



Speaker Bios Friday, April 13

Carl Ackerman, *Director, The Clarence T. C. Ching PUEO Program, Punahou School*

Carl Ackerman is the Director of the Clarence T. C. Ching PUEO Program at Punahou School. Involved with PUEO for over a decade, Carl also works extensively in the Honolulu community and is on the Board of Directors of several nonprofits, including Youth Service Hawaii, the Honolulu YMCA, and the Key Project.

Ielaf Altoma, *Ed.M. Candidate and Co-Chair, UndocuAllies Initiative, Harvard Graduate School of Education*

Born in Baghdad, Iraq, Ielaf Altoma immigrated to the United States as a refugee with her family. While earning a bachelor's degree in sociology and education at UC Santa Barbara, Ielaf found her passion for helping other first generation, low-income students of color navigate the college process. Ielaf is pursuing a master's degree in education in prevention science and practice at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where she is also involved with the UndocuAllies Initiative.

Clara Baron-Hyppolite, *College Completion Manager, College Track New Orleans*

Clara Baron-Hyppolite serves as the College Completion Manager at College Track New Orleans. Prior to joining College Track, Clara was the founder and executive director of Bridge the Gap, a nonprofit after-school program that helps high-performing, low-income students through the selective admissions process. Clara holds a master's degree in mental health counseling and behavioral medicine from the Boston University School of Medicine and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Carnegie Mellon University.

Nicole Batt, *Director of the Office of Engagement, University of Utah*

Nicole Batt is the Director of the Office of Engagement at the University of Utah. Nicole holds a bachelor's degree in communications, a master's degree in public administration, and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in political science at the University of Utah.

Akil Bello, *Director of Equity and Access, The Princeton Review*

Akil Bello is the Director of Equity and Access for The Princeton Review. Akil has worked in test prep for all major admissions tests for over 25 years, ran his own test prep company for a decade, and has focused on removing barriers for underserved students seeking access to higher education for over 15 years. Akil holds a bachelor's degree of architecture from the Pratt Institute.

Paul Bonitto, *Associate Director, Undergraduate Admission, National AHANA Recruitment, Boston College*

Paul Bonitto has spent 25 years in admissions, and currently recruits and conducts outreach to underrepresented students as the Associate Director of Undergraduate Admission and National AHANA Recruitment for Boston College. Paul was the founder and lead facilitator of the National Symposium for Multicultural Recruitment, NEACAC College Admission Professional of the Year (2012), and two-time past president of NECBAC.

Jessica Brady, *Career Fluency Programs Manager, The Opportunity Network*

As the Career Fluency® Programs Manager at The Opportunity Network, Jessica Brady works alongside the Director of Partnerships and Training and Program Director to manage Career Fluency® best practices for both the OppNet Prep program and OppNet Partnerships. Prior to joining OppNet, Jessica worked at tech company Stack Overflow and at cable networks WE TV in and Bravo. Jessica received her B.S. in journalism from Northwestern University.

Celishia Bussey, *Coordinator and Advisor, Project Excite, Northwestern University*

Celishia Bussey is a Coordinator and Advisor for Project Excite and is also a therapist in private practice. Celishia has a bachelor's degree in psychology and African and Afro-American studies from Washington University in St. Louis, and a master's degree in human services and counseling from DePaul University.

Alma Valverde Campos, *Ed.M. Candidate and Co-Chair, UndocuAllies Initiative, Harvard Graduate School of Education*

Alma Valverde Campos was born in Mexico City. In 2003, Alma moved to the United States, where her life has been shaped by the challenges that arise from leaving one's natal country and obstacles first generation immigrants face. Alma is very involved with advocacy for undocumented students. After receiving an Ed.M. in education policy and management from Harvard Graduate School of Education, Alma will bring the lessons she has learned back to her community and continue advocating for undocumented students. Alma received her B.F.A. and B.A. in political science from Sonoma State University.

Adonica Duggan, *Managing Director of External Affairs, New Schools for Baton Rouge*

Adonica Duggan is the Managing Director of External Affairs at New Schools for Baton Rouge. Previously, Adonica spent 12 years with the Zachary Community School District, and then served for two years as the chief of communications and public relations for East Baton Rouge Parish School System. Adonica is a graduate of the Manship School of Mass Communication at Louisiana State University and a member of the Manship School Alumni Board.

