Alcruz, Joanna

Joanna Alcruz is an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership for Diverse Learning Communities Doctoral program at Molloy College. She is also an Assessment and Accreditation Coordinator with expertise in educational measurement, as well as educational psychology. She has been teaching and interacting with diverse student populations for the past 15 years.

Akinleye, Leah

Leah Akinleye currently serves as an Assistant Principal at Schenectady High School supporting students, teachers, administrators and staff through Restorative Practices (conflict resolution through conversation). She has conducted over two hundred Restorative Practice circles on building relationship to increase social capital. Leah is a member of several committees at the Schenectady City School District dealing with Attendance, Classroom Management, Grading, Student Based Support Teams, the Code of Conduct, and the Restorative Practice Team. She has assisted with district wide implementation on Restorative Practices, Implicit Bias and My Brother’s Keeper Mentoring Program. Leah believes in educational transformation. With a change in mindset anything is possible!

Belkin, Liliana D.

Dr. Belkin currently serves as Director of School Support for the NYCDOE Office of Postsecondary Readiness Grades 9-14 Early College & Career Schools Team where she works closely with school and central leadership to shape policies and practices that enhance model implementation and student success. She recently earned her PhD at New York University’s Steinhardt School in Administration, Leadership, and Technology Department concentrating on educational leadership and policy. Prior to NYU and as a doctoral student, Belkin was a special education teacher for 8 years in the Bay Area, was a graduate research assistant at NYU Metro Center, a research assistant at Vera Institute of Justice, Social Science Research Council, and Center for Court Innovation, and an adjunct professor at Montclair State University & SUNY Empire State.
Luarben (Lulu) Bencosme, M.S.Ed., holds a master’s degree in Early Childhood Education, with a Special Education Extension. Her previous experience includes teaching Special Education Itinerant Teacher, Parent Coordinator, and CPSE & CSE meeting interpreter. She also spent many years in early childhood education working with English language learners and students with disabilities. Lulu works closely in partnership with school districts, community agencies, colleagues, and families, with a special focus on the needs of Hispanic students and parents. She provides training to parents in English and Spanish in a format so that parents can easily understand and access information, assisting them to understand and navigate the special education process. She is or has been a member of various organizations such as National Association for the Education for the Young Children (NAEYC), Westchester Association for the Education of the Young Children (WAEYC), New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE), and the Changing Suburbs Institute (CSI), NYS State Systematic Improvement Plan and Westchester Children & Family Network of Systems. She presents frequently to professionals on understanding and meeting the needs of Spanish-speaking families, and has presented at many conferences and the New York State Education Department. Lecturer a LIU in Brooklyn NY and MBK.

Jeffrey Bennett is in his third year as the principal of Mont Pleasant Middle School. He came to the Schenectady City School District in March of 2016 as the Mont Pleasant Assistant Principal. Although this is his third year as the principal of Mont Pleasant, he has experience as a principal in surrounding districts. Mr. Bennett has a B.A. in secondary Social Studies from the State University at Cortland, a Master’s degree in School Counseling from State University at Oneonta, and his School District Administration degree from State University at Albany.

Originally from Trinidad & Tobago, Andrea Bernard served as a Family Services Worker for more than ten years before becoming the Director of Parent University in 2015. During her tenure she has provided more than 1,000 hours of training to more than 600 parents. As a team member in the National Superintendent’s Association’s Family and Community Engagement’s first cohort, she co-presented during the 2017 conference in Nashville, TN. Andrea received her BA from John Jay College.

Alicia Arce-Boardman is an elementary school teaching in the Uniondale School District in New York. She has been teaching for 11 years, however has been in the field of early childhood education for 15 years. She is co-author of No More Culturally Irrelevant Teaching. She is also published in The Reading Teacher and Early Years: An International Research Journal.
Sally Brothers, NBCT is an English teacher at Greece Arcadia High School, Mosaics Teacher at Arcadia High School and district Teacher Leader for Mosaics in the Greece Central School District (GCSD). Her role as Teacher Leader for English five years ago at Arcadia High School led to the creation and development of the 12th grade Mosaics English curriculum, classes, and clubs.

Nicole Buccilli is a Buffalo Public School District Data Coach in the Division of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction. Prior to this position, she worked as a building math teacher with students in grades K-8. Mrs. Buccilli is actively involved with her district’s initiatives surrounding culturally responsive teaching and disproportionality, and continues to learn more and grow her passion surrounding this work. Mrs. Buccilli is married and the proud mother to two daughters.

