



## Foundation for Child Development Young Scholars Program 2018

### Convening

Preparing the ECE Workforce to Meet the Diverse Needs of Children  
*Challenges, Opportunities, and Policy Solutions*



### Speaker and Attendee Biographies

**Gina Adams**, a senior fellow in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute, is a national expert on factors that shape the affordability, quality, and supply of child care/early education services, and the ability of low-income families to benefit from them. Since the mid-1980s, she has worked on a range of child care and early education programs, including child care subsidies, Head Start/Early Head Start, state prekindergarten, two-generation models, and quality initiatives. She led seminal research on how families, providers, and agency staff experience the subsidy system that supported state and federal efforts to create subsidy systems that are family-friendly and fair to providers. Adams codirects Urban's Kids in Context initiative. Her current research interests include working across program silos to address challenges that instability and insecurity create for children's healthy development, helping states simplify their child care systems to align them with SNAP or Medicaid, examining the intersection between child care and workforce development strategies, exploring factors that affect whether children of immigrants participate in state prekindergarten programs, examining absenteeism in early childhood programs, and assessing two-generational models. She has led major multistate or multisite qualitative studies and mixed-method studies. She also has extensive experience in public speaking, technical assistance, and publishing for a wide-ranging audience. Before joining Urban in 1999, Adams directed child care research at the Children's Defense Fund and worked as a child care teacher for infants and as a home visitor for low-income Latino families.

**Shirley Adelstein** is a senior research associate in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute. Her research focuses on programs and policies that promote child and family well-being and gender equity, particularly in the areas of early care and education and work-family policy. From 2008 to 2011, Dr. Adelstein conducted research evaluating impacts of the Tulsa, OK, universal pre-K and Head Start programs as a research fellow at the Georgetown University Center for Research on Children in the U.S., where she is currently affiliated as a non-resident senior fellow. Immediately prior to joining Urban, she worked as an analyst at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, where her research focused on work-family policies, benefits, and trends for the federal workforce, especially in the areas of workplace flexibility, child care subsidies, and other supports for working caregivers. She completed her BA in Social History at New York University and received her MPP and PhD in Government from Georgetown University.

**Lea J. E. Austin** is Co-Director of the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at UC Berkeley. Lea knows that the preparation, working conditions, and compensation of early childhood educators matters for their own well-being and are inextricably linked to the quality of early care and education services for children. Thus, Lea is committed to achieving public policies and investments that support an early care and education system that is effective and equitable for children and their teachers. She conducts research and analysis focused on early childhood educators and has more than 15 years of extensive experience in the areas of workforce development, early childhood leadership competencies and curricula, and public policy and administration. Her specific interest in securing access and opportunities to leadership and decision-making roles in the field for early educators of color were spurred by her work with Mills College in Oakland, California, and First 5 Alameda County (California), where she developed leadership programs in higher education and community settings and implemented a professional development initiative focused on attainment of college education. She is a co-author of the Early Childhood Workforce Index (2018), *What does good child care reform look like?* (2017), *California's ECE Workforce: What We Know Now and the Data Deficit That Remains* (2018), and numerous other research and policy papers focused on the preparation, working conditions, and compensation of early educators. Lea earned a master's degree

in Public Administration from California State University, Hayward, and an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from Mills College.

**Paula Bendl Smith** is a Child Care Specialist for the Office of Child Care's Technical Assistance Division where she serves as the primary lead for child care workforce issues and consumer education. Prior to joining OCC Paula was the Director of Training at the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (now CCA), and served as the founding Executive Director of Kentucky's CCR&R State Network where she launched coaching, training, professional development scholarship and counseling state systems and consumer education programs to support Kentucky's child care quality rating and improvement system (QRIS).