Lorna Smith, *Chief Executive Officer, Horizons National*

Lorna Smith joined Horizons National in 2004 and became Chief Executive Officer in 2007. Under her leadership, the organization has grown from 13 sites to more than 50 in 18 states. Lorna's vision for continued expansion of the Horizons network across the country is driven by her commitment to social justice. Lorna holds a B.A. from Wellesley College, an M.B.A. from Cornell University, and completed a fellowship at Stanford University's Executive Program for Nonprofit Leaders.

Amanda Sommerfeld Case, *Assistant Professor, Washington College*

Amanda Sommerfeld Case is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland, and serves as Director of HOYAS CPIP, a college preparatory program for lower-income youth. Amanda previously worked as an assistant professor at Wayne State University and as a clinical assistant professor at Boston University. Amanda has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Allegheny College, a master's degree in counseling psychology from Teachers College, Columbia University, and a doctoral degree from University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Jamal Encalade, *Project Coordinator, KIPP New Orleans Schools*

Jamal Encalade is a Project Coordinator at KIPP New Orleans Schools and also an Alumnus of KIPP New Orleans. The newest member of the KIPP New Orleans Schools' Development and KIPP Through College Teams, Jamal works to ensure the experiences and voices of the students, families, and communities are represented. Jamal graduated from Spring Hill College with a Sociology degree in 2017.

Rachel Everitt, *Assistant Director, Utah College Advising Corps, University of Utah*

Rachel Everitt is the Assistant Director for the Utah College Advising Corps. Rachel holds a bachelor's degree in social science and secondary education from Westminster College and master's degree in public administration from the University of Utah.

Lauren Flinn, *Director of Postsecondary Support, Excel Academy Charter Schools*

Lauren Flinn is the Director of Postsecondary Support for Excel Academy Charter Schools in Boston, Massachusetts. Lauren previously served as the assistant director of the McNair Scholars Program at UNC Chapel Hill. Lauren has a bachelor's degree in sociology from Bowdoin College and master's degree in higher education administration from Boston College.

Maria del Carmen Flores-Mills, *Senior Associate Dean of the College, Franklin & Marshall College*

Maria del Carmen Flores-Mills is the Senior Associate Dean of the College at Franklin & Marshall College, and former associate dean at Princeton University. She has also been named as the dean of students at Colgate University, effective June 4, 2018. Prior to her role at Franklin & Marshall, Maria spent 13 years at Princeton University. She holds a bachelor's degree in Spanish and education with distinction from Iowa State University and J.D. from the University of Iowa College of Law.

Alisa France, *Senior Program Coordinator, The Opportunity Network*

As the Senior Program Coordinator for College Success, Alisa France oversees programming to ensure Fellows successfully transition to and navigate college. Previously, Alisa served as the Career Fluency® program assistant and graduate program intern. She also served as a dual-department intern at the National Education Association and the government affairs assistant at Washington D.C.'s convention and visitors' bureau. Alisa holds an M.A. in education policy from Teachers College, Columbia University, and a B.A. in political science from Howard University.

Cassandra Geiger, *Director, Northwestern Academy for Chicago Public Schools*

Cassandra Geiger is the Director for the Northwestern Academy for Chicago Public Schools with Northwestern University in Chicago, Illinois. Cassandra previously served as a college counselor for the Schuler Scholar Program. Cassandra has a bachelor's degree in developmental psychology and a master's degree of education in counseling with a concentration in school counseling from DePaul University.

Toinette Gunn, *Vice President, Programs, Chicago Scholars*

Toinette Gunn serves as the Vice President of Programs for Chicago Scholars in Chicago, Illinois. Toinette is honored to have served at-risk youth and their families in the human services field and nonprofit sector for over 20 years. She holds a Ph.D. in counseling education from Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan.

Kate Hummel, *Associate Dean of Students, Lycoming College*

Kate Hummel is the Associate Dean of Students at Lycoming College in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. With a professional career spanning twenty years working in higher education, Kate has worked at Frostburg State University, Longwood University, Lycoming College, Lynchburg College, and Garrett College. Kate's focus and practice has always included advocating for processes and programs that are inclusive and offer equity to each student.