Eudes S. Budhai has served in various capacities in the field of education. His educational experience began in a private school as an assistant teacher working with students who required extensive emotional and academic support. This experience led him to aspire to become an educator. Since then he has become a teacher, Department Chair, Building and district level administrator, and adjunct professor. Mr. Budhai has been involved in various local, statewide and national committees on initiatives for student achievement and serves on several advisory boards. Mr. Budhai serves as the Superintendent for the Westbury Union Free School District. He has served as President of New York State Association for Bilingual Education and the National Association for Bilingual Education. He holds a BA in Bilingual Elementary/ Special Education/Latin American Studies, MS Ed. in Multicultural Education, Post-graduate degree in Supervision and Administration and continues his endeavors to obtain a doctorate. He advocates for educational equity and social justice for all children.
Capers, Natasha

Natasha Capers is the mother of two boys ages 11 and 13, a native of Brownsville, Brooklyn, and the Coordinator for the NYC Coalition for Educational Justice (CEJ), poised to be the next generation of black liberation leaders. Having attended public school in District 23 and attended Thomas Jefferson High School, she knows first-hand the problems and the promise of NYC public schools, especially those in under-resourced communities. Natasha has served as School Leadership Team Chair, Parent Association President and Vice President for the District 23 Community Education Council. Natasha began her work with CEJ when her children’s school was placed on the NYC Department of Education’s list for closure. After a successful campaign to prevent the closure of that school, she became a dedicated CEJ parent leader and then took on the role as the Coordinator. The NYC Coalition for Educational Justice unapologetically organizes in Black, Brown and immigrant communities, and uses parent voices and power to advance research-based strategies to improve academic outcomes for students. CEJ’s current campaign is focused on pushing NYC to adopt Culturally Responsive Education, including cultural competency trainings for teachers and school staff, diverse curriculum and a DOE Office of Culturally Responsive Education.

Crouch, Luberta

Luberta Crouch has been a Family Engagement Facilitator since 2015. Beginning in 2007 she has worked with, for and on behalf of children and families in the Syracuse area. Luberta earned her Bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood Education from Ashford University in 2010 and is currently working on her Masters Degree.

Farina, Antonio L.

Antonio Farina is a 16-year Schenectady City School District employee. He was a science teacher at Schenectady High School and has served 10 years in various roles, and grades, from Dean (grades Pre-K-8) to Assistant Principal (K-8), Interim Principal (grades Pre-K-2) and is now the Principal at Oneida Middle School. He holds a B. A. in Psychology from the University of Rochester and a B. S. in Environmental Science from the University of Massachusetts. He received his Ed. M. from MCLA and is currently exploring his options in pursuing his doctoral degree. He has dedicated his time and efforts to urban education and the children of Schenectady. His work with TAC-D has been ongoing for roughly 6 years. He feels that the discussion of equitable access to education and disproportionality is necessary in order for race, poverty, and disability not to be a predictor of achievement.
Farley, Damonni

Damonni Farley is the supervisor of the Cultural Brokers which is a community empowerment program that works in partnership with the Schenectady City School District. The model emphasizes the understanding that the unique culture of a community is a valued commodity. Local, respected neighborhood leaders are hired and trained to understand human behavior, cognition, navigating school culture and systems and applying analytics to solve critical social problems. Damonni has been with the district for 5 years. 
On Twitter @damonnifarley

Fergus, Eddie

Eddie Fergus is an applied researcher. His work explores the effects of educational policy and practice as it intersects the lives of populations living in vulnerable conditions. More specifically his policy work extrapolates the relationship between discipline codes of conduct, gifted program practice, and academic referral processes and the educational outcomes of low-income and racial/ethnic minority student populations. This work also outlines policy and practice changes in order for schools to develop as protective environments for vulnerable populations. Fergus consultants on these policy and practice changes with state departments of education (e.g., California and Texas) and U.S. Department of Justice on disproportionality. Additionally, his publications include basic research on educational outcomes of populations in vulnerable conditions, and data workbooks focused on monitoring policy and practice changes.

Foster, Lindsey

Lindsey Foster is a Research Associate on the Policy, Research, and Evaluation (PRE) team at NYU’s Metro Center. Her research interests include how education and law intersect to create experiences for students in vulnerable populations, specifically young girls of color. Currently, she works on studies that range in topics related to educational equity, policies, and program evaluation. Lindsey earned her BA in English from Howard University and her MA from Teachers College, Columbia University in Education Policy and Social Analysis with a specialization in law and education.

