

# Student-Parent Data Stories: How Collecting Data on Parenting Students Affects Policy, Practice, and People's Lives

## Speaker Biographies

**Yoslin Amaya Hernandez** is Student Advocacy Coordinator at Generation Hope. She is a Generation Hope Alumni and a recent graduate of the University of Maryland with a Bachelor's in Government and Politics. She also graduated from Montgomery College in 2019 with an Associates in General Studies. As a teen parent/student parent, Yoslin understands first hand the struggles of juggling college while also parenting. Being an Alumni of the program, Yoslin holds Generation Hope's mission near and dear to her heart and is excited to join the team as their first ever Student Advocacy Coordinator. Being a woman of color, DACA recipient and student parent, she has experienced how transformative her college degree has been for her and her family and knows too well the economic mobility it provides. As a result of her lived experience and the support she received from Generation Hope, she was able to advocate for herself and student parents across the nation through various engagements. She is excited to join the organization and continue her advocacy efforts to make higher education more equitable for parenting students and other marginalized groups. Prior to working with Generation Hope, she was the Community Liaison for Maryland Delegate Jared Solomon and served as Parent Advisor for Ascend's Postsecondary Success For Parents Initiative. During her free time she enjoys cooking and spending time with her family.

**Theresa Anderson** is a principal research associate at the Urban Institute. She is a member of the Building America's Workforce cross-center initiative in the Income and Benefits Policy Center and is affiliated with the Center on Education Data and Policy. She is interested in improving access to and success in education throughout the life course, from early childhood to adulthood. Her work has focused on student parents, low-income families, opportunity youth, adult education students, underprepared college students, high school students from historically underserved populations, and public housing residents. She is the co-founder of the Student-Parent Action through Research Knowledge (SPARK) Collaborative and co-lead of the Data-to-Action Campaign for Parenting Students. With input from a diverse Leadership Council, she co-led the development of the Student-Parent Families at the Center Framework and Roadmap for Change, which map opportunities for stakeholders across the field to support pregnant and parenting students and their families as they pursue their education career, and life goals.

**Tanya Ang** serves as Managing Director of Advocacy at Higher Learning Advocates. She comes with over 20 years of higher education experience with much of that experience focused on identifying and promoting policies that best support ways to increase access and attainment of higher learning for all students. She believes higher education can be as life changing for others as it was for her and her siblings, all first-generation students. Prior to coming to Higher Learning Advocates, Tanya served as the Vice President of Veterans Education Success where she worked to ensure military-connected students had access to high-quality education. She has also worked at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and served as the Director of Veterans Programs at the American Council on Education. Tanya began her career in higher education working at two universities as an Administrative Analyst for the Vice President of Student Affairs Office at California State University – Fullerton and as Associate Registrar at Vanguard University where most of her work focused on supporting post-traditional students.

**Marlee Breakstone** is Senior Policy Manager at Generation Hope. She was born and raised in Connecticut but has always dreamed of calling Washington, DC home. She graduated from the University of Michigan with a major in reproductive health policy and minors in history and women's studies. After college, she worked both at nonprofits and on campaigns to elect progressive candidates. Most recently, Marlee

worked in the reproductive health, rights and justice movement at an organization called Catholics for Choice. Driven by her values and her commitment to social and reproductive justice, Marlee is thrilled to join the team at Generation Hope and help the organization grow its impact in the policy and advocacy space as the organization's first Senior Policy Manager. Outside of work, Marlee can be found visiting local thrift shops, doing puzzles or exploring DC with her rescue dog, Ruthie (RBG).

**Miriam Cullimore** has served as the Student Parent and Whole Family Coordinator for the Minnesota Office of Higher Education since October, 2021, where she works to advance student parent initiatives, coordinate the state's approach to support student parents, and works collaboratively across public and private agencies to ensure student parent interests are included. Prior to this, Ms. Cullimore served as Project Manager for ShowMe Healthy Relationships, a federally-funded healthy marriage initiative project at the University of Missouri, for six years and has over ten years of experience in program and performance management, program development and implementation, networking, outreach, and program marketing. She is a strong community and social services professional who has spent 16 years supporting high needs/low resource families. She possesses a Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Science degree and a Master of Public Affairs degree from the University of Missouri, as well as graduate certificates in Nonprofit Management and Grantsmanship. Miriam is married with three children (2 at home, 1 grown!) and loves to garden, camp, and hike.

**Autumn R. Green** is a Nonresident Fellow in the Income and Benefits Policy Center at the Urban Institute. She is also Twink Frey Visiting Social Activist at the Center for the Education of Women+, University of Michigan.