Anthony Abraham Jack, *Junior Fellow at the Harvard Society of Fellows and Assistant Professor of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education; and Shutzler Assistant Professor, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University*

Anthony Jack is a Junior Fellow at the Harvard Society of Fellows and Assistant Professor of Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He also holds the Shutzler Assistant Professorship at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. His research documents the overlooked diversity among lower-income undergraduates: the "[Doubly Disadvantaged](#)" (those who enter college from local, typically distressed public

high schools) and “[Privileged Poor](#)” (those who do so from boarding, day, and preparatory high schools). His scholarship has earned numerous awards. Dr. Jack has held fellowships from the Ford Foundation and the National Science Foundation and is a 2015 National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation Dissertation Fellow. The National Center for Institutional Diversity at the University of Michigan named him a 2016 Emerging Diversity Scholar.

Jeff Joseph, *Director, Minority Mentorship Programs and First-Year Experience, Massasoit Community College*

Jeff Joseph worked in admissions at Wheelock College before joining the staff at Massasoit Community College. Jeff built the Ubuntu Scholars program, a culturally relevant and connected leadership development program for Black and Latino men, which includes academic and personal support, mentoring, and connections with community members through a monthly breakfast program, among other events.

Raana Kashi, *Program Manager, College Access for All - Middle School, NYC Department of Education*

Raana Kashi is the Program Manager for College Access for All - Middle School in New York City. Raana previously served as the director of middle school initiatives for Henry Street Settlement in New York City. Raana has a bachelor’s degree in political science from Temple University and a master’s degree in social work from Columbia University.

Brad Kerwin, *Special Assistant to the Director, The Clarence T.C. Ching PUEO Program, Punahou School*

Brad Kerwin is the Testing Coordinator and Special Assistant to the Director of the Clarence T. C. Ching PUEO Program at Punahou School. He is also the Chief Executive Officer of The Reading Company, Inc., which serves as independent educational consultants for a number of schools throughout Hawaii.

Tazha King, *Senior Manager, College Partnerships, KIPP*

Tazha King specializes in program development, college persistence, and leveraging college partnerships to support underrepresented students on their journeys to and through college. Tazha oversees KIPP’s national college partnerships and collaborates with KIPP regions to optimize the value of all college partnerships for KIPPsters. As the former director of college completion and director of college advising and partnerships for College Track, Tazha established the college advising and college partnership initiatives in the southern region serving students attending 50+ different colleges and universities across the country.

Dennis Lacewell, *Senior Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Urban Prep Academies*

Dennis Lacewell is the Senior Director of Institutional Effectiveness of Urban Prep Academies in Chicago, Illinois. For nine years, Dennis served as the founding principal of Urban Prep Charter Academy for Young Men-Englewood campus, the nation’s first public charter high school for boys. Dennis has a bachelor’s degree in history and political science from Winston-Salem State University, a and master’s degrees in curriculum and instruction from North Carolina State University, and a master’s degree in supervision and leadership from National Louis University.

Troy Lazaro, *Assistant Director, Multicultural Recruitment, and Liaison to the Office of Multicultural Affairs, University of Massachusetts Lowell*

Troy Lazaro is the Assistant Director of Multicultural Recruitment and Liaison to the Office of Multicultural Affairs at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. His position allows him to advocate for positive change and equality along the lines of cultural and social diversity. Troy believes it is the responsibility of every college and university to support a healthy atmosphere toward diversity throughout the institution.

Demisha Lee, *Chief Education Officer, Daniel Murphy Scholarship Fund*

Demisha Lee is the Chief Education Officer at the Daniel Murphy Scholarship Fund. Demisha previously held the position of director of college counseling for the Schuler Scholar Program. Demisha has a bachelor's degree from Williams College and a master's degree in higher education from University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Meredith Lombardi, *Associate Director, Outreach and Education, The Common Application*

Meredith Lombardi is the Associate Director of Outreach and Education at The Common Application, where she engages with students and the counseling community to ensure Common App tools and resources are relevant and support college access initiatives. Prior to joining The Common App, Meredith worked as a high school counselor in Washington, DC and Georgia. Meredith holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from Emory University and a Master of Education from The University of Maryland, College Park.