Fowler, Donna

Donna Fowler is the Assistant Director of Special Education for Schenectady City Schools. She is currently in her third year as an administrator with the district, prior to coming to Schenectady Donna worked as a social worker for 4 years in a Community Action Program and over 15 years as a social worker for students with disabilities. On Twitter @donnacf1
Franz, Nate

Nate Franz is the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning at the Syracuse City School District. Inspired by teaching swimming lessons, volunteering in preschools, and mentoring adolescents in group homes throughout his time at the University of Wisconsin, Nate quickly developed a deep interest for working with young people. This passion stuck with him as he relocated to Washington, DC, leading him to pursue a master’s degree in early elementary education at American University. While teaching in DC, Nate was recognized as a finalist for DC Teacher of the Year and awarded the Agnes Meyer Award by the Washington Post. Since moving to Syracuse in 2011, Nate has earned his building and district leadership certificates from Syracuse University and deepened his commitment to urban education. When he is not advocating for equity in education, Nate spends his free time transporting his two sons to their respective swimming lessons and preschools.

Galarza, Kay

Born and Raised in McAllen, Texas, Kay Galarza moved to New York City in September of 2016, a week before her freshman year at Baruch College Campus High School where she is currently a junior. Kay is a youth leader whose work centers around different forms of advocacy and activism, particularly around dismantling systems of oppression within the school system and empowering youth voice and experience. As a participant and intern in the DOE’s and NYU’s Youth Technical Assistance Center on Disproportionality (YTAC-D), she has presented research, analysis, and experiences of disproportionality at a Columbia University Conference and NYU’s Summer Institute. Kay serves as a Youth Partner Facilitator for her Borough Student Advisory Council, as well as a member of the Chancellor’s Student Voice Working Group and Chancellor’s Student Advisory Council. She has also been one out of eight youth in the nation to be a panelist on the Council for Great City Schools’ Panel: Students Speaking Out ahead of the Midterm Elections. Kay’s leadership has been recognized by her adult partners resulting in her serving on panels for the NYU Summer Institute, DOE’s, Honoring Leadership Event, and Champions for Children Event. She was also awarded by WE Movement with the Get Doing 2018 Award and by the Council for Great City Schools with the Change the World 2018 Award. As a young student and woman of color, she is acutely aware that her identity had been politicized long before she ever entered a classroom. She allows her passion to fuel her work in advancing equity and access, and eventually liberation.

Giglio, Tom

Thomas Giglio is the Director for English as a New Language and Refugees Services for the City School District of Albany. He possesses a Bachelor’s Degree from the State University of New York and a Master’s Degree from the College of Saint Rose in Special Education. In addition, he has an Advanced Certificate in School Administration from the same institution. He has served as a Special Education Teacher, Elementary and Middle School Principal in his 19-year career at the City School District of Albany.
Glover, Crystal P.

Dr. Crystal P. Glover is an Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education at Winthrop University. Crystal is a National Board Certified Early Childhood Generalist and reading specialist with ten years of experience as a primary grades teacher. She serves on the editorial board for Perspectives and Provocations, a national journal of the Early Childhood Education Assembly of the National Council of Teachers of English.

Grant, Markeisha

Markeisha Grant is a College Program Manager with the NYC Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Readiness. Ms Grant works with the NYC Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (NYC PTECH) to support college access, persistence, and transition. Prior to joining the NYC Department of Education, she worked at Teacher’s College, Columbia University conducting research on improving college advising, developmental education, and the two year to four-year college transfer process. Ms. Grant holds a Bachelors Degree from Smith College and a Masters from Harvard in Education Policy and Management.

Harry, Beth

Beth Harry is a professor of special education in the Department of Teaching and Learning at the University of Miami. A native of Jamaica, she entered the field of special education as a parent of a child with cerebral palsy, an experience that has been chronicled in her memoir, Melanie, bird with a broken wing: A mother’s story published by Brookes. In response to Melanie’s needs, Beth started a school for children with disabilities in Trinidad in 1978, which has now been in existence for 40 years. Inspired by her experience as a parent, Beth’s research and teaching focus on the impact of special education on children and families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Her studies have included Puerto Rican, African American and a wide range of other cultural groups. In 2002, she served as a member of the National Academy of Sciences’ panel to study the disproportionate placement of minority students in special education. Her research findings on these topics have been published in numerous books and articles, including, Why are so many minority students in special education? and Case Studies of Minority Student Placement in Special Education, published by Teachers College Press. In 2003 she received a Fulbright award to do research on Moroccan children’s schooling in Spain, where she was based at the University of Seville. Beth’s most recent research is currently in press, titled Childhood disability, advocacy and inclusion in the Caribbean: A Trinidad and Tobago case study, which brings her full circle to the start of her work in special education in Trinidad. Beth Harry graduated from St. Andrew High School in Jamaica, earned her Bachelors and Masters degrees at the University of Toronto, Canada, and her Ph.D., at Syracuse University in the US. Previously an associate professor at the University of Maryland at College Park, Beth has also taught in Toronto and Jamaica, and was founder and director of the Immortelle Children’s Center for Special Education, Port of Spain, Trinidad.
Haynes, Nicolle L.  
Nicolle L. Haynes is currently the Director of School Culture and Climate for the Syracuse City School District. Her focus is developing Tier I systems, in 34 schools, that establish, enhance and sustain vibrant and supportive school cultures. She currently leads initiatives in the District focused on Culturally Responsive Practices, which encompasses restorative practices and strong Tier I Behavior Support Systems. Ms. Haynes likes to refer to School Culture as the womb that teaching and learning is developing in, and her goal is healthy development resulting in well-rounded scholars. She has been an educator for over 25 years and has provided leadership in areas ranging from Mathematics education, Bilingual and ESOL services, Early childhood education to Parent and Community Engagement. Strong Leadership is her passion because the focus of strong leadership is service. Ms. Haynes is a graduate of the University of Rochester, St. John Fisher College, and Roberts Wesleyan College, with Master of Science Degrees in Mathematics Education, School Administration, and Executive Leadership, respectively.

