



**EVENT  
PROGRAM**

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# FROM THE RAPSA BOARD PRESIDENT

WELCOME TO THE AAPF

## Dear 2017 Alternative Accountability Policy Forum Attendees:

Welcome to Coronado Island and the Sixth Annual Alternative Accountability Policy Forum. I am glad to see so many friends returning among the 250 education, workforce and community leaders here to share best practices and policy needs of those who serve dropouts, opportunity youth and other critically at-risk students. Those RAPSAs call "at-promise" students. Students no longer at-risk of failure, but at-promise of success because of your passion and courageous leadership. This year's 22 concurrent sessions with more than 50 presenters provide practitioners, researchers, and others who understand that making a difference in the lives of at-promise students requires inspired commitment, alternative tools, and meaningful measurements.

Our forum builds new friendships and strengthens long term alliances. The event begins with a compelling keynote address from Dr. Howard Fuller, one of the nation's leading advocates for school choice to serve the most disadvantaged children in America. The forum concludes with a general session focused on what's really happening in Congress for at-promise students. We are glad to welcome two important congressional staff members who work with the Members of the House Education and Workforce Committee, Mandy Schaumburg and Jacque Chevalier.

This year's Policy Forum helps us all to raise the need for alternative metrics as states are attempting to develop Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) compliant systems for addressing the needs of at-promise students. We appreciate the commitments made this year by the California Department of Education, the Gardner Center, and the Stuart Foundation to ensure that our event and your voices are part of that discussion in California.



We also have representatives of the Kentucky and Colorado Departments of Education discussing their statewide policy efforts as well as experts from national organizations like America's Promise Alliance, American Youth Policy Forum, Civic Enterprises, and Jobs For the Future, exploring what ESSA-compliant means in the context of reengaged dropouts, opportunity youth, and other at-promise students. In all, we have leaders from twenty states from California to New York and Washington to Florida.

This year's Forum showcases the exciting Rapsa Awards event. We are awarding five Rapsa Courage Awards each with a \$1,000 scholarship for at-promise students who demonstrate courage in overcoming obstacles and pursuing academic excellence. The Rapsa Heart Award for education leaders who demonstrate a heart for at-promise students and the challenges that they face goes to

Dr. Debra Duardo, Superintendent of the Los Angeles County Office of Education. And, congratulations to Colorado State Senator Rhonda Fields, who is the deserving recipient of the Rapsa Vision Award.

Rapsa is most proud of bringing leaders together to share strategies and to learn from each other. Our work on common challenges unique to the at-promise population is making a big difference for our students, their communities, and the Nation.

Thank you for all that you do to reengage at-promise youth.

Sincerely,

**Linda Dawson, EdD**

President, Reaching At-Promise Students Association Superintendent/CEO, School for Integrated Academics and Technologies (SIATech)



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# AGENDA-AT-A-GLANCE

## WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 15

**2:00–3:30 PM** **THE CALIFORNIA STRATEGY PRE-CONFERENCE**  
TIDELANDS  
Open to all interested attendees.

**5:00–6:00 PM** **WELCOME RECEPTION**  
CORONADO BALLROOM FOYER

## THURSDAY NOVEMBER 16

**7:00–8:00 AM** **BREAKFAST**  
CORONADO BALLROOM FOYER

**8:00–9:00 AM** **WELCOME AND KEYNOTE: DR. HOWARD FULLER**

**9:15–10:15 AM** **BREAKOUT SESSIONS I**

CORONADO A/B The Life-Changing Power of Abundant Reading

CORONADO C Resources and Strategies for Alternative School Accountability

CORONADO D 20 Years of Reengagement Success: Seattle’s Partnership for Connecting At-Promise Students to College

TIDELANDS Implementing Mentoring Programs with At-Promise Teens

**10:45–11:45 AM** **BREAKOUT SESSIONS II**

CORONADO A/B Using “Students at the Center” Resources to Strengthen Instruction

CORONADO C Leveraging Social Supports for At-Promise Students

CORONADO D Building Bridges to College for California Opportunity Youth: The Role of CBOs and Pathways in Community College Relationships

TIDELANDS The Role of Authorizers and School Boards in Schools Serving At-Promise Youth

**12:00–1:30 PM** **RAPSA AWARDS LUNCHEON**

**1:45–2:45 PM** **BREAKOUT SESSIONS III**  
CORONADO A/B Continuous Improvement of Alternative Education in Kentucky: Support, Recognition and Accountability

CORONADO C District-Wide Social Emotional Learning: Cultivating Champions to Build Capacity and Sustainability

CORONADO D Now What? Developing Post-Secondary Options for Reengaged Youth

TIDELANDS A Synthesis of Academic Interventions for Students in Alternative High Schools

**3:00–4:00 PM** **BREAKOUT SESSIONS IV**

CORONADO A/B Measuring Effectiveness of Student Reengagement Programs

CORONADO C Trends and Opportunities in Statewide Accountability for Youth in Alternative Schools under ESSA

CORONADO D Flip the Script San Diego: 53,000 Reasons to Change the Story of San Diego’s Opportunity Youth

TIDELANDS Starting with Students

**4:30–5:30 PM** **EVENING RECEPTION**

## FRIDAY NOVEMBER 17

**7:30–8:30 AM** **BREAKFAST**  
CORONADO BALLROOM FOYER

**8:30–9:30 AM** **BREAKOUT SESSIONS V**

CORONADO A/B Opportunity Measures: Validating Unique Student Outcomes and School Success

CORONADO C Retention and Other Measures to Demonstrate Successful Outcomes for At-Promise Students

CORONADO D Developing Trauma Informed Systems: Lessons Learned

TIDELANDS Reengaging Students with a Student Engagement Department

**9:45–10:45 AM** **BREAKOUT SESSIONS VI**

CORONADO C High-Stake Stories: How to Break Through Fake News with Real Lives

CORONADO D Reengaging At-Promise Students: Equity Advocacy In Action

**11:00 AM** **CLOSING GENERAL SESSION**

# EVENT AGENDA

## WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 15

**2:00–3:30 PM**

TIDELANDS

### The California Strategy – Pre-Conference

*Graciously sponsored by the **Stuart Foundation***

This pre-conference session (open to all interested attendees) examines the role of alternative accountability in California. Dr. Jorge Ruiz de Velasco of Stanford University and Project Staff Director of the Alternative Schools Task Force will discuss the importance of metrics that reflect the needs of students and schools which focus on at-risk students. Department of Education representatives will discuss the strategy for incorporating alternative accountability metrics into the California Accountability Model and School Dashboard. Ernie Silva, RAPSA Executive Director, will highlight AAPF sessions of interest related to the development of alternative metrics.

**3:30–6:00 PM**

### Registration

**5:00–6:00 PM**

CORONADO

BALLROOM FOYER

### Welcome Reception

*Graciously sponsored by the **Coronado Island Marriott Resort & Spa***

As a way to break the ice and make new connections, bring a piece of branded bling to swap with another fellow attendee!

