Dr Kurtzer, is a graduate of the University of Florida College of Medicine and in 1997 completed her OBGYN residency training at Rush-Presbyterian-St. Lukes in Chicago. During her 15 years of solo OBGYN practice she became very aware of the role of interpersonal violence in her patients’ health issues. She became involved in Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse awareness and prevention early in her career and providing the specialized care needed for patients with a trauma history.

With her transition to Northwestern Medicine in 2015, she now dedicates her career to providing trauma informed gynecology services at the Center for Sexual Medicine and Menopause and training other health care professionals on the impact of Interpersonal Violence and Victim Centered care. She lectures on Intimate Partner Violence, Human Trafficking, the Neurobiology of Trauma and Trauma Informed Care.

She is the Medical Director for Trauma Informed Care and Education for the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and is a current member of the Trauma Informed Hospital Collaborative working on transforming Chicago area hospital systems to improve health equity. She is a member of the Northwestern Medicine Quality-Equity committee and Social Determinant of Health subcommittee. She is an active member of the Healthcare Committee of the Cook County Human Trafficking Task Force, the Northwestern University Campus Coalition on Sexual Violence and many other organizations working on Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Violence, and Human Trafficking prevention efforts and education for health care providers. She is a member of Chicago’s Network (collaboration of Domestic Violence organizations) task force on gun violence prevention and strengthening the IL Firearm Restraining Order.

From 2018-2020, she was a board member and Treasurer for the Chicago Chapter of the National Organization for Women and has organized events around the NOW Love Your Body campaign such as the “Hug Your Body/Embrace Your Vote” panel in October 2018 to encourage political engagement in regards to women’s health issues. She was an invited speaker at the Young Feminist Conference in 2018, the Find Kierra Coles and End Violence Against Chicago Women and Girls press conference in April 2019. In 2021, she was invited to speak at the Chicago Ruth Bader Ginsburg memorial about patient and provider trauma caused by political interference in abortion medical care and she also covered he impact of trauma on gun violence survivors as a panelist at the 7th Annual Gun Violence Prevention Conference 2021 for the Center for American Progress. In 2021, she joined the steering committee on Community Health, specifically gun violence prevention for the national organization Doctors for America. In January 2022, she was elected as President and Co-chair for the American Medical Women’s Associations- Physicians Against the Trafficking of Humans (AMWA-PATH).

In her spare time, she is active in the anti-violence movement integrating gun violence prevention with her expertise in interpersonal violence, working with survivors and trauma informed care. She has been a member of Moms Demand Action since 2013. She co-organized the Evanston Wear Orange event for National Gun Violence Awareness day in June 2018 and focused on informing residents about survivor and community trauma and providing resources. She also co-organized the two Evanston Gun Buy Backs in 2018 to provide a safe way for residents to rid their homes of unwanted firearms and educated the community about the association of home gun ownership and lethal suicide/homicide risk. In 2019, one week after the tragic synagogue mass shooting and murder of an African American couple in a store parking lot, she organized and spoke at the Tree of Life/Kroger vigil in downtown Evanston to remember the victims but also to stress the connection between bigotry and hate crimes with easy access to firearms in our country. She frequently tables at community events to educate residents about safe gun storage and red flag laws. She represented Moms Demand Action in planning for the Back of the Yards Peace March in both 2018 and 2019 and was a spokesperson at the march in 2019. She lectures as a medical specialist on violence against women and suicide risk with gun ownership to educate communities and healthcare professionals about the Illinois Firearm Restraining Order. In 2020, she created and moderated a panel on “Deadly Misogyny: the intersection of gun and gender based violence” in coordination with the Center for Health Equity Transformation and was co-chair for a Doctors for America training for healthcare professionals on Gun Violence Prevention advocacy in which she also spoke on Emergency Risk Protection Orders.

She educates local politicians about the need for trauma informed services and advocates on behalf of survivors and survivor families of interpersonal violence. She worked with a gun violence survivor and IL State Representative Robyn Gabel and State Senator Robert Peters on a successfully passed bill to expand economic and job security to all survivors of violent crimes in Illinois and was asked to provide expert testimony on the connection of this bill to trauma informed care at an March 2021 House hearing and May 2021 Senate hearing. She attends many memorials and vigils and promotes awareness of unsolved murders for the survivor families with children killed by gun and other violence and for missing women and children. Most recently, she was one of the organizers of the Hyde Park based installation for the December 2021 memorial for Gun Violence Victims and Survivors.

Last, she has fundraised for, donated to and promotes the efforts many local non-profit organizations including Covenant House Chicago, The Institute for Non-Violence, I Grow Englewood, the Darren B. Easterling Center for Restorative Justice, the Jaya Beemon foundation, CAASE and Strides for Peace. She speaks on the connection between homelessness and domestic violence to human trafficking for local organizations. In 2019 and 2020, she participated in the Women Unite Sleep Out to raise awareness about the connection of young adult homelessness to Intimate Partner Violence and the risk for human trafficking. She also volunteers a few hours on Saturdays in the summer for the Austin Garden Collective to help develop community gardens in the underserved areas of the west side of Chicago. In the fall and winter, she volunteers at the St Elizabeth food bank in Bronzeville on the near south side of Chicago. She raised her two daughters in Evanston, but now lives in Chicago and when not busy at work, loves to work in her garden, play soccer with her dog and bake biscotti and rugelach for her husband.