Holt, Alicia  
Alicia Holt is an Assistant Principal at Oneida Middle School in Schenectady, NY. She believes that students who are equipped with truth and knowledge will then have the power to transform society. As a proud product and advocate for public education her lifelong mantra is the South Afrikan term Ubuntu which translates to: I am because we are; and because we are I am.  
On Twitter @iamAliciaHolt

Honigsfeld, Andrea  
Andrea Honigsfeld is a professor, Associate Dean and Director of the Educational Leadership for Diverse Learning Communities Doctoral Program at Molloy College, Rockville Centre, NY. She is a Fulbright Scholar, author, coauthor or coeditor of 20 books and over 50 articles. In the past 15 years, she has been presenting at conferences across the United States and internationally on culturally and linguistically responsive education for ELLs.
Khalifa, Muhammad

Dr. Muhammad Khalifa is the Robert H. Beck Professor of Ideas in Education at the University of Minnesota. Formerly a school leader, he is now a leading expert on culturally responsive school leadership and anti-oppressive education. Through the newly established Culturally Responsive School Leadership Institute (crsli.org), he helps school leaders work with communities to promote schools that look deeper than "achievement gaps," and more at the humanization of students in school. He has worked with heads of governments and schools in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East to reform education, but is most noted for his work in urban and suburban school districts across the U.S. He leads equity reform in schools by performing Equity Audits, and helps districts use equity audits to close gaps and promote the humanization of minoritized youth. His online equity audits can be found at: adjusted.org

Kress, Tricia

Tricia Kress is an Associate Professor of Educational Leadership for Diverse Learning Communities Doctoral program at Molloy College. She is co-editor of the book series *Imagination and Praxis* (Brill/Sense Publishers) and is author or editor of several books including *Paulo Freire’s Intellectual Roots: Toward Historicity in Praxis*, which received the Society of Professors of Education 2014 Book Award. She is also the Chair of the AERA Paulo Freire SIG.

Lanham, Catherine

Catherine A. Lanham received a Bachelor’s in Fine Arts from The State University at Buffalo and a Master’s of Science from Florida State University with a focus in teaching literacy to students with disabilities. She holds teaching certificates in the subjects of special education and art in New York State. Ms. Lanham has been working with teenagers since 2002 and has taught in Orlando, Florida and New York City, two high needs and diverse districts. She currently teaches at Orchard Collegiate Academy in the Lower East Side. Ms. Lanham has previously presented professional development at the school level, for District 1 in the NYC DOE, and for TAC-D.

Marsh, Trenton L.

Dr. L. Trenton S. Marsh is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Michigan. His interests include qualitative methods, the social context of education, and school choice, with an emphasis on “no-excuses" charters. He also explores the experiences of low-income students and families of color to help inform equitable pedagogies, policies, and processes in PreK-12 and higher education contexts. His work has been published in Urban Review, GSE Perspectives on Urban Education, and Education Week.
Martinez, Ana

Ana Martinez is the Chief of staff to the Chief Schools Officer of Aspire Public Schools, a college preparatory charter management organization. She supports the Chief of staff in leading the superintendent team serving schools in Los Angeles, the Bay Area, the Central Valley, and Memphis, as well as the student supports managers and directors of each region. Ana leads with a foundation of love, hope, equity-focused pedagogy and strong instructional knowledge. She understands and believes that true change will happen when we connect ourselves to those we serve. Prior to this role, Ana has served as a teacher, Dean, Assistant Principal and Principal in the South Los Angeles and Huntington Park communities. She has served in several turnaround schools and has transformed student and staff culture by establishing strong relationships with families, students and staff and creating consistency in practice. She has minimized suspensions and classroom incidents by professionally developing staff in strong classroom practices and establishing school-wide systems and progress monitoring to ensure consistency for students. Many of her professional developments entail understanding the six-circle model, unpacking implicit bias, understanding healing and trauma informed communities, as well as systems of oppression in the communities she serves, as well as in the classrooms. Ms. Martinez also founded her own school in South Los Angeles eight years ago and established a strong student and staff culture, as well as a strong instructional program. Her school continues to have low behavior incidents, less than 1% suspensions and improved academic data year after year.