## THURSDAY NOVEMBER 16

**7:00 AM**

### Registration Opens

**7:00–8:00 AM**

CORONADO

BALLROOM FOYER

### Breakfast

**8:00–9:00 AM**

CORONADO

BALLROOM

### Welcome and Keynote Address: Dr. Howard Fuller



Dr. Howard Fuller, PhD, is nationally known for his unending support of transformative education options that empower low-income families. Dr. Fuller is recognized for his work as a civil rights activist, education reform advocate, as well as a respected academic. He is a Distinguished Professor of Education, and Founder/Director of the Institute for the Transformation of Learning at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Fuller's recent book, *No Struggle No Progress*, is based on the truth he found in the words of African-American statesman and abolitionist Frederick Douglass: "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did, and it never will." An *Education Week* book review concludes, "Howard has always worried a helluva lot more about fighting for his principles than about placating his friends." AAPF attendees will receive a complimentary copy of Dr. Fuller's book. Dr. Fuller's keynote will recognize that reengagement demands alternative strategies as well as valuing the work of educators who struggle to reengage youth. He will challenge attendees to be fearless advocates for equity and to empower underserved students.

Join the conversation on social media by using the hashtag **#AAPF17**

9:15–10:15 AM

**BREAKOUT SESSIONS I**

CORONADO A/B

**The Life-Changing Power of Abundant Reading****Presenter:** Jan Bryan, Renaissance

Dr. Jan Bryan, former professor and current education officer for Renaissance, will lead a session focused on differentiated and individualized instruction for reading and the use of multiple metrics to quantify reading growth. Attendees will explore practices proven to yield achievement and growth gains. Further, they will explore reading's impact on vocabulary acquisition and how that impacts job advancement outside of school to understand why wide abundant reading is the surest route out of poverty.

CORONADO C

**Resources and Strategies for Alternative School Accountability****Presenters:** Carinne Deeds, American Youth Policy Forum; and Christopher Mazzeo, Education Northwest

As state plans for school accountability under the Every Student Succeeds Act come forth, education leaders around the country are grappling with the best ways to ensure high-quality alternative schools while also allowing them flexibility to successfully fulfill their missions. Panelists will preview two forthcoming resources related to accountability for alternative education settings: (1) a policy brief designed to help education leaders better understand the framework of accountability for alternative education, and (2) a toolkit outlining the systems and processes states can use to ensure robust and relevant accountability for alternative schools. All panelists will reflect on the general purpose of accountability systems in alternative education and their role in ensuring the quality and continuous improvement of alternative education institutions.



## CORONADO D

**20 Years of Reengagement Success: Seattle's Partnership for Connecting At-Promise Students to College****Presenters:** Curt Peterson, Anissa Sharratt, Mike Sita, and Molly Ward, South Seattle College and Highline Public Schools

Supporting reengagement students from high school to college is not a distant dream. It's happening every day in Seattle through a 20-year partnership between Highline Public Schools and South Seattle College. Serving one of the most challenging parts of the city, a partnership built on trust, flexibility, and total commitment to student success is seeing students earn diplomas and transition to college. This presentation will explain the partnership, how it works, and its successes.

## TIDELANDS

**Implementing Mentoring Programs with At-Promise Teens****Presenters:** Sara Asmussen and Lisa DiGaudio, New Dawn Charter High School

Research shows that students who have strong personal connections at the school setting have a greater chance of achieving academic success. New Dawn leaders will outline how to develop a mentoring program that connects all adults in the school building with every student in the school, including sharing the results at New Dawn, a transfer high school in Brooklyn, NY. Presenters will share how New Dawn outperforms in persistence and other areas on the NYC School Survey and Quality Snapshot by developing and implementing a mentoring program. In this hands-on session, participants will work in small groups according to their mentoring experience to explore one of three relevant questions: How can a small scale mentoring program be adopted at your school? What would be necessary to develop a successful proposal and implement it? And, troubleshooting current practices: what is working and what isn't?

**10:15–10:45 AM Coffee and Networking Break**

CORONADO

BALLROOM FOYER



**10:45–11:45 AM BREAKOUT SESSIONS II****CORONADO A/B****Using “Students at the Center” Resources to Strengthen Instruction****Presenters:** Terry Grobe and Krista Sabados, Jobs For the Future

In this session participants will explore the principles of student-centered learning drawn from research and identify states where “Students at the Center” policies are being promoted. The session will connect participants to a range of resources that can guide and inform student-centered instructional work. A writing to learn strategy will be employed to assist participants in determining how to use the resources to strengthen or support practice in their particular contexts.

**CORONADO C****Leveraging Social Supports for At-Promise Students****Presenters:** Shannon Varga, America’s Promise Alliance

Dr. Shannon Varga will provide a social support mapping app for understanding the social supports available to at-promise youth and levers for optimizing their academic (and life) success. Participants will use provided tablets to work through an exercise using a social support mapping app that practitioners can use with youth to understand the youth’s web of supports. The session includes a discussion about how to use that information to optimize the supports that youth are and could be receiving. The session is relevant both for practitioners who work with at-promise youth as well as for policy advocates who are looking to design better policies to support at-promise youth.

**CORONADO D****Building Bridges to College for California Opportunity Youth: The Role of CBOs and Pathways in Community College Relationships****Presenters:** Elisha Smith Arrillaga, Ed Trust-West; Linda Dawson and Laurie Pianka, SIATech; Breeanna Decker and Joe Herrity, Opportunity Youth Partnership

This session will highlight how the Oakland–Alameda County Opportunity Youth Initiative (OACOYI), Santa Clara County Opportunity Youth Partnership (SCCOYP), and SIATech, a nonprofit charter high school focused on dropout recovery, are all leading efforts to create pathways to college for opportunity youth and young people in alternative high schools. We will showcase tools the collaboratives have used to bring together community-based organizations to partner with their local colleges and their progress in these collaboratives.

**TIDELANDS****The Role of Authorizers and School Boards in Schools Serving At-Promise Youth****Presenters:** Leslie Talbot, Talbot Consulting; Vanessa Threatte, SUNY Charter Schools Institute; and Darren Woodruff, DC Public Charter School Board

Hear from school board members and charter school authorizers about how they view their role in supporting the reengagement of at-promise youth. This interesting panel includes leaders from coast to coast and will be informed by surveys of frequent AAPF attendees. Session attendees will have time to ask questions and comment on the interviews and perspectives. If you’re trying to find out what school boards are thinking about their responsibilities to out-of-school youth and about reengagement, this is the session for you.

**12:00–1:30 PM**CORONADO  
BALLROOM

## Awards and Scholarships Luncheon

**Award Winners:** Page 12*Graciously sponsored by Learn4Life***1:45–2:45 PM**

CORONADO A/B

## BREAKOUT SESSIONS III

### Continuous Improvement of Alternative Education in Kentucky: Support, Recognition and Accountability

**Presenter:** Christina Weeter, Kentucky Department of Education

This presentation will provide attendees a holistic picture of the Kentucky Alternative Educational System and the state-level efforts to ensure a meaningful accountability process that promotes reflection, student voice, strengths, and continuous improvements. Data visuals, protocols, and example reports will be shared. Interaction with attendees will be infused throughout, including and the use of plickers (i.e., paper clickers) that allows live polling and immediate display of audience input as well as intermittent discussions. Kentucky assesses the extent of student progress toward proficiency and strives for accurate, understandable reporting so that all Kentucky education stakeholders have the data they need, including Career Technical Education measures.