**Shannon Christian** serves as the Director of the Office of Child Care at HHS' Administration for Children and Families. She is a former Associate Commissioner of the former Child Care Bureau at ACF, where she advanced President Bush's Good Start, Grow Smart early childhood initiative, and shaped the office's research agenda to better support state policy and spending decisions. Committed to effective prevention strategies, Shannon oversaw the launch of Illinois' home visiting program and was an active board member of Be Strong Families, a Chicago-based national nonprofit. Earlier in her career, Shannon was part of former Wisconsin Governor (and HHS secretary) Tommy Thompson's welfare reform team, serving as head of the planning section in the state Health & Social Services Department's Office of Policy and Budget, and as Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Workforce Development. Shannon has an MPP from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, a certificate in nonprofit management from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Business, and an undergraduate degree in economics and international relations from California State University, Chico.

**Jerlean Daniel** is a former Executive Director of the National Association for the Education of Young Children prior to which she served as faculty and Chair of the Applied Developmental Psychology Program and Psychology in Education Department at the University of Pittsburgh. She was a child care center director for 18 years.

**Devon Genua** is a research assistant with the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute. She currently supports projects focusing on early childhood home visiting, early care and education, adolescent sexual health and safety, and supports for child-welfare involved families. Genua graduated with honors and highest distinction from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a B.A. in Public Policy.

**Danielle Gonzales** is the Managing Director for the Education & Society Program at the Aspen Institute. The Program works to inform, influence, and inspire education leaders across policy and practice to improve Pre-k-12 education, especially for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. In this role, she leads efforts to convene senior education leaders at all levels of education to tackle the most vexing issues in education, to develop and foster partnerships with a diverse range of education leaders, and to write and develop publications and resources associated with professional learning; social, emotional, and academic development; and educational equity. Prior to this, Danielle was a Senior Program Officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation working to advance the Foundation's K-12 strategy in key states and developing the Foundation's strategy for engaging faith communities in education reform. Danielle has over 15 years of experience in education philanthropy, policy and advocacy in both pre-k and K-12 education and at both the state and national level. She began her career teaching fourth grade in Brownsville, TX.

**Rolf Grafwallner** is Program Director for Early Childhood Initiatives at the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) in Washington, D.C. where he works with states to improve learning opportunities and outcomes for young children. Prior to joining the Council, Dr. Grafwallner worked on early childhood policy and school reform as an Assistant State Superintendent at the Maryland State Department of Education. He has been a teacher, program director and administrator prior to joining the Department. He supports CEELO with expertise on large scale early childhood assessments, governance, finance, and organizational leadership, as well as early education systems building.

**Tamara Halle** is a developmental psychologist and a senior scholar in the early childhood research area at Child Trends. She has over 20 years of experience conducting research and evaluation studies on factors associated with children's early development, especially the professional development of the early childhood workforce; the quality of early care and education settings; and family, school, and community supports for school readiness. Her recent work has focused on dual language learners and the application of implementation science to early care and education programs and systems. Dr. Halle is known both nationally and internationally as an expert on early childhood development, the early childhood workforce, and implementation science. She has worked with numerous states in support of their early childhood initiatives. Dr. Halle has contributed to the design and analysis of several large-scale national surveys, including the NSECE, ECLS-B, ECLS-K, FACES, and the NLSY97. Dr. Halle also serves on the Implementation Research Advisory Committee for the Foundation for Child Development and as a senior advisor within the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (NCPFCE). She previously served on the Technical Work Group for the Center for Early Care and Education Research–Dual Language Learners (CECER-DLL) and as a research specialist for the National Center on Child Care Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives (PDW Center).

**Winona Hao** directs NASBE's Early Childhood Education (ECE) work. She provides state policymakers with ECE policy trends, analyses, and technical assistance. Hao oversees NASBE's ECE State Network where she supports state teams and works with national partners to advance the workforce for children from birth through age eight. For eight years, Hao taught children from birth to age five in China and the U.S. As an immigrant, she is a strong advocate for dual language learners and believes all children can thrive through effective early education. Hao also worked at Save the Children and the Institute of Public Policy at the George Washington University, from which she also earned a master's degree in international education policy.