McNair, Kellie

Kellie McNair is Co-Principal of Longridge Elementary School. She has worked in the Greece Central School District for 19 years, first as a classroom teacher and then serving as a Math Intervention Teacher before going into administration. She is currently working with her administrative team to build a Community School at Longridge which will provide mental health services, dental care, and afterschool programs to the 800 students that attend Longridge Elementary School. In addition to her work in the Greece Central School District, Mrs. McNair is an educational consultant in the Mathematics Outreach Program at the Warner Center at the University of Rochester. She lives in Spencerport with her husband and their two children.
Morales, Candace

A Teacher for ten years, Candace Morales currently serves as the CLRT Coordinator where she oversees the My Brother’s Keeper program. A firm believer in raising up students who will take their proper place in society as agents of change. She believes that the MBK program is a trans-generational movement that will result in stronger men of color, families, and communities. Candace believes that the educational system is overdue in rendering a culturally responsive curriculum.

Morrell, Fatima

Dr. Fatima Morrell is the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction in the Buffalo Public Schools. She is a former Spanish Teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal, and Supervising Principal. Dr. Morrell considers herself the “Guardian of Equity” in Buffalo, as she leads the District wide initiative on Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching, Racial Equity and Disproportionality, and she leads the “All-Male Academy” Initiative through the federally funded “My Brother’s Keeper” grant.

Nash, Kindel Turner

Kindel Turner Nash is an Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education. She has taught children in urban schools in South Carolina, Georgia, California, and in Department of Defense schools in Germany. Her research has been funded by the Spencer Foundation and, she has published research in top journals including The Reading Teacher, Teachers College Record, Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood Education, Urban Review, The New Educator, and The Journal of Transformative Education.

Owens, Derrick

Derrick Owens is a member on New York Communities for Change and a leader with the NYC Coalition for Educational Justice. As a father of an eight-year-old daughter he believes that public education should be fully funded, rooted in equity and free of systemic racism. Derrick is deeply invested in CEJ’s current Culturally Responsive Education campaign.
Paine, Valerie

Valerie Paine is the Assistant Superintendent for Student Achievement and Support Services overseeing all of Greece elementary schools. Dr. Paine’s department provides leadership in the programs and services which support the academic, social, behavioral, and emotional development of all students. In addition, her department provides training and support to district and school site personnel to assist them in their efforts to be in compliance with legal requirements as they pertain to topics and situations within the scope of student services.

Paser, Patty

Patricia Paser is the Assistant to the Superintendent in the Schenectady City School District, in Schenectady, New York. Patty was a middle school teacher and guidance counselor for 19 years. She is currently in her 8th year as the Assistant to the Superintendent in the Schenectady City School District and prior to that, she was the Paige Elementary School Principal for 5 years in the same district. On Twitter @paser_patty

Perkins, Jerome

Jerome Perkins is the Home School Coordinator at Arbor Hill Elementary School serving students in grades Pre-K-6. Jerome has worked in the field of education for 21 years. During the past three years he has been part of the founding CRE Leadership Team for the City School District of Albany. Jerome continues to believe that creating a culturally responsive space is one of the main keys to success with our students today. He believes that working in education is a calling rather than a vocation.

Poindexter, Michael-Aaron

Michael-Aaron Poindexter is the Community School Coordinator at Phillip J Schuyler Achievement Academy, an elementary school in the City School District of Albany (CSDA). Michael has earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the State University of New York at Albany, a Master’s Degree from United Theological Seminary, and is currently pursuing a second Master’s Degree from The University at Albany. He is a member of the equity policy design team for the CSDA as well as a Culturally Responsive Education facilitator.
Mica Pollock, an anthropologist, is Professor of Education Studies and Director of the Center for Research on Educational Equity, Assessment, and Teaching Excellence (CREATE) at the University of California, San Diego. Her newest book is Schooltalk: Rethinking What We Say About – and To – Students Every Day (The New Press). Pollock’s work explores educators’ key role in daily efforts for antiracism and equality. She pinpoints the key role of language in educators’ work. In projects based in schools, districts, cities, universities, community organizations, and the government, Pollock has explored how people in diverse education communities talk as they try to collaborate in student support. Pollock’s work always asks how diverse education communities can come together to support equity – to develop the full human talents of every young person and all groups of young people, every day. Pollock’s current work at CREATE explores how networks of conversation partners can leverage a university to create K-20 opportunities to learn.

