>
<b>Abortion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believes that life begins at conception, and supports laws of our nation reflecting that view.</li> <li>• Believes that the right next step is for the Supreme Court to overturn Roe v. Wade so that states will be empowered through the democratic process to determine their own abortion laws.</li> <li>• Supports the Hyde Amendment, which broadly bars the use of federal funds for abortions. As president, he will end federal funding for abortion advocates like Planned Parenthood.</li> <li>• Will take a stand against China's One-Child policy or compulsory sterilization and forced abortion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believes a woman's health care choices are personal decisions, best made with her doctor—without interference from politicians.</li> <li>• Committed to protecting a woman's right to choose.</li> <li>• Opposed attempts to defund Planned Parenthood.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.womenshealth.gov/about-us/who-we-are/owh-fact-sheet.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.mittromney.com/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.barackobama.com/>