Kara Maggiore, *Director of School Strategy, New Schools for Baton Rouge*

Kara Maggiore is the Director of School Strategy at New Schools for Baton Rouge. Kara previously served as a special education and intervention teacher and administrator in Jefferson Parish and KIPP New Orleans schools for nearly a decade.

Nicole Maloy, *Associate Dean of Equity and Access, Undergraduate Admissions, University of Pennsylvania*

Nicole Maloy is the Associate Dean of Equity and Access in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at her alma mater, the University of Pennsylvania. Nicole's previous role was director of multicultural outreach in Penn Alumni Relations, where she organized the university's first diversity conference for alumni. Nicole earned a Bachelor of Science from the Wharton School with a concentration in multinational marketing and a minor in French, and is currently a candidate for a Master of Science in nonprofit leadership from Penn's School of Social Policy & Practice.

Parastoo Massoumi, *Middle School College Planning Manager, College Access for All - Middle School, NYC Department of Education*

Parastoo Massoumi is a Middle School College Planning Manager for the College Access for All - Middle School initiative at the NYC Department of Education. She previously worked as the director of the middle school student success center at the Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation in Brooklyn. Parastoo holds a bachelor's degree in international relations from UC Davis and a master's degree in education administration and leadership from the University of the Pacific.

Erika McConduit, *President and Chief Executive Officer, Urban League of Louisiana*

Erika McConduit is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Urban League of Louisiana. Erika has served as a member of Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards' economic development transition team, on the Board of Supervisors for the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, and on numerous other committees. Previously, Erika was the Chief Operating Officer of the YWCA of White Plains and Central Westchester, New York. Erika graduated summa cum laude from Howard University, and cum laude from Loyola University School of Law in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Anna McCreight, *Partnerships Manager, The Opportunity Network*

As the Partnerships Manager, Anna McCreight leads the cultivation of new partners for OppNet's Career Fluency® Partnerships. Prior to joining OppNet, Anna served as the high school program coordinator with Student U, a college access and success organization working with students and families in the Durham Public Schools in North Carolina. Anna received a B.A. in journalism from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

James Murphy, *Director of National Outreach, The Princeton Review*

James Murphy is a writer on education and culture, and has nearly two decades of experience preparing students for standardized admissions tests. James has studied and taught writing at some of the nation's top universities. James holds a Ph.D. in English from the University of California, Berkeley.

Jennifer Murphy, *Executive Coordinator of Educational Outreach/Faculty, Access ASU/Arizona State University*

Dr. Jennifer Murphy currently serves as an Executive Coordinator for Educational Outreach with Access ASU and as a Faculty Associate within the College of Integrated Sciences and Arts at Arizona State University. Jennifer collaborates with university and school district leadership, students, and families to supplement and enhance college readiness efforts within local junior and senior high schools. A former high school counselor, Jennifer focuses her college readiness outreach on increasing students' non-cognitive skills to build resiliency for postsecondary success.

Olufemi Ogundele, *Assistant Dean for Diversity Outreach, Office of Undergraduate Admission, Stanford University*

Olufemi Ogundele is the Assistant Dean of Diversity Outreach at Stanford University. Previously, Olufemi was the associate director of diversity and recruitment at Cornell University. Olufemi earned a bachelor's degree in journalism and public relations from Mansfield University and a master's degree in strategic communication from the Roy H. Park School of Communications at Ithaca College.

Liliana Ornelas, *Middle School College Planning Manager, College Access for All - Middle School, NYC Department of Education*

Liliana Ornelas is a Middle School College Planning Manager for College Access for All - Middle School at the NYC Department of Education. Liliana previously worked as the associate dean for multicultural recruitment at Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts. Liliana has a bachelor's degree from Brown University in ethnic studies and a master's degree in education policy and management from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Diana Peña, *Certificate of Advanced Study Candidate, Harvard Graduate School of Education*