CORONADO C

### District-Wide Social Emotional Learning: Cultivating Champions to Build Capacity and Sustainability

**Presenters:** Joelle Hood, Collaborate Learning Solutions; and Justin Brooks, Jerri Jameson, and Dianne Tiner, Kern High School District

Studies show that when Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is implemented district-wide and the focus starts with adults first, the outcomes for success and sustainability are much more likely. Last year, Collaborative Learning Solutions and Kern High School District partnered in a new Professional Learning/Internal Champion Coaching model called “Social Emotional Learning 2.0.” A team from each of the 23 high schools in the district gathered together monthly. In these monthly meetings, they participated in a full day of highly interactive and engaging Professional Learning with the expectation that they would take this new learning back to their classrooms and sites and come back with stories of best practices and challenges to overcome. These SEL Internal Champions also participated in an online Professional Learning network supporting each other with ideas, questions, resources, and inspiration. Learn how to use SEL and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports to become catalysts for positive change!

CORONADO D

### Now What? Developing Post-Secondary Options for Reengaged Youth

**Presenters:** Michelle Feist, FHI360; Thomas Showalter, NYEC; Kelly Henwood, Special Projects Manager at San Diego Continuing Education (SDCE); and Kevin Hickey, the Director of High School and Bridge Programs at Jewish Vocational Service

What are the latest ideas for creating relevant options beyond high school for youth with significant barriers to employment? Learn about work in Washington, DC; San Diego, CA and San Francisco, CA that is helping reengaged youth overcome barriers and increase college attainment rates and career success.



TIDELANDS

**A Synthesis of Academic Interventions for Students in Alternative High Schools**

**Presenter:** Sally Brown and Nicole Pyle, Utah State University

Dr. Nicole Pyle and Sally Brown will provide a systematic review of the academic interventions implemented in alternative high schools from 1970 to 2016. Limited high-quality research studies are available to inform researchers and educators of effective academic interventions to improve academic outcomes with youth who attend alternative high schools. The presenters will review the research base, highlight the most effective instructional strategies implemented in academic interventions, and suggest possible future research and implications for practice.

**2:45–3:00 PM**

CORONADO  
BALLROOM FOYER

**Coffee and Networking Break**

**3:00–4:00 PM**

CORONADO A/B

**BREAKOUT SESSIONS IV**

**Measuring Effectiveness of Student Reengagement Programs**

**Presenters:** Judith Martinez, Colorado Department of Education plus three Colorado Student Reengagement Grantees from Urban Suburban and Rural School Districts; Maurice Henrigues, Boulder Valley Schools; David Kollar, Jeffco School District; Sheila Pottorff, Poudre School District; and James Steward, Westminster Public Schools

The Colorado Student Reengagement Grant was launched in 2016 to assist local education providers in providing academic and support services to increase student reengagement at the secondary level. Attend this workshop and hear from Colorado districts that received this first-time funding to pilot innovations linked to student reengagement and implement effective research-based strategies. Discussion will include a review of key program components, lessons learned in tracking results, evaluation findings, and communicating results to policy makers.



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## CORONADO C

**Trends and Opportunities in Statewide Accountability for Youth in Alternative Schools under ESSA**

**Presenters:** Carinne Deeds, American Youth Policy Forum; Jody Ernst, Momentum Strategy and Research; Jorge Ruiz de Velasco, Stanford University Graduate School of Education; and Amy Schlessman, Rose Operating System for Education

This session will feature a panel of experts focused on understanding how states across the country are considering the unique characteristics of alternative options schools in the state school accountability plans. Panelists will examine how states are defining alternative schools, how states are approaching the overall design of alternative accountability systems, and specific indicators of continuous improvement. In addition, panelists will discuss how some states are building policy consensus on accountability approaches that balance the need for common measures, with the need for customization and innovative program design.

## CORONADO D

**Flip the Script San Diego: 53,000 Reasons to Change the Story of San Diego's Opportunity Youth**

**Presenters:** Ian Gordon, Youth Development Office San Diego; Omar Passons, Land use and construction attorney (Caltrans); Naomi Moore, Senior Peer Job Coach at CONNECT2Careers/SDWP; and Roshawn Brady, VP at Access

**Moderator:** Rebecca F. (Becky) Phillpott, Education Policy and Program Development Professional

San Diego Workforce Partnership and community partner panelists will present findings from the 2017 study "Flip the Script: 53,000 Reasons to Change the Story of San Diego's Opportunity Youth." Panelists will share details of early efforts to address the San Diego County youth disconnection crisis, data analysis gleaned from the 2017 study commissioned by the San Diego Workforce Partnership, and present a vision for how San Diego can flip the script for opportunity youth.

## TIDELANDS

**Starting with Students**

**Presenter:** Nelson Smith, National Association of Charter School Authorizers

States are getting more sophisticated in how they tell the story of student achievement and school performance; but many in the alternative education community think that even the latest accountability systems fail to take into account the situations and background of "our kids." This session will brainstorm the pros and cons of current systems, look at the barriers to thinking differently, and envision new approaches that meet public accountability needs but truly start with students. This session will be highly interactive and challenge our assumptions about who we serve and why.

4:00–4:30 PM

**Networking and Reflection Break**

4:30–5:30 PM

CORONADO  
BALLROOM FOYER**Evening Reception**

Graciously Sponsored by *Reaching At-Promise Students Association*

## FRIDAY NOVEMBER 17

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**7:30–8:30 AM**

CORONADO

BALLROOM FOYER

### Breakfast

*Graciously Sponsored by Renaissance*

**8:30–9:30 AM**

CORONADO A/B

## BREAKOUT SESSIONS V

### Opportunity Measures: Validating Unique Student Outcomes and School Success

**Presenters:** Mike Epke, Principal at The New America School-Thornton; Jody Ernst and Jim Griffin, Momentum Strategy and Research; and Jennifer Turnbull, The New America School Network

Together, Momentum Strategy & Research and a consortium of Colorado alternative education campuses are leading the way on a project demonstrating how the types of unique student outcomes central to alternative schools can be validated and used for accountability purposes. Attendees will hear a detailed account from a participating alternative school about the measures they are using in the Opportunity Measure Pilot Project and how the review process has helped validate data on measures that speak to their unique mission and the plan to incorporate this data into how the school is held accountable.

CORONADO C

### Retention and Other Measures to Demonstrate Successful Outcomes for At-Promise Students

**Presenters:** Janice Delagrammatikas and Diana Walsh-Reuss, Come Back Kids, Riverside County Office of Education

Join the conversation of meaningful outcome measures for at-promise students with leaders from the Come Back Kids program in Riverside County. This timely session provides opportunities Support Reengagement and Dropout Prevention to share strategies and seek consensus. Bring your approaches and questions about how dropout recovery schools are measuring retention and save rates, and any other measures they are using to demonstrate successful outcomes for students. The conversation will cover how schools are disaggregating data by student subgroups as well as by age and credit accrual. This session is geared at experienced education leaders and data nerds serving at-promise students from all states.

CORONADO D

### Developing Trauma Informed Systems: Lessons Learned

**Presenter:** Amy Lansing, University of California San Diego

Join frequent RAPSAs contributor, Amy Lansing, as she discusses how her work with juvenile court schools, dropout recovery schools, and other programs serving at-promise youth has informed her practice. Amy is an expert at graciously translating complex neurocognitive science into practical approaches for addressing the trauma that at-promise students live with. Hear about the work that she does with incarcerated and other trauma infused youth as well as her strategies for empowering staff to support them. Amy will be returning for her fourth AAPF and is among our highest rated presenters. We are pleased to have her back for this new session.