**Dr. Erica Hernandez** is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Bowie State University (BSU), the oldest of Maryland's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). She is also the Faculty Principal Investigator for BSU's Child Care Access Means Parents In School (CCAMPIS) grant and Project Director for BSU's Ascend at the Aspen Institute's Black and Native Family Futures Fund. As a faculty member, Dr. Hernandez has taught many student-parents over her 10 years at BSU. She is the faculty advisor for the Student Parent Association, a student group for student-parents. Dr. Hernandez is a Faculty Innovation Fellow through the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford University, where she applied a design thinking approach to increasing student success for student-parents. She also is the Faculty Champion of a team of BSU student-parents participating in the University Innovation Fellows program through Stanford. Dr. Hernandez completed the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) Emerging Leader Program as member of the 2021 cohort and is a current Participant Leader in the 2023 cohort of the American Psychological Association's Leadership Institute for Women in Psychology.

**Heather King** is the inaugural Project & Policy Analyst for Basic Needs at University of California Office of the President where she provides systemwide guidance, coordination and analysis for basic needs. She has been working for the past decade to better understand and support college student basic needs insecurities and parenting student challenges through programming, direct practice, research and policy analysis with an emphasis on disproportionate impact. Compelled by the inequitable impacts of basic needs insecurities and lack of parenting supports in higher education that she both observed and experienced herself, Heather was among the first in her field to conduct community-based research on SNAP eligibility barriers for college students and helped found California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt's respected Oh SNAP! Food Programs as a Master of Social Work student. This inspired her to pursue her Ph.D. in Public Policy from Oregon State University (OSU). At OSU, she served as Instructor of Record for several courses in sociology and political science while pursuing her studies. Heather served as OSU's Family Resource Center Advisory Board Chair for three years, as a CalWORKs and Rapid Rehousing Counselor in the California Community Colleges and as a Social Work Instructor in the California State University system.

She is currently writing her dissertation on the impacts of programming and policy for parenting students. Throughout her educational-professional journey, Heather has served on equity and resource boards, task forces and grass roots community efforts. She has also paused her studies to conduct direct practice in higher education and community-based organizations that serve low-income populations, believing it both important to stay connected with the realities of ground conditions and to pass knowledge forward.

**Portia Polk** is Director of Learning and Advocacy at Generation Hope. She is a graduate of American University with a Master's in Public Administration and of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a B.A. in Anthropology and Peace, War, and Defense. Before Generation Hope, she served as an associate for the Postsecondary Success for Parents Initiative at Ascend at the Aspen Institute, an organization committed to the economic and social mobility of families through the two-generation approach to poverty. In that role, she focused on the challenges and opportunities faced by students who are parents on their journey towards postsecondary completion. Prior to that role, she served as a high school college advisor for the Carolina College Advising Corps, a nonprofit that uses the near-peer model to place recent college graduates in high schools across NC to increase the number of low-income, first-generation college, and underrepresented high school students who enter and complete higher education.

**Caroline Sanders** is Associate Director, Community Relations and Engagement at Eastern Michigan University and Washtenaw County Commissioner -- District 4. She is an advocate for family, friends, workers, and her community. She has over fourteen years of non-profit board leadership experience, having served various boards in Washtenaw and Wayne counties and has recently been re-elected as Washtenaw County Commissioner for District 4 - Pittsfield Township, Michigan. Caroline has been a student, staff member and an administrator at Eastern Michigan University for over thirty years. She is a nontraditional student who has earned degrees from Oakland Community College and Eastern Michigan University. Her reputation is that of being a collaborative "doer" with respectable success securing financial and in-kind resources to support the community members she serves. Caroline has advocated for single mothers, students with children, young adults, seniors and the most voiceless for decades. Her advocacy has led her to create the only Students with Children student organization at EMU, successfully convinced the governor's staff to request the fifteen public universities to complete a report on the status, hurdles and services provided to students with children on their respective campuses.

**Dr. Jamie Williams** is a Senior Higher Education Impact Manager in Generation Hope's Learning & Innovation department. In this role, Jamie provides support to colleges and universities interested in taking action to further elevate student parent success at their institutions. As a child of teen parents and a former student parent, Jamie joined Generation Hope with about 20 years of nonprofit and education experience primarily working as an advocate, educator, researcher, and capacity builder to further community-driven collective impact initiatives, basic needs security, and more equitable access to quality education and economic mobility. In addition to being an AmeriCorps Alum, Jamie earned a Doctorate in Public Administration from West Chester University of Pennsylvania, an M.Ed. in Counseling from Frostburg State University, and a B.S. in Psychology from the University of Pittsburgh.