Dr. Bilal Polson, is the principal of Northern Parkway Elementary School in Uniondale, NY. Bilal has presented at American Educational Research Association (AERA), University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA), National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and The Technical Assistance Center on Disproportionality (TACD) conferences. Dr. Polson has co-authored a number of peer reviewed journal articles and been featured in a chapter of Courageous Leadership a book published by Teachers College Press (2016).

Tasha Potter is the Principal on Special Assignment for Equity and Family Engagement for Greece Central School District (GCSD). She has worked for GCSD since 2007, serving as an Assistant Principal, Principal and Lead Principal, most recently at Autumn Lane Elementary. Prior to joining GCSD, Mrs. Potter has taught in both the Rochester City School District and Gates Chili Central School District, with a combined total of 25 years of experience in education. In addition to ensuring equitable outcomes at Autumn Lane Elementary School, she has taken a lead role in moving the District’s Equity initiative forward. She also works as an Adjunct Professor at Roberts Wesleyan College, teaching courses on diversity and childhood & adolescent developmental psychology. Mrs. Potter resides in Chili, NY with her husband and 3 children.
Provenzano, Brett

Brett Provenzano is Superintendent of the Fairport Central School District. His background is as a social studies teacher and middle school principal. As a Superintendent, Mr. Provenzano is a strong advocate for equity and access for all students. He is a leader in both district and community activities related to diversity and building inclusive communities. Through his intentional leadership actions “equity and access” has been moved the forefront of district initiatives.

Radford, Sam

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 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 students. He also hosts a weekly Radio, Podcast and Facebook live show “We The Parents” every Thursday at 7pm on WUFO Power 96.5 FM. A native of Buffalo, Mr. Radford attended Buffalo’s Hutchinson-Central Technical High School, Erie Community College and State University of NY Empire State College. After high school, Mr. Radford served honorably in the United States Marine Corps. Professionally Mr. Radford has worked as a block club organizer for C.R.U.C.I.A.L. Human Services Inc, Senior Trainer for the NYS MLK Institute and Commission for Nonviolence, Director of the Berkshire Farms Buffalo Youth Detention Center, Education Organizer for the Alliance for Quality Education (AQE), Regional Director for Citizens Action of New York and as a Middle School Math teacher until starting in his current position as Director of the Community Action Organization of WNY (CAO) Masten Resource Center. He is the recipient of many community awards including: 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.

Reid, Irastina

Irastina Reid is currently an Assistant Director of Special Education for the Syracuse City School District. She has 15 years of experience as a special education teacher for SCSD. Her focus is on specialized programming and instruction for students with disabilities and developing Tier 3 systems to support students. Her passion lies in helping students reach their full potential. She believes that through hard work, perseverance, equity, fairness and opportunity every student can be successful. She hopes to continue to make a positive impact in students’ academic achievement and attainment to a life-long love for learning by changing their narrative and doing uncomfortable things!
Dr. Ian Roberts is the Chief Schools Officer of Aspire Public Schools, a college preparatory district where he leads the team of superintendents serving schools in Los Angeles, the Bay Area, the Central Valley, and Memphis. His focus in leading these district leaders and schools is anchored in providing contrarian and courageous culturally responsive, quality and equity focused leadership that prepares every student for college from grades TK through 12th grade. Prior to this role, he served as the High School’s Network Superintendent with Saint Louis Public Schools, where he coached, supported, and evaluated high school and alternative school principals, providing them with intensive coaching for effectiveness, excellence in student and teacher achievement outcomes, and cultural responsiveness; rather than for compliance. During his tenure, 5 of the St. Louis Public Schools high schools were ranked in the top 50 in the state for academic performance, including the numbers 1, 9, and 25 ranked schools. He encourages the leaders with whom he works to think creatively about how they can improve their school communities; an approach that couples quantitative and qualitative research, and his practitioner’s experience in innovative school improvement and turnaround. Dr. Roberts is a pivotal intellectual voice in the K-12 arena and is sought after throughout the United States and internationally to speak and lead sessions for organizational leaders on combining Accountability with Empathy and Compassion, and Equity focused leadership. He is the author of three books on leadership, each of them having a focus on content about equity, empathy, and culturally responsive tenets, where he blends research with the educational practitioner’s perspective. Prior to becoming a principal, district leader, and leadership trainer, Dr. Roberts was a Commissioned Military Officer and world class and Olympic Athlete; competing in track and field at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia, and world Championships in Maebashi, Japan and Seville, Spain.