**Jacqueline Jones** is the Foundation for Child Development's President & CEO, where she is responsible for developing and implementing its strategic vision and goals. Prior to her tenure at the Foundation for Child Development, Dr. Jones served as a Senior Advisor on Early Learning to Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and as the country's first Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Early Learning in the U.S. Department of Education. Prior to her position in the Obama Administration, Dr. Jones served as the Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Early Childhood Education in the New Jersey State Department of Education and as a Senior Research Scientist at the Educational Testing Service in Princeton for over 15 years. Dr. Jones has been a visiting faculty member at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a full-time faculty member at the City University of New York. She received both her master's and Ph.D. degrees from Northwestern University.

**Anna Kimura** is the Policy Assistant at the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD). As the Policy Assistant, Anna helps manage the SRCD Policy Fellowship Program which places post-doctoral and pre-doctoral fellows in Congress as well as federal and state executive branch agencies. She supports the work of SRCD's Policy Team by helping to disseminate child development research to policymakers and stakeholders, while also working to communicate relevant child and family policy issues to SRCD members. Anna holds her B.A. in Child Study and Human Development from Tufts University where she completed her senior thesis examining the development and implementation of an anti-bias education curriculum at a local public elementary school.

**Sarah LeMoine** is the Senior Director for ZERO TO THREE's Professional Development and Workforce Innovations department. Ms. LeMoine has focused her career on early childhood professional development systems and workforce issues. She holds an MS in leadership and policy with extensive experience of almost 30 years ranging from direct service work to national-level research and writing, technical assistance and training, policy analysis, and advocacy. Previously, she directed ACF's PDW Center at ZERO TO THREE, NAEYC's State Workforce Systems Policy, and held leadership and technical assistance positions with the National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) and the Wheelock College Center for Career Development. Ms. LeMoine has authored and co-developed numerous professional development systems publications and tools, including the ZERO TO THREE Critical Competencies for Infant-Toddler Educators; Office of Child Care/Office of Head Start's PD system cost analysis tool and the Strengthening the Workforce toolkit focused on workplace conditions, compensation, and access to PD; chapters in Teachers College Press edited volumes on workforce and PD competencies and system policies and governance; NAEYC/NACCRRAs Training and TA Glossary; NAEYC's Policy

Blueprint for State PD systems; NCCIC's simplified PD systems model; and the first national TA paper on cross-sector PD systems. She has been honored to facilitate and present at hundreds of conferences at state, regional, national, and international conferences and meetings. Sarah is also proud to serve on numerous ongoing and shorter-term international, national, and state advisory boards and workgroups, including currently: the National Academy of Medicine's B-8 Workforce executive group and wider advisory body, the Power to the Profession Task Force staff representative, NAEYC's working/advisory groups on diversity and professional standards/competencies, and the Early Childhood Personnel Center national collaborating partners and expert groups.

**Naomie Macena** is a Program Officer at the Foundation for Child Development responsible for developing and monitoring a grant portfolio, including leading the Young Scholars Program.

Prior to joining the Foundation, Naomie was a Program Officer at The Pershing Square Foundation where she managed the Pershing Square Sohn Cancer Research Alliance, a \$25 million program funding research in New York City. The Alliance is dedicated to pursuing breakthroughs in curing cancer by advancing the most innovative cancer research and by facilitating collaborations between the science and business communities. Naomie received her BS in Criminal Justice and MA in Sociology from St. John's University in Queens, New York and her master's in Social Work from Andrews University in Michigan

**Ivelisse Martinez-Beck** is a Senior Social Science Research Analyst and the Child Care Research Team Leader in the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Prior to her appointment as Team Leader in OPRE, she held a Society for Research in Child Development Executive Branch Policy Fellowship with the Child Care Bureau, (currently Office of Child Care). At OPRE she leads the planning for research funded with research set-aside funds from the CCDBG Act of 2014 and manages projects focused on the quality of early care and education (ECE) programs, research on Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS), professional development of the early childhood workforce, and access to high quality ECE by low-income families and children. Ivelisse is Project Officer for the National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE), the CCEEPRA project, and the Variations in Implementation of Quality Interventions (VIQI) study. Dr. Martinez-Beck received a B.A. in Liberal Arts from the University of Puerto Rico and a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology and Linguistics from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

