

Vanita Gupta

Vanita Gupta is president and CEO of The Leadership Conference Education Fund and The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. The Leadership Conference Education Fund builds public will for federal policies that promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States. The Education Fund's campaigns empower and mobilize advocates around the country to push for progressive change in the United States. The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 200 national organizations to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States. Before joining The Leadership Conference in June 2017, Gupta served as Acting Assistant Attorney General and head of the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division. Appointed in October 2014 by President Barack Obama as the chief civil rights prosecutor for the United States, Gupta oversaw a wide range of criminal and civil enforcement efforts to ensure equal justice and protect equal opportunity for all during one of the most consequential periods for the division.

Prior to joining the Justice Department, Gupta served as Deputy Legal Director and the Director of the Center for Justice at the American Civil Liberties Union, where she launched the Smart Justice Campaign to end mass incarceration. She joined the ACLU in 2006 as a staff attorney. Gupta began her legal career at the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, where she litigated a series of landmark wrongful drug conviction cases in Tulia, Texas. Gupta graduated magna cum laude from Yale University and received her law degree from New York University School of Law, where later she taught a civil rights litigation clinic for several years.

Catherine E. Lhamon

Catherine E. Lhamon is the chair of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. President Obama appointed Lhamon to a six-year term on the commission on December 15, 2016, and the commission unanimously confirmed the president's designation of Lhamon to chair the commission on December 28, 2016. Lhamon also litigates civil rights cases at the National Center for Youth Law, where she has been of Counsel since October 2017.

Before coming to the commission, Lhamon served as the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education until January 2017. Obama



nominated her to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights position on June 10, 2013, and she was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate on August 1, 2013. Immediately prior to joining the Department of Education, Lhamon was director of impact litigation at Public Counsel, the nation's largest pro bono law firm. Before that, she practiced for a decade at the ACLU of Southern California, ultimately as assistant legal director.

Earlier in her career, Lhamon was a teaching fellow and supervising attorney in the Appellate Litigation Program at Georgetown University Law Center, after clerking for The Honorable William A. Norris on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Lhamon received her J.D. from Yale Law School, where she was the Outstanding Woman Law Graduate, and she graduated summa cum laude from Amherst College.

Bridging Borders: Children in Immigrant Families (MPR A)

César Moreno-Pérez (Moderator, @profe_c)

César Moreno-Pérez is an associate director in the AFT's human rights and community relations department- a union representing over 1.7 million teachers, school support staff, faculty, adjunct instructors, nurses, health care professionals and public employees. He currently oversees the AFT's work on immigration, unaccompanied and refugee children, and U.S. child labor, and is an integral part of the team that guides the AFT's policy and programs for families and educators of English Language Learners. Part of his portfolio includes strategic partnerships with national Hispanic, AAPI and immigrant rights organizations. He has led several national and statewide campaigns on social and economic justice issues. Prior to joining the AFT national staff, Moreno-Pérez was the co-executive director for the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute and the deputy executive director for the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA). He has been on several delegations investigating civil rights violations in South Africa, South and Central America, Europe, Cuba and Mexico. He is a native of the Central Valley of California and is a graduate from the University of California, Berkeley. He serves on the LCLAA national executive board, advisory board of the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators, and was the U.S. representative and immediate past president of the Youth Committee of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas, the regional body of the International Trade Union Confederation.



Patrice Lawrence (@LawrencePatrice)

Patrice Lawrence is the National Policy & Advocacy Director for the UndocuBlack Network where she leads the network's advocacy efforts on immigrants' rights, workers rights, and racial justice. Greatly committed to social, racial, gender and immigration justice, Lawrence works along with other civil rights groups, organizations, elected officials, and community members with the goals of transforming the realities of Black undocumented people. Federal, State and local policies from the DREAM Act to Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to municipal IDs have real significance for human beings in their communities. It is time that those directly impacted lead the charge on what they need to thrive. There is no power like people power and the might of the UndocuBlack Network is a testament to that. Lawrence is a Jamaican, a Jamerican and a lover of life. She firmly believes that the sum of one's experiences makes them whole regardless of their immigration status.

Greisa Martinez (@Grei_sa)

Greisa Martinez Rosas is deputy executive director at United We Dream. United We Dream (UWD) is a national nonpartisan, membership-based organization of over 100,000 immigrant youth and allies. Led by its 55 affiliate organizations in 26 states, UWD advocates for the dignity and fair treatment of undocumented immigrant youth and their families.