Join the conversation on social media by using the hashtag **#AAPF17**

## TIDELANDS

**Reengaging Students with a Student Engagement Department**

**Presenters:** Isabel Galvez Lara, Director of the Student Engagement Services, Phil Matero, CEO; Derrick Ayson, Student Engagement Services; YouthBuild Charter Schools of California

Reengaging out-of-school youth can be difficult and demanding work despite quality programs and high ideals. Learn how YouthBuild Charter Schools of California is meeting the challenge by empowering their most engaging teachers to take on the task. Learn about the creation of their Student Engagement Department and its amazing results. This session provides an opportunity to be on the cutting-edge of emerging best practices in student engagement and dropout prevention.

**9:30–9:45 AM**CORONADO  
BALLROOM FOYER**Coffee and Networking Break****9:45–10:45 AM**

CORONADO C

**BREAKOUT SESSIONS VI****High-Stake Stories: How to Break Through Fake News with Real Lives**

**Presenter:** Matthew LaPlante, Utah State University

What stories are you telling about your students and your work? Often, the narrative we want to deliver and the one we actually send are vastly different. That's in no small part because we are all-too-often deathly afraid of "bad news." But journalist, professor, and equity-in-education advocate Matthew LaPlante says it's time to stop being afraid of the real, gritty, uncomfortable and heart-breaking realities of working with students facing poverty, family instability, physical ailments, untreated mental illness, and abuse. At the first Alternative Accountability Policy Forum, LaPlante challenged attendees to not only embrace their failures, but to openly share those experiences with the world. This year, LaPlante will present some strategies for breaking past the media cacophony so that stakeholders and policy makers alike can better understand the fight in which we are engaged.

CORONADO D

**Reengaging At-Promise Students: Equity Advocacy In Action**

**Presenter:** Tony Simmons, High School For Recording Arts

A session on reengagement in the struggle for educational equity will be hosted by Tony Simmons, Executive Director of High School For Recording Arts and RAPSAs Board Member. Simmons will moderate a session of invited California Legislators representing the State Legislature's Latino Caucus, Black Caucus and Select Committee for Boys and Men of Color. The conversation will focus on how education leaders can impact policy development that supports reengaging youth of color who have been pushed out of the education system. High School for Recording Arts is dedicated to providing all young people a chance to realize their full potential, despite any previous setbacks through music and the exploration and operation of the music business. More than just earning a high school diploma, HSRA prepares students for a positive post-secondary education and life. Schools serving at-promise youth are ground zero for providing educational equity. Learn what you need to secure your seat at the table.

**10:45–11:00 AM**    **Networking Break**

**11:00 AM**

## **CLOSING GENERAL SESSION**

### **Advocating For Student Success – Education and Workforce Development in the 115th Congressional Session**

*Graciously sponsored by the **Walton Family Foundation***

**Presenters:** Mandy Schaumburg, Education Deputy Director and Senior Counsel, House Education and Workforce Committee; Jacqueline Chevalier, Education Policy Director, Democratic Staff

**Moderator:** Ernie Silva, Executive Director Reaching At-Promise Students Association

The November 2016 election brought changes in Congressional direction. Hear from House Education and Workforce Committee staff about what those changes mean for education and workforce development at the federal level. Changes in education and accountability resulted under the Congressional Review Act. Significant bipartisan changes in workforce development are being debated in the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (H.R. 5587) and other opportunities for at promise students will result from the passage of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2017. Learn from congressional staff about how these laws evolved and what they mean for opportunity youth in the coming years. This is an unprecedented opportunity to gain an inside view of national policy development and to begin your analysis of how to position your schools, programs, and students to take advantage of emerging trends and policies.

**12:00 PM**

## **CONFERENCE ADJOURNS**



# REACHING AT-PROMISE STUDENT AWARDS



The Reaching At-Promise Students Awards celebrate the success of at-promise students across the United States and recognize the commitment of the adults who support them. This year's At-Promise awards were expanded to provide five Courage Awards for students. Each Courage Award includes a \$1,000 scholarship.

## THE COURAGE AWARDS

These awards recognize at-promise students who demonstrate courage in overcoming obstacles and pursuing academic excellence. There were many nominations from students across the country that were considered. After careful discussion, the Advisory and Awards Committee selected the following five Courage Awards recipients:



Junior Brown  
SIATech  
Sacramento, CA



Isaac Cerecedes  
El Rancho High School  
Pico Rivera, CA



Jada Chinn  
Duval MYcroSchool  
Jacksonville, FL



Diana Gallegos  
John J. Cairns  
Continuation High School  
Lindsay, CA



Christian Rapaglia Santos  
Phoenix Charter  
Academy, Lawrence, MA



## THE HEART AWARD: Dr. Debra Duardo

This award recognizes education leaders who show a heart for supporting at-promise students in their academic endeavors and the capacity to see beyond the trauma faced by the students. This year the Heart Award recipient is Dr. Debra Duardo, the Superintendent of Los Angeles County Office of Education. Dr. Duardo is recognized for her deep passion and commitment to resolving the inequity in education for children of color, students with disabilities, and low-income students. On behalf of the students, schools and staff who believe that reengaging young people in education and career development transforms them to being at promise of success rather than at risk of failure, we thank you for your nominations and wish all of the nominees continued success in the work that they do.



## THE VISION AWARD: Senator Rhonda Fields

The Vision Award is in recognition of policymakers who demonstrate exceptional vision for understanding the challenges faced by at-promise youth and the development of creative policies to attract and retain students who would otherwise be left out of traditional school programs. This year the Vision Award recipient is State Senator Rhonda Fields, a Colorado legislator who represents Arapahoe County. Senator Fields is recognized for her defense of education and wrap-around service funding; her advocacy for providing student access to transcript data and diplomas despite inability to pay; and her ability to overcome personal tragedy in the establishment of the Fields Wolfe Memorial Fund's Dayton Street Opportunity Center which provides opportunities for reengaged dropouts, incarceration-impacted children, and other at-promise youth.

# AAPF PRESENTERS



## **Dr. Elisha Smith Arrillaga**

Dr. Smith Arrillaga has more than 15 years of experience working with nonprofit and government organizations, and she has also taught and consulted on strategic planning, grant making, and evaluation at several organizations. Most recently, Elisha served as a Director at the Career Ladders Project. She worked with alternative high schools and colleges across the state and led initiatives to develop pathways to college and career for California students by aligning the work of school districts, employers, community colleges, and community-based organizations. In 2016, Elisha was selected in the inaugural cohort of the California Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP) a professional development program that aims to strengthen education policymaking in California.



## **Sara Asmussen**

Dr. Asmussen is the Founding Executive Director of New Dawn Charter High School, a transfer school in NYC. She comes from the field of community mental health research with extensive experience managing large scale research projects, budgets, and grant work. She began her work in education at the Beginning with Children Foundation as the Director of Research, moving to John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter School, the first transfer charter school in NYS, working as the Director of Compliance and Accountability. Sara was also the original lead data engineer on the PICCS project at CEI, a federally-funded Teacher Incentive Grant, and worked with a number of other charter schools developing data models which incentivized teachers whose students showed academic growth throughout the year.



## **Derrick Ayson**

Derrick Ayson is currently working in the Student Engagement Services Department as the YCSC Leadership Development Coordinator. His role includes working hands on with our programs to strengthen our leadership development efforts, supporting our YCSC alumni network, and training sites/students on creating “Safe Spaces” as an effort to better serve our LGBTQ population. Derrick has 8+ years of experience having worked closely with both YouthBuild USA and YouthBuild Charter School of CA. Overall, he is excited to continue building our YouthBuild movement.