**Sarah Merrill** is an Infant Toddler Program Specialist from the Office of Early Child Development with a focus on Head Start. She currently works on infant/toddler program issues and professional development birth to five. She has 30 years of experience in the infant toddler field. She was an infant/toddler child care teacher for 14 years in Boston, MA. She served as a National Head Start Fellow in 2000-2001, and focused on Early Head Start. She worked a variety of capacities with ZERO TO THREE for 10 years, including Senior Early Childhood Associate within the Head Start Bureau, Mentor Coach Coordinator for the Learning, Literacy and Life Project, and Senior Training Specialist / Writer for the Early Head Start National Resource Center (EHSNRC). Sarah received a Bachelor Degree in infant/toddler child development and a Masters in teacher leadership from Wheelock College in Boston.

**Abena Ocran-Jackson** is the Director of Council Programs at the Council for Professional Recognition. She is responsible for the effective management (organization, planning, execution, control and evaluation) of all aspects of the Child Development Associate (CDA), new products and services. Ms. Ocran-Jackson has over 20 years working in early care and education in a variety of roles from preschool teacher, senior director of NAEYC's Accreditation department and as director of teacher preparation with KinderCare Education. In 2015, she was named one of the Exceptional Leaders in the field of early childhood by Childcare Exchange's Leadership Initiative. Ms. Ocran-Jackson has moderated and presented in extensively at local, state, and national early childhood conferences. Ms. Ocran-Jackson has a Bachelor's degree in Human Development from Howard University and also holds a Master's degree in Nonprofit Management from Trinity Washington University.

**Aisha Ray** is a Professor Emerita of Child Development at Erikson Institute, and a Distinguished Fellow at the BUILD Initiative. She has taught learners from preschool to graduate school; supported the development of community-based

programs serving culturally, racially and linguistically diverse children, families and practitioners; and led professional development efforts for the early childhood workforce serving children birth to age eight. Her areas of research include racial equity and diversity in early childhood professional development systems; multigenerational Black family childrearing; and the role of fathers in child rearing in low-income Black communities. She has written and presented on effective early education practices and policies for children in poverty, boys of color, and culturally and linguistically diverse children; family engagement; culturally responsive teacher preparation; and building equitable state early childhood systems. Dr. Ray is the former Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty at Erikson Institute.<sup>o</sup><sup>ll</sup> Currently she is working on a variety of projects including: co-leader of the BUILD Initiative's Equity Leaders Action Network; senior advisor to the President of the National Black Child Development Committee; member of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Early Learning of the New York State Board of Regents; and advisor to the Illinois Early Learning Council's Executive Committee on racial equity. In addition, she is a community activist engaged in issues related to Black child development and racial equity in Chicago. Dr. Ray earned a doctorate and a master's degree in developmental psychology from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor; a master's degree in early education from Erikson Institute/Loyola University of Chicago; and a bachelor's degree in history from Grinnell College.

**Tonja Rucker** Tonja currently serves as the Director for Early Childhood Success in the Institute for Youth Education and Families at the National League of Cities. She is responsible for developing and overseeing implementation of the Institute's work plans and long-term strategies for early education. She conceptualizes and leads efforts to identify and document best practices and promising initiatives, oversees the implementation of TA, and contributes to the overall management of the Institute, including strategic planning, coordination of cross-program initiatives, and identification and cultivation of prospective funders. Tonja works directly with mayors, city councilmembers, and other municipal officials in creating local systems of support for parents, children, and youth in their communities. By helping cities develop the necessary local infrastructure and providing concrete ideas and tools for policy and programmatic action, a significant number of cities and towns have positioned themselves as models for investing in children's healthy growth and development. Prior to joining the NLC team, Tonja served as Transition Coordinator for Baltimore City Head Start and as an Adjunct Professor at the University of Maryland College Park. She serves on a variety of boards and committees, supporting and advising national and local work for young children. She has a doctorate in Human Development from the University of Maryland College Park and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Spelman College.