Originally from Hidalgo, Mexico, Martinez came to the U.S. with her family at a young age as an undocumented immigrant. She has organized immigrant youth, students and workers for the passage of pro-immigrant policies at the local, state and national level for the past 10 years. She studied at Texas A&M University. Martinez cares deeply about the empowerment of our communities, and is committed to fighting for Social Justice for all.

Shamsun Nahar

Shamsun Nahar is a Youth Program Site Manager at the Center for Pan Asian Community Services (CPACS). She earned a Bachelor of Arts, Applied Linguistics from Georgia State University. Her philosophy is that education and empowerment come hand in hand. With this mindset instilled in her from a young age, Shamsun Nahar (Shams) emigrated from Bangladesh to NYC, then to Atlanta in search of such empowerment. She's shared this value while teaching English to refugee girls, and while working with numerous faith based organizations in the com-



munity. She's had an incredibly fulfilling time working closely with immigrants, refugees, and the underserved with the Center for Pan Asian Community Services (CPACS), leading youth programs, and working as an advocate for the community. She's worked with violence prevention, sex education, academic enrichment, career exploration, and advocacy in her time at CPACS. Being mistaken for one of the youth participants is almost part of her job description. One of her favorite parts of her work is to watch students not just academically excel, but to become inspired to civically engage the community, and keep the momentum going for youth involvement in matters outside the classroom. When she's not working, she can be found hiking in the woods, at various waterfalls, and exploring caves, like the woodland creature that she is.

Advancing Justice in Schools: Where Do We Go From Here? (MPR B&C)

Kristen Harper (Moderator, @KHarper_edulove)

Kristen Harper brings to Child Trends a wealth of expertise in how to utilize research to drive policy decisionmaking and promote better outcomes for youth. In addition to serving as a strategic advisor to existing Child Trends work to help improve the policy relevance of our products, she looks forward to building a portfolio of work around racial and ethnic disparities in education, special education, supportive school climates, school discipline, school-based interactions with law enforcement, and juvenile justice.

Harper comes to Child Trends after serving seven years in the U.S. Department of Education, where she was a chief architect of the agency's efforts to improve conditions for learning. Most recently, Harper was Senior Policy Advisor for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, working to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the identification, placement, and discipline of children with disabilities. Prior to her work in federal education policy, Kristen provided consultation to an after school volunteer organization in Cambridge, MD and data support for a character education program for middle and high school girls in Washington, D.C.

Harper has an undergraduate degree in political science from Loyola College in Maryland, and a masters' degree in education policy and administration from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Elizabeth Olsson (@eolssonldf)

Elizabeth Olsson serves as senior policy associate at LDF. In that capacity, she identifies, develops and advances legislative and policy reforms, with a special concentration on education equity. Olsson partners with federal and state-based coalitions, including the Dignity in Schools Campaign, to ensure the fair and effective implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015.

Previously, Olsson was manager of policy and advocacy for Internationals Network for Public Schools, where she was responsible for leading advocacy initiatives to promote educational equity for immigrant English language learners. Prior to her work with Internationals Network, Olsson served as the policy coordinator for ExpandED Schools. While there, she advocated for legislative and policy reforms to improve access to high-quality educational opportunities for low-income students of color. She also served as Elementary After-School Program Manager for Harlem Children's Zone and previously worked as a middle school English teacher. Olsson is a graduate of the New York University Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and Pace University School of Education.

Diane Smith Howard (@Dianesmithhoward)

A litigator with 20 years of experience in juvenile and education law, Diane Smith Howard's work at NDRN focuses on conditions for youth in the juvenile justice system and child welfare systems. In addition, she works on issues related to adults with disabilities in the criminal justice system, and children and youth with disabilities that impact behavior in the public education system. Smith Howard provides training and technical assistance to the P&A network on these issues. She has worked for NDRN's Maine and Michigan affiliates, providing direct service to clients.

Savina Tapia (@BSACbuzz)

Savina Tapia is currently a sophomore studying Law and Society with a Minor in Education Studies at American University. Before recently moving to Washington, D.C., Tapia spent her entire life in Boston, MA. Tapia has been a member of the Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) for over 4 years, and served as the sole Student Representative to the Boston School Committee. The Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) is a group of high school students, co-administered by Youth on Board and Boston Public Schools, that protect and advocate for the voices of students in the BPS system. BSAC empowers the student body



to express their opinions regarding educational policy changes, and ensures that students are included in decision and policy-making which impacts their lives and educational experiences. Tapia began her work through BSAC during their “Keep the Cap” campaign, which focused on keeping the instituted cap on the amount of charter schools in Boston. She is now an alumni staff member for BSAC and Youth on Board and primarily focuses her efforts and research on the School to Prison Pipeline and Educational Development in the U.S.