Diana Peña earned an Ed.M. from the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) with a focused study on childhood counseling from the Prevention Science and Practice program. Previously, Diana was a dual language teacher in Texas where she helped found an elementary school in Austin and a Pre-K program in San Antonio. Diana holds a B.S. in early childhood education from the University of Texas at Austin and was a 2011 Teach For America corps member. Currently, Diana is pursuing a certificate of advanced study from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Vijay Pendakur, *Robert W. and Elizabeth C. Staley Dean of Students, Cornell University; and Editor, *Closing the Opportunity Gap: Identity-Conscious Strategies for Retention and Student Success**

Vijay Pendakur serves as the Robert W. and Elizabeth C. Staley Dean of Students at Cornell University. Prior to this appointment, he worked on campus-wide student success initiatives for underserved populations as an Associate Vice President for Student Affairs at California State University-Fullerton. Previously, Dr. Pendakur served as the director for the Office of Multicultural Student Success at DePaul University in Chicago. He is the Editor of the recent book, [*Closing the Opportunity Gap: Identity-Conscious Strategies for Retention and Student Success*](#), as well as numerous chapters on Asian American racial identity development, color-blind racism, and critical leadership pedagogy. He holds a bachelor's degree in history and East Asian studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a master's degree in U.S. history from the University of California-San Diego, and a doctorate in education from DePaul University.

Craig Robinson, *Chief Program Officer, College Advising Corps*

Craig Robinson is the Chief Program Officer for College Advising Corps. Previously, he served as national director of KIPP Through College at the KIPP Foundation and vice president for A Better Chance. Craig holds master's degrees in secondary education and education administration from the University of Michigan.

Salvador Sanchez, Jr., *Certificate of Advanced Study Candidate, Harvard Graduate School of Education*

Salvador Sanchez, Jr. received a bachelor's degree from the University of California Berkeley in social welfare, an Ed.M. from the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) with a focused study on adolescent counseling from the prevention science and practice program, and is currently pursuing a certificate of advanced study from HGSE. Salvador worked at Seneca as a mental health counselor for youth going through probation in Oakland, California.

Diane Scott, *Co-Director of College Placement, Academy of the Pacific Rim*

Diane Scott is Co-Director of College Placement at Academy of the Pacific Rim, a high-performing urban charter public school in Boston, Massachusetts, celebrating its 20th year. Diane has done similar work for Greater Egleston Community High School and City Year, both in Boston. Diane has a bachelor's degree in developmental psychology from Stanford University and a master's degree in education from Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Sonya K. Smith, *Former Associate Dean of Admission and Director of Diversity Outreach, and Current Director of Graduate Admission, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University*

Sonya K. Smith is the Director of Graduate Admission at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. In her former role as associate dean of admission for diversity outreach, she helped build Princeton's network with college access organizations and strengthened recruitment initiatives. Sonya earned an A.B. from Stanford University, holds a master's degree from the University of Michigan, and is a doctoral candidate.

M. Ricardo Townes, *Associate Dean, Student Mentoring and Leadership, Pomona College*

M. Ricardo Townes is the Associate Dean of Student Mentoring and Leadership at Pomona College. Over the past 12 years, Ricardo has served on various committees, including the President's Advisory Committee on Diversity. Since Ricardo joined Pomona College he has been dedicated to providing support to students. He holds a degree from the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Kelly Truong, *Ed.M. Candidate, Harvard Graduate School of Education*

Kelly Truong is a current Ed.M. candidate and Urban Scholars Fellow at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Previously, Kelly taught high school special education and coached first- and second-year teachers across 16 schools in Greater New Orleans, Louisiana. Kelly was named a New Orleans Saints Teacher of the Week and a finalist for Teach For America's national award for classroom excellence. As the daughter of Vietnamese asylum seekers, Kelly is passionate about teaching students from traditionally under-resourced communities.

Paris Woods, *Co-Founder and Executive Director, College Beyond*

Paris Woods is Co-Founder and Executive Director of College Beyond, a New Orleans-based nonprofit. Paris worked in college admissions, financial aid, and student advising at Harvard University, before moving to New Orleans to become the founding director of alumni support for New Orleans College Prep Academies. Paris has been honored in Gambit's 40 Under 40 and is the 2017 Millennial Award recipient for education. A first generation college graduate herself, Paris earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Harvard University.