**Heather Sandstrom** is a principal research associate in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute. Her research focuses on early childhood development and public programs that support the well-being of low-income children and families, such as Head Start and Early Head Start, public prekindergarten, child care subsidies, and early childhood home visiting. Her most recent projects have studied parents and child care providers who are immigrants or limited English proficient. Before joining Urban, Sandstrom worked as an independent early childhood research consultant, serving organizations and institutions around the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, including Child Trends and the Maryland State Department of Education. Sandstrom has a Ph.D. in human development with a certification in measurement, statistics, and evaluation from the University of Maryland, College Park.

**Maurice Sykes** serves as senior associate at the early childhood leadership institute where he focuses on policy and practices related to developing new leaders to the field of early childhood education. Maurice was recently inducted into the Washington DC Hall of Fame for his numerous contributions to the field of education.

**Dexter Taylor** is a Research Manager at the Council for Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. Dexter completed his Ph.D. in Social Psychology at University of Maryland, College Park and his undergraduate studies in Psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University. His research interests include workforce development, public health, and stereotyping and prejudice with an eye toward programs and policies that affect vulnerable populations including children, minorities, and people with disabilities. He has collaborated with researchers across several disciplines including sociology, economics, and public health.

**Christy Tirrell-Corbin, PhD** Christy Tirrell-Corbin, PhD, is the Director of the Early Childhood/Early Childhood Special Education Teacher Preparation program and the Executive Director of the Center for Early Childhood Education and

Intervention at the University of Maryland. Dr. Tirrell-Corbin has worked extensively with Title I (high poverty) schools to increase family engagement and raise awareness of teacher beliefs and practices relative to race, culture and socioeconomic status. She has also studied teacher candidates' beliefs and practices around race and culture. Dr. Tirrell-Corbin has been the principal investigator/project director of multiple evaluation projects, to include: Evaluation of Maryland's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant program, Evaluation of the Birth to Five Service Delivery Models in Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education and an Evaluation of the Efficacy of Maryland's Family Engagement Framework.

**Sara Vecchiotti** is the Chief Program Officer at the Foundation and is responsible for program and grant development and monitoring and communications. Prior to this position, Dr. Vecchiotti served as the Chief Operating Officer for Lutheran Social Services of New York where she oversaw all social service programs. Dr. Vecchiotti has also held several leadership positions at the New York City Administration for Children's Services within the Division of Early Care and Education. Dr. Vecchiotti has completed the Society for Research in Child Development Congressional Fellowship in the Office of Senator Jeff Bingaman working on early care and education policy and the Executive Branch Fellowship in the Office of Child Care at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She has also held fellowships at the Foundation for Child Development, Yale Child Study Center, Columbia University, Teachers College and the Edward Zigler Center in Child Development and Social Policy. Dr. Vecchiotti holds a doctorate in Applied Developmental Psychology from Fordham University and law degree from New York Law School.

**Martha Zaslow** is Director of the Office for Policy and Communications of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) and a Senior Scholar at Child Trends. As Director of the SRCD Office for Policy and Communications, she facilitates the dissemination of research to decision-makers and the broader public through Congressional and Executive branch briefings, research briefs, and press releases focusing on research in *Child Development*, SRCD's peer reviewed journal. She also monitors and keeps the SRCD membership apprised of social policy and science policy developments related to children and families. She directs the SRCD Policy Fellowship Program, working with the SRCD Policy Fellows who have placements in the Executive Branch and Congress. As a Senior Scholar at Child Trends, Martha conducts research focusing on professional development of the early childhood workforce, and approaches to improving the quality of early childhood programs. Martha recently served on the Secretary's Advisory Committee for Head Start Research and Evaluation and on the Committee on Developmental Outcomes and Assessments of Young Children of the National Research Council.