Marlyn Tillman (@GwinnettSToPP)

Marlyn Tillman has been a public education advocate for many years. After moving to Georgia and seeing how her oldest son was targeted in school, Tillman took action and co-founded Gwinnett Parent Coalition to Dismantle the School to Prison Pipeline (Gwinnett SToPP), a parent-led community-centered advocacy group focused on reversing the School to Prison Pipeline (STPP) trend. Gwinnett SToPP accomplishes its work by empowering parents and youth to advocate for policy changes that support the dismantling of the school to prison pipeline in Gwinnett County and increasing public awareness of the STPP through community education. Tillman is a member of Gwinnett County Public Schools GEMS curriculum review committee, serves on the advisory board for Child Trends Healthy School Environments Initiative and formerly served on the steering committee of the national Dignity in Schools Campaign and the Gwinnett County Human Relations Commission. Tillman was actively involved in the U.S. Department of Education’s Rethink Discipline campaign, which was designed to help schools effectively create positive school climates. Tillman is also the former STPP Project Director for the ACLU of Georgia.

Campus Disconnections: The Student of Color College Experience (Classroom #318)

Joseline Garcia (Moderator)

Joseline Garcia currently serves as the president of the United States Student Association (USSA), the oldest and largest student organization in the country. She is the daughter of Mexican, Guatemalan immigrants, a sister of two younger brothers, and a first-generation alumni of the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB). Her organizing career began at UCSB when she attended a Student of Color Conference hosted by her Statewide Student Association. She led multiple campaigns throughout her two years as a board member of USSA, including State of Emergency, Free Higher Ed, and organized the largest Million Student



March in the country where over 1,500 individuals participated. In her role as Student Advocate General, an executive position in UCSB's student government, she lead a historic campaign where the Latino student community created demands to increase the recruitment and retention of their community on campus. After an 8 hour meeting with the Chancellor and other administrative executives, all demands were signed which lead to the establishment of a Central American Department and major, Latinx Parent Weekend, and a Campus Mural that celebrates the Latinx community. In her role as president, she continues to fight for students on a national and federal level by uplifting local community efforts onto a national platform, getting arrested in front of New York's Trump Tower, leading direct actions in Washington, D.C. against Congress, acting as the primary student negotiator in the Department of Education's Borrower Defense Negotiated Rulemaking, amongst other things. Her experiences have taught her to channel her passion and anger into grassroots organizing and work towards reproducing justice for communities who are exploited by a capitalist society.

Dr. Rosa M. García

Rosa M. García is a senior policy analyst with CLASP's Center for Postsecondary and Economic Success, where she works to expand access to postsecondary opportunities and career pathways for low-income students, low-skilled adults, students of color, and immigrants. Rosa also works across CLASP's policy teams to help advance CLASP's racial equity agenda.

Prior to joining CLASP, Garcia worked to promote access, affordability, equity and diversity, and student success in higher education through her roles as a public servant and advocate at the federal, state, and local level. Her previous positions include deputy chief of staff/legislative director to a senior member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, executive director of legislative affairs at the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), special assistant/legislative aide to a County Councilmember in Montgomery County, Maryland and a gubernatorial appointment to the Maryland State Board of Education. Garcia has also worked at the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), the U.S. Census Bureau, and the Morris K. Udall Foundation.

Rosa received her undergraduate degree in History and Latin American Studies at Wesleyan University. She holds master's degrees from Teachers College, Columbia University; the University of California at Los Angeles; and Baruch College,

City University of New York. In 2015, she completed a Doctor of Education from the University of Pennsylvania’s Graduate School of Education. Rosa is a recipient of the Mellon Fellows in Teaching Program, the National Urban Fellows Program, and the Rawlings Leadership Fellowship. Rosa was born in East Los Angeles and is a proud daughter of Mexican immigrants.

Adaku Onyeka-Crawford

Adaku Onyeka-Crawford is senior counsel for education at the National Women’s Law Center (NWLC). Her work focuses on promoting educational attainment and empowerment for girls and women—particularly for marginalized girls, pregnant and parenting students, and girls of color. She also advocates for policies that fight sexual harassment and violence in school. Before joining NWLC as a fellow, Onyeka-Crawford received her J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center and her B.S. in Journalism from Northwestern University. She spent her law school summers at Young Invincibles and the National School Boards Association. Before law school, she helped connect low-income women and families to housing, job training, and summer learning programs at the Chicago Housing Authority.