## **Roshawn Brady**

Roshawn Brady began his career of guiding youth to find their purpose at an early age. Directly after graduating high school, he began coaching freshman basketball. Although his life’s journey temporarily took him out of direct service with youth, he used his own experience working in jobs that simply provided a paycheck to find his own path and get back to his true purpose: people. He began his career at Access as a youth case manager and then moved to coordinating youth groups and learning academies, eventually becoming Program Manager and ultimately VP. He credits his career path to the mentors in his life that encouraged him to do more and talk less.



### Justin Brooks

Justin Brooks has his Bachelor's in French for Secondary Education and his Master's in Teacher Leadership. Justin has been teaching with the Kern High School District for the past 14 years. During this time he has taught all 4 levels of French, Access (a district created literacy program), and this year he created a class solely devoted to teaching Social-Emotional skills. Aside from teaching, he has held the position of department chair for eight years and Professional Development Leader for nine years. Justin is also an advisor for many clubs on campus like the Gay-Straight Alliance, National Honors Society, and the Upstander Brigade.



### Sally Brown

Sally Brown is a graduate assistant and doctoral student in the School of Teacher Education and Leadership at Utah State University. With approximately eight years of experience as a classroom teacher working with at-risk students and seven years of experience in a supervisory role for pre-service teachers, Sally has seen first-hand the needs of struggling readers. She has successfully developed curriculum for students with mild/moderate disabilities, youth at risk in an alternative high school, and culturally diverse student populations in comprehensive high schools. Sally received her Master of Education degree in Special Education with endorsements in learning disabilities and emotional disturbance from the University of Virginia. Working under Dr. Nicole Pyle, her current research focuses on literacy interventions designed to improve outcomes for struggling readers in secondary education.



### Jan Bryan

Jan Bryan's educational tenure includes K – 8 music teacher, primary classroom teacher, and university professor at the undergraduate and graduate levels, Director of the America Reads program at North Texas University, and curriculum author and co-author for the Texas Department of Education career tech division. Jan now serves as VP and National Education Officer for Renaissance where she researches educational trends and initiatives and writes about her passion: the well-being of students.

### Jacqueline Chevalier

Jacqueline Chevalier serves as the Director of Education Policy for the Democratic staff of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce under the leadership of Ranking Member Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (D-VA). In her role, she oversees the Committee's entire education and child welfare portfolio, spanning jurisdiction of the Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education and Higher Education and Workforce Development subcommittees. Her primary policy focuses include Title I of the ESEA, disability and civil rights in education issues, and school choice.





### Linda Dawson

Dr. Linda Dawson has been Superintendent and CEO of SIATech, Inc., since 2004. She has been with the organization since April of 2000. Her experience includes Deputy Superintendent at SIATech and Director of Education Services at Guajome Park Academy. Linda has been recognized twice as the Outstanding Secondary Administrator by the Association of Poway School Managers, and Teacher of the Year. Most recently, Linda was honored as a finalist in the James Irvine Foundation Leadership Award and received a \$25,000 grant to be used for education programs at SIATech.



### Breeanna Decker

Breeanna's main responsibilities include strengthening cross-sector coordination and collaboration for Opportunity Youth, ages 18-24, to have a structured transition to post-secondary education and career opportunities. Before joining The Council, Breeanna served as an intern for two locally elected officials: Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson and Oakland City Councilmember Lynette McElhane. Passionate about youth and education, she has worked with Lincoln (formerly Lincoln Child Center) and the Children's Defense Fund's Freedom Schools, assessing the reading levels of West Oakland public school students.



### Carinne Deeds

As a Senior Policy Associate at American Youth Policy Forum in Washington, DC, Carinne is involved in the development of learning events and products related to education and youth development, including Capitol Hill forums, webinars, discussion groups, and publications, as well as the dissemination of policy and practice guidance to multiple audiences. Her current issue areas include alternative education, strategies for at-risk youth, accountability under the Every Student Succeeds Act, social and emotional learning (SEL), employability and college and career readiness, and out-of-school time systems.



### Janice Delagrammatikas

Janice Delagrammatikas is presently principal of The Come Back Kids Charter with Riverside County Office of Education. Come Back Kids is an independent study drop-out recovery charter school serving students ages 16-23 at 23 sites throughout Riverside County. Janice also serves as a cadre member for the Technology Information Center for Administrative Leaders (TICAL) and is a certified teacher for the Leading Edge for Administrators Course. She is a Leading Edge Certified Administrator and her interests include using technology to make learning more engaging, collaborative, and relevant for teachers and students. Recently, her focus has been on developing innovative practices that adapt interventions and co-curricular activities to meet the needs of independent study students.



### Lisa DiGaudio

Lisa DiGaudio is the Founding Principal at New Dawn Charter High School and a doctoral candidate at Walden University. She is also the Chief Blogger for the Network of Independent Charter Schools, where she provides an “on the ground” perspective about creating, running and teaching in effective charter schools. She also serves as an Educational Advisory for EASOL, an open source data store. Lisa served for 13 years in the classroom as a lead teacher, data coach and summer school leader. For the last six years Lisa has been an administrator and contributed to the New Dawn application charter. Lisa was also a New York Educator Voice Fellow with America Achieves for 2015 and serves as a Policy Fellow with America Achieves for 2016-2017.



### Mike Epke

Mike Epke is the Principal at The New America School-Thornton, an alternative education campus charter high school working with new immigrants, English language learners, and academically underserved students near Denver. The school’s leader since 2011, Mike has seen the school move from a school on the department of education’s watch list to a school now accredited with meeting expectations for AEC campuses in the state. In addition to the work at schools, board leadership with the Colorado Coalition of Alternative Education Campuses was instrumental in the development of a legislated AEC Accountability Work Group to provide performance indicator recommendations for the State of Colorado.



### Jody Ernst

Dr. Jody Ernst is the founding Vice President of Research and Policy Analytics for Momentum Strategy & Research (MSR), a non-profit dedicated to conducting collaborative research among the many organizations serving charter schools across the country. Previously, Jody was the Senior Director of Research & Evaluation for the Colorado League of Charter Schools where she began her pioneering research on the growth of high-risk students and assisted the Colorado Department of Education and many charter school authorizers across the country to develop frameworks to hold alternative education campuses (AECs) accountable in a way that was both rigorous and relevant. Jody continues her research into alternative accountability in her new role at MSR, focusing on research to inform schools, districts, state education agencies, and authorizers on appropriate benchmarks for schools serving high-risk populations.



### Michelle Feist

Michelle Feist is the Director of the Department of School and Community Services at FHI 360. She has over 20 years of experience supporting systemic change initiatives focused on school reform and youth development. Michelle co-authored, “Bringing Students Back to the Center: A Resource Guide for Implementing and Enhancing Re-Engagement Centers for Out-of-School Youth,” a report for the U.S. Department of Education. She is currently providing technical assistance to Raise DC’s Community Partnership for Postsecondary Attainment. This Lumina-funded project focuses on increasing postsecondary persistence and attainment rates for reengaged youth in the DC area.



