

REALIZING COMMUNITY COLLEGES' POTENTIAL AND ENSURING A PATH TO THE MIDDLE CLASS

Speaker Biographies

Cheryl Hyman, chancellor of the City Colleges of Chicago, manages a \$700 million budget, oversees nearly 5,500 employees, and ensures the success of more than 100,000 students annually. Since she launched a Reinvention of City Colleges in 2010, the graduation rate has more than doubled, and degrees awarded annually are the highest in City Colleges' history. With Mayor Emanuel, she launched two signature initiatives: College to Careers, which partners faculty and staff with over 150 companies and universities to align curriculum with workforce demand, and the Star Scholarship, through which hundreds of Chicago Public School graduates receive free college each year.

Nisha Patel is executive director of the US Partnership on Mobility from Poverty at the Urban Institute. Supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Partnership is a nonpartisan group of leaders, experts, and practitioners working to identify promising interventions to make real, lasting progress against persistent poverty in America. Patel has nearly two decades of experience leading, developing, and implementing initiatives to increase economic opportunities for low-income families. She served in the Obama administration as director of the Office of Family Assistance within the US Department of Health and Human Services, overseeing a \$17 billion annual portfolio of federal grants, including the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. Patel was previously deputy director of Ascend at the Aspen Institute, where she led national efforts to expand two-generation approaches to improve outcomes for children and their parents. Before that, Patel was a program officer in the US Program at the Gates Foundation, where she managed a portfolio focused on increasing postsecondary success through community partnerships and policy development, as well as special initiatives. Patel previously held positions as director of programs at the Washington Area Women's Foundation and senior policy analyst at the Center for Law and Social Policy. She has also been an adjunct professor at the George Washington University. Patel is a graduate of Vanderbilt University and holds an MSW with a concentration in social and economic development from Washington University in St. Louis.