Joëlle Simeu

Joëlle Simeu is a sophomore Questbridge Scholar pursuing a degree in English and Politics at Washington and Lee University. Joëlle is a prominent leader at Washington and Lee—she is a Justice on the Student Judicial Council, a member of the Student Association of Black Unity, and a strong advocate for change on her campus. Throughout her college experience, Joëlle has worked with faculty and administrators through her school’s University Committee on Campus Climate and Inclusiveness (UCICC) to improve the college experience of underrepresented students on campus. Joëlle hopes to enter a career in advocacy work and public policy.

Joshua Tang (@j0shuatang)

Joshua Tang was a campus leader when *Fisher v. The University of Texas at Austin* was first heard by the United States Supreme Court in 2012. Joshua organized a campus coalition in support of UT’s consideration of race in admissions. He worked closely with the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, The Leadership Conference Education Fund, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, and NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. The Leadership Conference invited Tang to speak at their rally held on the steps of the Supreme Court during *Fisher I*.

Joshua became the first person in his family to earn a college degree when he graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Government in 2014. Joshua is currently an associate at JPMorgan Chase & Co. in New York, New York. He is working towards law school admissions with hopes of advocating for underprivileged children.

Early Childhood Education: Setting up Our Children for Success (MPR A)

Cemeré James (Moderator, @NBCDICemere)

Cemeré James is the vice president of policy at the National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI). In this role, she leads advocacy work at the national level developing and implementing strategies to influence and shape government policies and raise public awareness on issues that impact Black children's education and overall health and wellbeing. James also provides technical assistance and training to NBCDI's National Affiliate Network in advocating for policy solutions at the state and local levels.

Prior to joining NBCDI, James was a senior policy analyst at the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP). She was also Lead Operations Specialist at Illinois Department of Human Service and, from 2009-2011, an inaugural fellow in the Illinois Early Childhood Fellows Program. James holds an MPP degree from University of Chicago and a Master of Industrial Engineering and Management Science degree from Northwestern University, as well as a bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering from Florida A&M University.

Barbara Bowman (@barbara_bbowman)

Barbara Taylor Bowman is the Irving B. Harris Professor of Child Development at Erikson Institute. She is one of the Institute's founders and served as its president from 1994 to 2001. She has over 50 publications. Bowman was Chief Officer for Early Childhood Education at the Chicago Public Schools from 2004 to 2012 and consultant to the U.S. Department of Education in 2009. She has served on professional boards and committees, including the boards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, of which she was President (1980-82), the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (1997-2002), panels for the National Research Council (she chaired the committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy) and served on the President's Commission for Educational Excellence for African Americans. Honors include six honorary doctorates. At present, she is



a member of the Illinois Early Learning Council, and on the boards of the Chicago Public Library, Great Books Foundation, and Erikson Institute.

Denise Marshall (@marshald_denise)

Denise Marshall has been the executive director of the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates (COPAA) since 2005. She graduated from Johns Hopkins University with a Master of Science in Applied Behavioral Science. Marshall has 30 years' experience in the field of disabilities in a variety of support, management, and advocacy capacities. She has a wealth of non-profit association management experience and is a dynamic trainer, experienced in leading sessions for participants of diverse abilities and experience levels. Prior to becoming the executive director of COPAA Denise was the director of training and educational Outreach for the national organization TASH from 1995-2005, the program manager and trainer for Maryland Leaders in Disability Policy; and a positive behavior support specialist and Director of the National Training Center for The Kennedy Krieger Institute in Maryland among other consulting and management positions. Marshall's specific areas of interest are civil right to quality education, positive behavioral supports, prevention and reduction in the use of restraints, seclusion and aversive techniques, family supports, grassroots advocacy, self-advocacy, and experiential learning.

Dr. Bob Stechuk

Robert Stechuk, Ph.D., is the director of early childhood education programs at UnidosUS (formerly the National Council of La Raza) in Washington, DC. He brings an extensive knowledge of child development, early literacy, cultural diversity, and dual language development to his work at UnidosUS, as well as first-hand experience with research and program administration. He works to build capacity among early childhood education programs serving Latino children through the development of research-to-practice materials and advocacy efforts.

Prior to joining UnidosUS, Stechuk was the co-director of the Office of Head Start National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness (NCCLR). He was the lead author of *Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs Serving Children Ages Birth to Five*. Stechuk teaches at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, including courses on cognitive development, language development, and early literacy. He holds an M. Ed. in early childhood special education and a Ph. D. in child development and early literacy from George Mason University.