### Isabel Galvez Lara

Isabel Galvez Lara is the Director of the Student Engagement Services Department at YouthBuild Charter School of CA serving young people ages 16-24 at 20 community school sites in Los Angeles County and some of its surrounding counties. Isabel was born and raised in Lennox, CA and is the first person in her family to earn a college degree. Isabel's personal experience as a student in Los Angeles schools is the foundation upon which she has developed her own pedagogical practice to support the holistic development of people by beginning with a deep understanding of one's self and one's place in the world. Isabel firmly believes that by creating the space and exposure opportunities for young people to dream, be curious, and explore we can host a holistic approach to education and youth development that transforms schooling to transformative learning.



### Ian Gordon

For 20 years, Ian Gordon has applied theory, research, and best practice to a variety of initiatives and programs that have resulted in improved behavioral, educational, and employment outcomes for youth. As Director of the San Diego Youth Development Office, Ian facilitates public system and community level change that supports positive youth development policy, strategies, and outcomes. He has done so by engaging and convening education, workforce training, employment systems, and youth service providers, to create pathways that embed social supports and youth development activities, and lead to living wage jobs and careers. This work has been the catalyst for a regional focus on Opportunity Youth, and has begun to yield increased resources, improved coordination of systems and services; and improved health, education and economic outcomes.



### Jim Griffin

Jim Griffin is a founder of Momentum Strategy & Research, a Colorado organization strengthening the nation's charter community through collaborative research. Jim leads the strategy side of the organization leading policy and system development efforts in areas such as public sector accountability systems, performance measures for atypical students and schools, and charter school facilities challenges. Prior to MSR, Jim was the founding leader of the Colorado League of Charter Schools. He spent nearly 19 years in that position shaping Colorado's charter. Over those years he also played a key role in launching a host of groundbreaking efforts and organizations, both locally and nationally – ranging from public school accountability, to legal advocacy, facilities financing, group purchasing, and food service.



### Terry Grobe

Terry Grobe is the Director of Youth Pathways in JFF's West Coast office in Oakland. Terry plays lead roles in city, state, and national initiatives aimed at improving education and workforce outcomes for low-income students and older youth. Currently she serves as coach for Opportunity Works (JFF's Social Innovation Fund initiative with the Aspen Forum for Community Solutions) and for the LEAP initiative (Annie E Casey's Social Innovation Fund initiative). Both initiatives are focused on building education to career pathways for Opportunity Youth. Terry works with the Aspen Forum for Community Solutions on the design and delivery of bi-annual cross-site learning institutes for the Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund, 24 city grantees building and connecting 16-24 year olds to career pathways.



### Maurice Henriques

Maurice Henriques is currently one of two Engagement Specialist for Boulder Valley School District. He also spent eighteen years prior as a Juvenile Intensive Probation Officer for the 20th Judicial District in Boulder County. In addition Maurice also served as the Truancy mediator for Boulder County from 2009-2016. Maurice has created several innovative programs for kids, including the JOCKS (Juvenile Outreach Creating Kinesthetic Skills), a running program that trained and ran the Bolder Boulder. For Maurice, working with at-risk kids is his calling. When Maurice lost his father at the age of nine, he knew he would work with kids. Having been blessed with a strong mother, he believes that if you have even one steady role model in your life, you can be able deal with adversity.



### Kelly Henwood

Kelly Henwood is the Special Projects Manager at San Diego Continuing Education (SDCE), the noncredit adult education institution of the San Diego Community College District (SDCCD). As the Special Projects Manager, Kelly assists to build greater connections between noncredit adult education and workforce development strategies. Kelly brings over 20 years of experience in nonprofit and public organizations in San Diego, Southern Nevada, and Oregon, with particular focus on workforce and youth development. She has a proven track record of building programs, departments, and systems utilizing multiple funding sources. Kelly has directed the youth departments for local workforce boards in San Diego and Southern Nevada, and youth reentry programming at Second Chance in Southeastern San Diego.



### Joseph Herrity

Joe serves as the lead “backbone” staff for the Opportunity Youth Partnership, a collective impact initiative in Santa Clara County that aims to improve the education and employment outcomes of Opportunity Youth in pursuit of durable self-sufficiency. In this capacity he coordinates and convenes a county-wide, multi-sector collaborative. Additionally, he oversees the implementation of Opportunity Works, a Social Innovation Fund project (funded by Jobs for the Future in partnership with Corporation for National and Community Service), which is working to enhance re-engagement education options by embedding critical support and guidance functions in dropout recovery institutions. Joe began his career in the social sector with two terms of service in AmeriCorps and spent six years working with high-risk court-involved youth.



### Kevin Hickey

Kevin Hickey serves as the Director of High School and Bridge Programs at Jewish Vocational Service, where he leads college and career readiness programs and public policy advocacy efforts on behalf of children, youth, families, and the unemployed. Kevin’s leadership has resulted in more than 5,000 jobs for youth, \$15+ million in new funding and other policy victories from the City and County of San Francisco to support children and families, and voter-approved reauthorization (November 2014) of the Children and Youth Fund, which secures \$100+ million annually for the next 25 years for local children and youth programs. Kevin is a proud veteran of the United States Navy.



### Joelle Hood

As Senior Consultant with CLS, Joelle brings over 20 year of experience to our clients. She has served as a Principal for Riverside County Office of Education's Alternative Education programs, and was an Assistant Principal and a teacher for districts in San Bernardino County. She provides coaching, mindfulness instruction, professional development, and positive youth development activities to educational, human services, and juvenile justice agencies throughout the nation. Her areas of expertise include Social Emotional Learning and School Climate transformation, including Neuroscience, Mindfulness in Education, Growth Mindset, PBIS and Restorative Practices. She is also a certified trainer for Restorative Practices, 40 Developmental Assets, Olweus Bullying Prevention, Understanding the Culture of Poverty, and 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens.



### Jerri Jameson

Jerri Jameson has earned a Bachelor's Degree in English and a professional clear credential. She is a 16 year veteran of the Kern High School District, and was twice nominated as Kern County Teacher of the Year representing Highland High School. Jerri has taught English 9-12 all levels including English Language Development. She has also taught AVID for 8 years and served as the AVID Site Coordinator. Three years ago, she began attending professional development on social emotional learning (SEL) and immediately became passionate about bringing SEL strategies back to the high school classroom. In August, Jerri accepted a position as Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) in the Kern High School District and is now working with various teachers and school sites to bring SEL to more students and classrooms in the district.



### Laura Kohn

Laura is a 25-year leader in the field of education, with a range of experience in policy, government, advocacy, research, program design, nonprofit management and philanthropy. She currently directs communications and the Center for Local Income Mobility (CLIMB) at the San Diego Workforce Partnership. CLIMB promotes and executes investments in children and youth to maximize their likelihood of thriving in the workforce as adults. Laura is also the co-host of the Good Schools for All podcast at Voice of San Diego, alongside Scott Lewis, the VOSD editor in chief.



### David Kollar

Dave is currently the Director of the Student Engagement Office for Jefferson County Public Schools. He oversees programming related to Title VI, Diversity and Inclusion, and Dropout Prevention. During his tenure as Director of Dropout Prevention, Jeffco Public Schools reduced the number of dropouts as well as their dropout rate by 50%. Dave has spent the last 15 years working on district-wide initiatives and cross agency systemic improvements to better educational and social outcomes for youth in Jefferson County. He is currently the Chair of the Education Subcommittee of the Child Youth Leadership Commission in Jefferson County and the Co-Chair of the County's Juvenile Services Planning Committee.