Allison Roda is an assistant professor in the Educational Leadership Program for Diverse Learning Communities at Molloy College. Her research and teaching interests are focused on urban education policy, educational equity, families and schools, and qualitative research methods. Allison’s work has been published in Teachers College Record, the American Journal of Education, and the Peabody Journal of Education. She is author of the book, *Inequality in Gifted and Talented Programs*.

Jason Rogers is an Assistant Principal for Giffen Memorial Elementary School in Albany NY which serves students from Pre –K to 6th grade. He also co-facilitates Culturally Responsive Education trainings for the City School District of Albany and has worked with a team to create the Equity Policy for the school district. He possesses a Bachelor’s Degree in Childhood Education, a Master’s Degree in Curriculum and Instruction, a second Master’s Degree and Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Leadership - all from the College of St. Rose. He has committed himself to being part of a team that looks to eradicate disproportionality in education for black students at both the macro and micro level.
Sanders, Vibetta

Vibetta Sanders is the former Principal of Pine Hills Elementary School in Albany NY. Since September she has taken on a new role in the district as Principal of Culturally Responsive Education and Equity. She possesses a Masters in Social Work, Masters in Educational Administration and Policy Studies and a Certificate of Advance Study in Educational Administration and Policy Studies, from the State University of New York at Albany. Since joining the City School District of Albany in 2005, she has committed herself to taking on the task of creating equitable learning communities.

Sinisgalli, Yvonne

Yvonne Sinisgalli is the Bilingual Special Education Specialist at the Long Island Parent Center at LIU where her purpose and commitment to improve outcomes for students with differing abilities lies in her dedication to provide parents and professionals tools to help them advocate for their children. Passionate about outreach to high need communities and marginalized people, she recently became a certified Native American Parent Specialist where she was trained to work with Native American families in the Southwest through a federally funded pilot program. Coupled with her commitment to improve outcomes for students with differing abilities, she is currently a Doctoral student at Molloy College concentrating on social justice and consults on the My Brother’s Keeper initiative in several Long Island districts. She is also an Adjunct Professor at St. Joseph’s College in the Child Study Department. Ms. Sinisgalli’s rich background and endless resources in education, psychology, and Spanish, combined with her role of mother to a child with a disability, help to foster solid connections with culturally diverse regions.

Smith, Keena

Ms. Smith is the District Data Coordinator for Greece Central School District. Keena’s work is centered around empowering district, building and teacher leaders in effectively using data to make thoughtful, informed decisions that ensure we are all aligned with the District Strategic Framework focused on Equity, Coherence, Excellence, and Collaboration. Ms. Smith has also been a Teacher Leader, Math Interventionist and classroom teacher in Greece. Prior to becoming an educator, Ms. Smith has worked in Washington, DC for the Chemical Industry supporting Health, Safety and Environmental Managers in complying with regulations and as a project manager for environmental remediation in Western New York. She currently lives in Greece with her husband and two children.
Dr. Robert Spicer is the CEO of Restorative Strategies, LLC. Through this consultant firm, Restorative Strategies has trained hundreds of participants who have exposed thousands of youths and adults to Restorative Justices Practices across the United States and internationally. Restorative Strategies, LLC currently is working with school districts, Police Departments and Youth leaders in building a critical mass of leaders of restorative justice. Robert’s greatest achievement is being a husband to Chandra and father to BreAnna, Bethany, Brea and Robert Jr.

Mr. James Spooner has been an advocate for the Albany City School District going on 12 years. Since becoming the District’s new Labor Forman he understands how the daily functions of maintenance and cleanliness of the buildings play a major role in our student’s success in learning and achieving the best education possible. James has taken on the role of Facilitator for Culturally Responsive Education and Equity in the district. He believes that creating equitable schools is everybody’s business.

Mrs. Tamara Thorpe-Odom is in her third year as the principal of Central Park Middle School in the Schenectady City School District; however, she comes to Schenectady with significant experience in the Special Education Realm. Mrs. Odom has a B.S. in History and Political Science from Mount Saint Mary College and holds certification in Elementary Education and Special Education. She has a Masters of Science in Education from the College of Saint Rose and is beginning her doctorate work in Education Leadership. Mrs. Odom is active in her community and a member of several educational organizations.

Todd Craig is a writer, educator and DJ whose career meshes his love of writing, teaching and music. His research examines the hip-hop DJ as twenty-first century new media reader and writer, and investigates the modes and practices of DJ rhetoric and literacy. Craig’s publications include the multimodal novel tor’cha, and essays in scholarly journals including Fiction International, Radical Teacher, Modern Language Studies and Changing English: Studies in Culture and Education.
Alfred Tompkins is the Family Support Equity Specialist for the City School District of Schenectady. In this role he works with parent liaisons, consults district faculty and staff on the culture, heritage and background of Schenectady’s students, and serves as a bridge between families and schools. As an ordained minister Al also offers pastoral support where ever it is needed.