Present in the Classroom: Educators of Color and Native Educators on Creating Racial Justice in Education (MPR B&C)

Dr. Ashley Griffin (Moderator, @DrAshleyGriffin)

As interim director of P-12 research at The Education Trust, Ashley Griffin conducts primary and secondary research to inform decision-makers at the national, state, and local levels and to generate knowledge that can help practitioners raise achievement and close gaps for students of color and low-income students. Prior to joining Ed Trust, Griffin worked as a research and evaluation analyst on projects to inform program implementation and instruction at the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA). Previously, she served as the director of research and evaluation at Capstone Institute at Howard University. Her work examined engineering education teaching strategies and the intersection of culture, context, motivation, engagement, and cognition for African-American students. Griffin has presented numerous papers, both nationally and internationally, on issues surrounding African American achievement for students grades P-16, and serves as a reviewer for The Journal of Negro Education.

A native of Ohio, Griffin holds doctoral and master's degrees in developmental psychology from Howard University, with a concentration in educational psychology and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Georgetown University.

Becky McCammon

Becky McCammon is the Restorative Practice Program Coordinator for St. Paul Public Schools and the Saint Paul Federation of Teachers, supporting 9 restorative practice pilot site schools. A secondary English and Language Arts teacher for 14 years, Becky has more recently been a learner and leader as a Peer Assistance and Review Consulting Teacher and a facilitator of Beyond Diversity- a two day racial equity training for educators. She currently serves as the Secretary for her local union. Both her 8 year old daughter and 11 year son attend St. Paul Public Schools.

Tommy Ramirez

Tommy Valentino Ramirez is director of MAAC Community Charter School in Chula Vista, an alternative high school serving marginalized students ages 14-24 near the US/Mexico Border in Chula Vista, California. Tommy created culturally inclusive leadership development and transformative justice programs at MCCS, where he has worked since its inception in 2001. With a background in grassroots

youth organizing, he has presented at various conferences throughout the nation, has trained multiple alternative schools, involvement with Peace and Dignity Journeys, and serves on multiple Boards. Currently President of the Board of Trustees for the Centro Cultural de la Raza in San Diego, one of the oldest Chicano cultural centers and art gallery that preserves, promotes, and educates about Chicano, Mexican, Latino, and Indigenous culture through art, cultural activities and events since 1971. He was selected by UnidosUS (formerly National Council of La Raza) as a 2015 National Institute for Latino School Leaders Fellow. Other honors include the 2015 Latino Civic Leader of the Year by the San Diego Union Tribune, the Cesar Chavez Alumni of the Year by UCSD.

Jose Vilson (@TheJLV)

José Luis Vilson is a math educator, blogger, speaker, and activist in New York City, NY. He is the author of *This Is Not A Test: A New Narrative on Race, Class, and Education*, and has spoken about education, math, and race for a number of organizations and publications, including *The New York Times*, *Education Week*, *The Guardian*, *Al Jazeera America*, *Huffington Post*, *EduTopia*, *GOOD*, and *El Diario / La Prensa*, NY. He is the founder of EduColor, a Math for America fellow and a National Board Certified teacher.

Queering the Classroom: How the American Education System Can Better Serve LGBTQ Students (Classroom #318)

Isaiah Wilson (Moderator, @LiveFree1867)

Isaiah R. Wilson is the director of external affairs for the National Black Justice Coalition (NBJC), where he is focused on the public policy implications of critical issues for Black LGBTQ and same gender loving (SGL) people. His issue areas include: health and wellness; HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention; safe and inclusive schools; employment non-discrimination; relationship recognition; anti-violence; and economic justice. Wilson leads the organization’s efforts to advocate for sound policy solutions that empower Black LGBTQ/SGL people in the United States, and plays an integral role in the development of NBJC’s rapid response messaging strategy that speaks to the diverse needs of its constituency at the intersection of racial justice and LGBTQ equality. His ultimate role as the external affairs director is to authentically integrate Black LGBTQ/SGL people’s challenges into the greater dialogue within African American communities in order to spur a more inclusive racial justice movement.

Wilson is a graduate of Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA and plans to pursue a doctoral degree in political science in the near future. He currently resides in Washington, DC.