### Amy Lansing

Dr. Amy Lansing is Director of the Cognitive and Neurobehavioral Studies in Aggression, Coping, Trauma, and Stress (CNS-Acts), in University of California, San Diego. Amy is dedicated to understanding the neurobehavioral underpinnings of high-risk behaviors and functional impairment in underserved and vulnerable populations, such as juvenile delinquents and maltreated youth. Amy is a licensed clinical psychologist who provides direct mental health and cognitive rehabilitation service delivery to incarcerated youth in San Diego County. Her work includes a focus on academic issues, cognitive deficits, and unmet mental health needs of youth who are Wards of the Juvenile Court (Child Welfare and Delinquency).



### Matthew D. LaPlante

Matthew D. LaPlante is an assistant professor in the Department of Journalism and Communication at Utah State University and a long-time advocate for providing educational opportunities for underserved Americans. He is the founding editor of NoDropouts.org, an informational website dedicated to sharing the experiences, expertise, and insights of those engaged in the fight to end the dropout epidemic. He is also an associate at Graduation Alliance, which works with school districts across the United States to give at-risk students the flexibility and support they need to earn a high school diploma.



### Judith Martinez

Judith Martinez has been with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) for nine years and currently serves as the Director of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement. Her work is dedicated to reducing Colorado's dropout rate and increasing credential attainment. This work involves analyzing trends in education data, supporting best practices, and seeking viable options for all students, especially those who face unique challenges and barriers. Prior to joining CDE, she was the Director of the National Center for School Engagement and Deputy Director of Family and Community Education and Support, a nonprofit group committed to positive parenting and prevention of child abuse and neglect.



### Phil Matero

Phil Matero is a recognized leader in the national movement to improve opportunities for quality education available to youth who have not been well-served by the traditional education system. As its Executive Director, Phil launched YouthBuild Charter School of California in 2008 to cultivate collaborative learning communities in which every student has the right to an authentic education, plays a meaningful role in creating positive social change, and becomes an active participant in working towards just conditions for all. He has consulted for YouthBuild USA, YouthBuild International, US Peace Corps, the National Youth Employment Coalition, and other projects where he offered his expertise in social justice, youth development and education towards meaningful efforts to generate consequential and sustainable opportunities for youth.



### Christopher Mazzeo

Christopher Mazzeo's work focuses on the diverse pathways to postsecondary success and developing and maintaining data and research partnerships. He is currently the Director for Evidence Use at Education Northwest and also serves as the Director of REL Northwest. Prior to joining Education Northwest, Mazzeo spent three years with the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR), where he managed CCSR's nationally focused policy and capacity-building initiatives. In this role, he consulted extensively with state and national policymakers, states, school districts, and funders on developing and using indicators of high school graduation and postsecondary readiness, enrollment, and success.



### Naomi Moore

Naomi Moore is the Senior Peer Job Coach at San Diego Workforce Partnership in the CONNECT2Careers program. In that role, she helps youth ages 16–24 years old find employment in San Diego County. She is also attending San Diego City College, majoring in Business Management. Naomi was a disconnected youth because she did not have enough credits to graduate from high school with her peers. Over the summer, she realized she needed her high school diploma, but also wanted to make money so she would not be dependent on anyone. That's when she found out about Urban Corps, a program that lets you work and go to school at the same time. She graduated from Urban Corps' charter school with her high school diploma in eight months. After a first job in the fast food industry, Naomi landed an internship with Urban League then transitioned to the peer job coach role at SDWP.



### Omar Passons

Omar Passons is a lifelong San Diegan committed to keeping our community safe, thriving, and affordable for everyone. Omar has been a land use and construction attorney, primarily in the private sector and with Caltrans, for eleven years. As a neighborhood advocate, Omar has worked tirelessly for equality, opportunity, and economic development. Omar grew up in San Diego County's foster care system and helped care for his foster brothers and sisters from a very early age. Those experiences created a deep compassion and empathy that stays with him in all of his work. He has served on the Executive Committees of the San Diego Workforce Partnership and United Way of San Diego County, two organizations dedicated to helping youth have opportunity to succeed.



### Curt Peterson

Curt Peterson has been working with alternative and re-engagement students in Seattle for over two decades. As a teacher and administrator he's had the opportunity to create and shape multiple programs designed specifically to serve this population. For the last 15 years he's been with Career Link High School at South Seattle College. CLHS is focused entirely on the re-engagement population and is dedicated to bringing youth back to school, help them earn a diploma, and connect them to post-secondary learning.



### **Rebecca F. (Becky) Phillpott**

Becky designed and managed targeted youth intervention programs, including Check & Connect Pathways Opportunity Youth, an Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions initiative, Check & Connect High School Persistence research implementation study, and other locally developed attendance and student engagement programs for the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD). She has more than 30 years' experience in education policy analysis, advocacy, and program development, including serving more than ten years as the Policy Analyst to the Board of Education, and five years as the Legislative Programs Analyst for SDUSD. She currently serves on the boards of the San Diego Youth Development Office, San Diego Education Fund, Harmonium, and the Bay Area Regional Council-San Diego State University Alumni Association.



### **Laurie Pianka**

Laurie has been part of the SIATech leadership team since 2005, starting as the principal of the SIATech school in San Jose, and moving to the position of Director of Education Services in 2007. In 2016 she moved to the position of Executive Director of Community Development and Career Pathways. Laurie was the lead on SIATech's successful Opportunity Youth (OY) CA Career Pathways Trust (CCPT) grant proposal that was selected for funding by the CA Department of Education in May 2015. She continues to provide leadership for OY programs as the OY programs are implemented.



### **Sheila Pottorff**

Sheila Pottorff has been in education for the past 28 years. She taught at the middle school level and served as an administrator at both middle and high school. She was the principal at Ferguson High School for five years before transitioning to Director of Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness in the Poudre School District. In 2009, she was the Colorado Middle School Principal of the year. Her passion areas are ensuring all students have access to postsecondary and workforce readiness, that learning is relevant and meaningful, and students understand that the purpose of education is to prepare them for citizenships, career, and continuing education.



### **Nicole Pyle**

Nicole Pyle, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of Adolescent Literacy and Secondary Education in the School of Teacher Education and Leadership at Utah State University. Her research interests include interventions for youth at-risk in secondary education, adolescent literacy, dropout prevention, college readiness, effective instructional practices, and multi-tiered interventions in inclusive settings. She was the recipient of the 2009-2011 IES Postdoctoral Fellowship on Reading Disabilities and Response to Intervention with Dr. Sharon Vaughn at the University of Texas at Austin. Nicole serves as an Institute Fellow in The Dropout Prevention Institute at The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk. She has more than 8 years of experience as a middle school and high school special education teacher.





### **Jorge Ruiz de Velasco**

Dr. Jorge Ruiz comes to Stanford from Berkeley Law, where he was Director of the Warren Institute's Program on Education Law and Policy. The focus of his work is on the study and promotion of change in public schools, the implications of education reform for disadvantaged students, education law and policy, and the effect of immigration on schools and communities. Prior to his appointment at the Warren Institute, he served as Director of the Institute for Research on Education Policy and Practice at Stanford, and has served terms as a Program Officer for Educational Opportunity and Scholarship at the Ford Foundation, and as a Senior Program Officer at both the James Irvine and William & Flora Hewlett Foundations.