Mary Lisa Wade has been advocating for families of the Syracuse City School District since 2002 as a Family Engagement Facilitator in the Office of Family Engagement. She received her BA in Communications in 1986 from Plattsburgh State University and a MSW from Syracuse University in 2016. Mary Lisa was recognized from NYSED for her work as part of the SCSD Department of Parent Partnership Network in 2004 and as Special Parent Honoree in 2005.

Takiyah Weekes is the Director of Career Readiness with the NYC Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Readiness. Ms. Weekes works with the NYC Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (NYC PTECH) to support career readiness, work-based learning, and industry partners to build pipelines to career pathways in the STEM sector. Prior to joining the NYC Department of Education, she worked at Henry Street Settlement overseeing Youth Employment programs. Ms. Weekes holds a MPA from Baruch College.

Philip Weinman currently serves as the Engagement Supervisor and Night School Principal at Schenectady High School. He is a Board Certified Social Studies Teacher who is on the New York State National Boards steering committee. In his instructional work he has developed National Board professional learning communities at Schenectady High School. Philip has led the building in developing respite programs and restorative practices that support students and help teachers in a powerful effort to build positive relationships and close the proficiency gap. As coordinator for the Operation Graduation respite program he enabled the most challenging students to navigate difficult situations, while understanding the rigor of academic focus needed to become a successful student. Philip is a leader amongst his colleagues as they look to him for guidance to improve their professional practice around working and supporting students through a culture of care. Currently, Philip is a leading member of the districts Trauma Sensitive Schools core team. His vision as an educator is to develop a trauma sensitive school that is invested in restorative practices as a necessary systematic change for all students.
Weishaar, Kelly

Ms. Kelly Weishaar is a Title I Student, Parent, and Community Access Liaison in the Fairport Central School District. In this role she engages in professional development, youth activities, and district planning in order to address the needs of diverse students and families.

Williams, Corey

Dr. Williams works as a Data Analyst for the Syracuse City School District. Prior to joining the district, he taught in early childhood education and served as an adjunct professor in Therapeutic Recreation. With a Master’s in Public Administration and a PhD in the social sciences, Dr. Williams brings a background in statistics, research, and program evaluation to SCSD. For the past 10 winters, Dr. Williams has championed the causes of access and opportunity for individuals with disabilities by helping to run a fully accessible ski program.

Williams, Eva D.

Eva Williams is currently the Principal of Van Duyn Elementary School. She is the eldest of three daughters born to Liberian parents in New York, NY. She was raised in New York and Liberia, West Africa. It was the experiences in Liberia that shaped Mrs. Williams educational career and helped her to understand the value of free public education. Mrs. Williams is a graduate of Syracuse University and SUNY Oswego. She earned a Master of Science in School Counseling and a Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Leadership respectively. Mrs. Williams is an invested, active member of this community and is focused on improving the quality of life of its stakeholders. She believes wholeheartedly in the quote by Nelson Mandela, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world” and is driven to make a difference in the local and global community.

Wright-Williams, Monique

Current Chief of Staff of the Syracuse City School District, former Executive Director of Family and Community Engagement, Monique has a wide and varied professional life. Monique served as Commissioner of Education for SCSD and led a local community agency as Executive Director for over ten years. Creator of the PEN (Parent Engagement Notebook), she and another team member was selected to present the strategy at the 2017 AASA National Conference.
The Technical Assistance Center on Disproportionality (TACD) has partnered with Borough Student Advisory Council (BSAC) to form the Youth Technical Assistance Center on Addressing Disproportionality (YTACD), the youth component of TACD. In the spirit of Freire, TACD realized it was not enough for only adults to be at the table to do this important work in disrupting educational disparities among youth. In partnership and solidarity, TACD and BSAC birthed YTACD, the first youth representation of its kind since TACD was created decades ago. Through a Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) framework, students take the lead in their own liberation and interrogate their positionality within dominant structures. YTACD has carefully analyzed nationwide, statewide, and district level data on achievement and discipline, while interrogating the concepts of race, culture, socioeconomic status, educational equity and more, in order to understand the parts that make up disproportionality and inequity. YTACD’s aim is to inform practitioners of how youth experience disproportionality in hopes to creating a more equitable schooling experience for all students. All youth participants are NYC DOE students of BSAC. The adult facilitators are Ari Sussman and Emilie Mittiga from the DOE Field Support office, and Hui-Ling Malone, TACD graduate assistant and NYU doctoral student.