Paul Castillo (@PaulCastilloJD)

Paul D. Castillo is a senior attorney and the students’ rights strategist for Lambda Legal, the oldest and largest national legal organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of LGBT people and individuals living with HIV through impact litigation, public policy and education. His legal docket and advocacy work spans a broad range of issues, including education, workplace fairness, and family relationships. He was a member of the legal team in the landmark case *Obergefell v Hodges*, which secured the freedom to marry for same-sex couples nationwide. Castillo currently represents a transgender high school student in Florida denied access to sex-separated facilities consistent with his gender identity in *Adams v. St. Johns County School Board*—the first case of its kind to go to trial.

Castillo maintains a proud record of serving students, LGBTQI people, communities of color and other individuals who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Prior to joining Lambda Legal, Castillo enforced federal civil rights statutes for the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

Kory Masen

Kory Masen is a transgender Latino from Tijuana, Mexico. As the racial and economic justice policy advocate at the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) he helps shape the organization’s advocacy and policy work for transgender people of color and those with low or no-income. He handles issues related to sex work, immigration and the criminal justice system. Masen’s background is in community organizing, and previous to his work at NCTE he headed Latinx and AAPI outreach for the Affordable Care Act at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Sarah McBride (@SarahEMcBride)

Sarah McBride is the national press secretary for the Human Rights Campaign and author of *Tomorrow Will Be Different: Love, Loss, and the Fight for Trans Equality*.

In 2012, McBride made national headlines when she came out as transgender while serving as student body president at American University. A native of Wilmington, Delaware, she serves on the Board of Directors of Equality Delaware and helped lead the successful effort to add gender identity and expression to her state’s nondiscrimination and hate-crimes laws. In 2016, she spoke at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia.

Sarah Munshi (@GLSENPolicy)

Sarah Munshi works at GLSEN, a leading national education organization dedicated to addressing lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) issues in K-12 schools as their state and district policy manager. In this position, she works to develop and maintain relationships with state legislators, school boards, government officials and national education organizations. She received her Master of Public Policy from University of Chicago and Bachelor of Science from University of Texas. She has previously worked for Congressman Gregory Meeks as deputy press secretary and with District of Columbia Public Schools in their Community Engagement Initiatives.

Parent Advocates: Effectively Engaging Parents to Be at the Forefront (MPR A)

Dr. Lynn Jennings (Moderator, @LynnJenningsPhD)

As Ed Trust’s director of national and state partnerships, Jennings leads a dynamic team that builds and strengthens relationships with organizations and communities that care deeply about educational justice. She works to increase the political and public will to act on equity issues, from preschool through higher education.

Jennings previously served as the senior legislative affairs associate at the Ed Trust. Before that, she worked for the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, where she managed the foundation’s educational and professional development programs.

Prior to entering the education policy world, She taught English, African American studies, and women’s studies courses at varied institutions of higher education including Spelman College, Columbia College Chicago, and University of Wisconsin-Madison. She earned a B.A. in English from Spelman College and her Ph.D. in English from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Jennings and her husband have two, school-aged sons and live in Washington, D.C.

Patrice Barlow

Patrice Holton Barlow has performed educational consulting for states, schools, and organizations for the last 8 years. With a strong understanding of educational expectations and policies, Barlow is assisting in the development of a foundational model that will successfully support individuals transitioning from K-12 into industry certifications and career readiness. A 2011-12 Teacher-of-the-Year, Barlow is committed to teaching the fundamentals of learning, empowering students to succeed, and aligning creative, project-based academic enrichment that reaches every student's learning style and ability. Barlow is known for her heavy focus on standards-based enrichment, opportunities for students, parent and community engagement, academic coaching, and promoting training aligned to the 21st Century Work Skills. Barlow's overarching role as the Chief Academic Officer and Community Relations Director for the non-profit Saving Our Sons & Sisters International (SOSSI), has allowed her the vision and strategic partners needed to make her roles in these collaborations possible. Through her experiences, Barlow works to inform and gain stakeholder and partner support for education equity, work readiness, job placement, and overall mental health and wellness.

Cindy Liu

Cindy Liu likes to say, she 'advocates like a mother' and would never change her children for the world, but rather, change the world for her children. She and her husband are raising two beautiful children, one with down syndrome. She is devoted to fighting the bigotry of low expectations on every front. When she is not focused on her social enterprise, Black Sheep Food Co-Op, or being slave to her young kids, she advocates nationally and locally for policy and cultural changes that benefit individuals with disabilities. She's been invited to speak on the national stage and with Congressional reps. She's even coined the phrase "disability fatigue" in a TEDx talk, called "Is She Smart." In her down time, Liu is a whisky nerd, enjoys photography, cooking with her husband and sleeping-in whenever possible. Liu graduated with an MBA from Thunderbird, a B.A. from UC Riverside, and held brand management positions with Disney Consumer Products, Activision and Munchkin Inc. She recently completed an Executive Education program in Social Entrepreneurship at Stanford University.



Samuel L. Radford, III (@brothersam)

Samuel L. Radford, III, currently serves as President of the District Parent Coordinating Council of Buffalo (DPCC), a duly recognized organization responsible for representing parent interests within the Buffalo Public School District. He is also a Fellow for the Weiss Institute, the research and consultation arm of the Say Yes to Education Foundation, where he works with communities around the country who have committed to a pathway for post secondary education completion for all their students. As a matter of public policy, Mr. Radford's interests arise at the intersection of parent engagement, student academic achievement and district, state and national level education policy.

He is the recipient of many community awards including: the Buffalo's Umoja Man of the Year Award, Association of Black Social Workers Community Service Award, 1490 Black Achievers Award, Phi Beta Sigma Education Community Service Award, Mayor's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Award, and the Buffalo News 2011 Citizen of the Year Award.

Araceli Simeón

Araceli Simeón manages the Parent Organization Network, a project which strengthens the abilities of culturally diverse and underserved parents to be trainers and leaders, supports their local initiatives and advocacy efforts, and connects them to a broader network of advocates so together they can effect long-term systemic changes resulting in high quality education for all.

Prior to PON, Araceli worked for a decade at MALDEF directing its national Parent School Partnership (PSP) program that trains parents to become advocates for their children. In March 2016, Simeón was appointed by the State Board of Education to the California Practitioners Advisory Group to provide input as the state establishes a single coherent accountability system. She is also a member of the Ad Hoc Family Engagement Group convened by the California Department of Education to inform statewide family engagement initiatives and improve technical assistance to local educational agencies. She graduated from the California State Polytechnic University, at Pomona, received her master's degree in Public Policy from the University of Southern California and is mom to two daughters.

Resourcing for Excellence: Getting All Our Kids What They Need to Succeed (MPR B&C)



Tyler Lewis (Moderator, @civilrightsorg)

Tyler Lewis is the director of messaging and project management at The Leadership Conference Education Fund and The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. In this role, he is responsible for developing the strategic communications and messaging goals for The Leadership Conference and The Education Fund. He also manages the organizations' brand identity in all public communications and is a speechwriter.

Before joining The Leadership Conference and The Education Fund, Mr. Lewis worked in communications at Pre-K Now, a public education and advocacy organization advancing high quality, voluntary pre-kindergarten for all, where he helped to develop the organization's online campaigns and media strategies. Mr. Lewis graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Creative Writing from Carnegie Mellon University in 2002.

Sheila Armstrong (@CookieArmstron)

Sheila E. Armstrong is a single mother of two boys attending the School District of Philadelphia. She grew up in a home similar to many Americans: poverty stricken, low-income, a prevalence of addiction to alcohol & drugs, high dropout rates, poor living conditions. While she faced many hardships, she did not allow those hardships to hinder her involvement with her children's education.

"As a parent and woman of faith, I have a moral obligation to be engaged in my children's education and work with everyone in my city and state to ensure we are creating and implementing strategies that will allow ALL children achieve academic success regardless of their zip code."

Armstrong is a community organizer for POWER's Education Campaign (www.powerinterfaith.org) and among her education victories was the passage of the 2016 PA Fair Funding Formula and the return of the School District of Philadelphia to local control. Armstrong is a member of the State Parent Advisory Council (www.spac.k12.pa.us) and a plaintiff in the education funding lawsuit *William Penn School District vs PA Department of Education*.

Marisa Bono

Marisa Bono is Chief of Policy to San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg, where she advises the Mayor and oversees the implementation of his policy agenda, includ-



ing priorities in education, transportation, housing, and public safety.

Before joining the Mayor’s office, Ms. Bono served as Southwest Regional Counsel for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), the nation’s premier Latino civil rights law firm. In that capacity she directed the office’s litigation and policy work, and became a leading civil rights litigator and advocate, specifically in the areas of education and immigrants’ rights.

In August of 2017 she completed an eight-week trial as lead counsel in *Martinez v. New Mexico*, the first adequacy case in the State’s history. She has tried school funding cases in Texas, Colorado, and New Mexico.

Ms. Bono received her bachelor’s degree from Rice University, and earned her J.D. and M.P.P. from the University of Michigan. She has testified in front of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and the Texas legislature, and has presented by invitation at law schools, universities, and conferences across the country.

Joe Rogers (@eduequity)

Joe Rogers is Director of Public Engagement and a Senior Researcher at the Center for Educational Equity (CEE) at Teachers College, Columbia University, where he leads CEE’s student- and parent-centered Know Your Educational Rights initiative, develops strategic relationships for policy reform, and conducts school-based research to assess students’ access to required learning opportunities.

Previously, he served as Director of Policy and Civic Engagement with Education Voters of New York and as a Program Associate in Teaching and Learning at New Visions for Public Schools, where he co-facilitated a program that strengthened school library programs throughout New York City. After beginning a career in education as an AmeriCorps VISTA with Georgetown University’s Volunteer and Public Service Center, he went on to launch and manage a Literacy*AmeriCorps program for a coalition of community-based adult, child, and family literacy service providers in Washington, D.C.

Rogers holds a master’s degree in education leadership, policy, and politics from Teachers College, Columbia University, and a bachelor’s degree in psychology from The George Washington University.

**In Our Own Voices: Welcoming People With Disabilities in All Schools
(Classroom #318)**

Dr. Adai Tefera (Moderator)

Adai Tefera (Ph.D.) is an assistant professor at Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Education. Her research focuses on education reform efforts aimed at improving educational equity for nondominant learners with disabilities. She focuses specifically on examining how equity-oriented policies and reform efforts aimed at improving the opportunities and outcomes of learners with disabilities travel to school districts, schools, and classrooms, and how they become enacted in practice. The second strand of her research focuses on the role of knowledge mobilization in education and efforts to build collaborative partnerships with educational practitioners and policy makers to improve the impact of educational research. She is particularly interested in the relationship between knowledge mobilization and education research in enhancing educational equity and inclusion by engaging with diverse audiences, including youth, community organizations, families, and policy makers. Her commitment to education equity in research, policy, and practice is inspired by her work in schools serving predominately nondominant communities and students in California, New Mexico, Arizona, and Virginia, as well as working as an education fellow with the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation.

Lydia X. Z. Brown (@autistichoya)

Lydia X. Z. Brown is a disability justice advocate, organizer, and writer who has focused on violence against multiply-marginalized disabled people, especially institutionalization, incarceration, and policing. Brown recently completed a term as Chairperson of the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council. In collaboration with E. Ashkenazy and Morénike Giwa-Onaiwu, Brown is the lead editor of *All the Weight of Our Dreams*, the first anthology by autistic people of color. They also designed and taught a course on critical disability theory, policy, and social movements as a Visiting Lecturer at Tufts University.

Brown has been honored by the White House, Washington Peace Center, Pacific Standard, Mic, National Council on Independent Living, Disability Policy Consortium of Massachusetts, National Association for Law Placement/Public Service Jobs Directory, Society for Disability Studies, and American Association of People with Disabilities. Their work has been featured in many scholarly and community

publications. After graduating from Northeastern University School of Law as a Public Interest Law Scholar, Brown will join the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law as a justice catalyst fellow.

Jocelyn Hanrath

Jocelyn Hanrath is a Vice President's Honor Roll student at Highline Community College. She is a collegiate soccer player who will attend Lamar University in the Fall of 2018 majoring in psychology. Hanrath was the 2016 Winner of the Allegra Ford Thomas Scholarship from NCLD. She is also the recipient of the Heart of a Marine Scholarship, the Susan B Madsen Service Scholarship, and the Coach K Scholarship. She has worked as a peer mentor in high school and college with those who have disabilities. She has been to Washington, D.C. to advocate for those with Dyslexia. Hanrath lives in Salt Lake City with her mother.

Maria (Conchita) Hernandez Legorreta (@conchitahdz)

Maria (Conchita) Hernandez Legorreta was born in Mexico and grew up in California. Conchita received her Bachelor's degree from Saint Mary's College of California, majoring in International Studies, Spanish, and History. She then went on to Louisiana Tech University where she received her Master's in Teaching with a focus on teaching blind students. She is currently a Doctoral student at George Washington University pursuing a degree in Special Education. Conchita has been the director of the NFB BELL Academy in Washington DC for the past five years. Conchita is the founder and Chair of METAS (Mentoring Engaging and Teaching All Students) a non-profit organization that trains educators in Latin America that work with blind/low vision students and other disabilities. Conchita is also a co-founder of the National Coalition of Latinx with Disabilities that seeks to amplify the voices of disabled Latinx in the disability rights movement. Currently, Conchita works at a public school in Washington, D.C. as a teacher of blind students.