### **Krista Sabados**

As a senior program manager at Jobs for the Future, Krista Sabados coaches high school reengagement programs, supports high schools' and colleges' partnership development and college readiness efforts, and supports school districts' implementation of student-centered learning strategies. Before joining JFF, Krista was an associate director of education at YouthBuild USA where she facilitated high school and GED instructor learning communities, training events, and conferences. Krista was also a researcher, instructor, and grant writer for organizations such as College Summit, Project Zero, Clovis Unified School District, and the Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education. She began her educational journey as a low-income, first-generation community college student where she received transformational instruction and mentoring.



### **Amy Schlessman**

Amy Schlessman, PhD, has dedicated her professional and personal life to education and human services. Amy's interests include the development of creative and innovative intelligence in learners of all ages from diverse cultural backgrounds and socioeconomic levels. Amy's recent research, policy analysis, and advocacy focus on education for overaged and under-credited youth. She has served as President of an international education association, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL); Chair of Research and Evaluation with the American Educational Research Association; and founding President, Arizona Alternative Education Consortium.

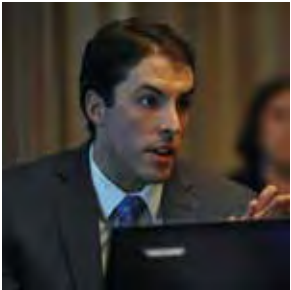
### **Mandy Schaumburg**

Mandy Schaumburg, Education Deputy Director and Senior Counsel for Chairwoman Foxx on the Committee on Education and the Workforce. In this role she focuses on general oversight of education and human services policy as well as policy issues including child nutrition, parent involvement, charter schools, and privacy. She also assists the education staff on the issues they cover for the Committee. She previously served as Deputy Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Department of Education in the Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development. Prior to that she worked for Congressman Mark Green of Wisconsin as his Legislative Counsel working on judiciary issues, health care, and the faith-based initiative. Before coming out to Washington, Mandy worked for Governor Tommy G. Thompson as Deputy Legal Counsel and his successor, Governor Scott McCallum, as his Legal Counsel.



### Anissa Sharratt

Anissa Sharratt currently serves as Alternative Learning Program Manager with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) in Washington State. Previously, Anissa managed the reengagement efforts in Highline Public Schools located south of Seattle. Anissa has eight years of experience in public education and has worked as a School Social Worker, Academic Advisor, and Reengagement Manager with students from kindergarten to the community college level. Anissa remains focused on providing students access to engaging and equitable educational opportunities. Through this work, Anissa has recognized the value of partnerships in creating sustainable options for at-risk students.



### Thomas Showalter

Thomas Showalter is an expert on education and workforce policy and related areas (disability policy, juvenile justice, antipoverty programs), as well as Congressional politics and processes. Thomas is the director of the National Youth Employment Coalition, a leading voice for opportunity youth (young people who are out of school and out of work). With NYEC, Thomas sets the organization's direction and strategy, and lifts up promising strategies and practices of NYEC members. Prior to NYEC, he was an advisor on the majority staff of the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, working for chairmen Sens. Edward M. Kennedy and Tom Harkin. He also advised advocacy organizations and foundations on communications and strategic planning at The Hatcher Group, a Bethesda-based communications firm.



### Ernie Silva

Ernie Silva works for the School for Integrated Academics and Technologies on legislation and policy. His expertise includes work with governmental, business, and community organizations to build support for dropout recovery and critically at-risk students. His leadership experience includes developing state and national coalitions of educators and others to support dropout recovery initiatives. Ernie has worked with charter school and district school administrators on accountability, budget, alternative education, English Language Learners, career technical education, and related issues since 1997.



### Tony Simmons

While working with national recording artists and record companies, Tony met David Ellis and assisted him in the formation of Studio 4/High School for Recording Arts. He also co-founded Another Level Records, the first national student-operated record label. Tony continues to work with students in exploring the Business of Music and mentoring for the student-operated commercial radio show entitled studio4allaccess. Tony has served as board member and provided technical assistance to such leading national school reform organizations like Edvisions, Inc.; the Black Alliance for Educational Options; and the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools. He was also part of the development team for Minnesota's first online project-based charter school called Edvisions Online Academy.



### **Nelson Smith**

From 2004 to 2011, Nelson was President and CEO and then Senior Advisor to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. Previously, he served as Vice President for Policy and Governance at New American Schools; as Executive Director of the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board; and as Vice President for Education and Workforce Development at the New York City Partnership. From 1985 to 1992, at the U.S. Department of Education, he oversaw programs devoted to improving education through research-based methods. He was an Adjunct Lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education from 2011 to 2014. Mr. Smith was given a Career Achievement Award from New Schools Venture Fund in 2010, recognizing his quarter-century of leadership in education reform.



### **James Steward**

James Steward began his career in education the summer of 1985, working in positions ranging from custodian, teacher, consultant, and principal. His passion for teaching and consulting in middle schools for 11 years led to a deep understanding of the quintessential middle school student. James designed a variety of programs to meet the needs of GT, K-8, and at-risk students in summer school venues. James completed his 24th summer school this past summer. In 2004, James and his wife, Jane, became foster parents and have fostered 11 children in their home. Focusing on at-risk teenage boys, James and Jane helped to facilitate a return to families or transition into adulthood for these children. Having served in a variety of administrative capacities, James was tapped to create Hidden Lake High School, an Alternative Education Campus, in the spring of 2007.



### **Leslie Talbot**

Leslie Talbot is the Founder and Principal of Talbot Consulting, an independent education management consulting practice. Founded in 2006, Talbot Consulting designs and directs new school/program startups; constructs and facilitates school improvement strategies; manages school/program replication and growth; and helps nonprofits move into the school space. Leslie's career spans nearly three decades, and has focused on education policy, research and evaluation, and systems change. She has written several papers and reports, including the most recent authored with Aretha Miller entitled, "Pathways to Opportunity Project: Increasing Educational Equity through Innovative School Design Elements."



### **Vanessa Threatte**

Vanessa Threatte is the Executive Deputy Director for Best Practices and Partnerships at the SUNY Charter Schools Institute. Vanessa is responsible for highlighting effective models of practice through the documentation and dissemination of existing and/or new evidence based practice, research, and innovations from the SUNY portfolio of charter schools. Additionally, she is responsible for identifying and maintaining strategic partnerships that support the exchange of good practice and further the effectiveness of the Institute. Vanessa most recently served as the Executive Director of the NYS Cradle to Career (C2C) Alliance, a SUNY effort focused on strengthening New York's education pipeline by improving outcomes for students from birth, through college, and to career.



**Dianne Tiner**

Dianne Tiner has been married for 14 years to her high school sweetheart and is a proud mother of 3 boys. She has been working for the Kern High School District for the past 13 years as a French and Spanish teacher. During her time with the KHSD, she has held the position of department chair for four years and Learning Team leader for eight years. Dianne is also an advisor for French Club, French Honor Society, and created the staff club at her school called The Roustabouts. Dianne has been learning and practicing Social Emotional Learning with her students for the past two years and has become a SEL leader at her school.



**Jennifer J. Turnbull**

Jennifer Turnbull is currently the Senior Research Analyst for The New America School Network and has served in this capacity since the beginning of 2015. For over a decade, Jennifer has been providing traditional and charter schools with information to inform research-based practices for assessing school quality and developing and utilizing sound performance measures for the purposes of internal and external school accountability and improvement. Additionally, she has expertise in qualitative and quantitative research and analysis, setting goals for schools and students using nationally normed assessments, comparing the growth and performance of charter schools and traditional public schools, and was involved in research that informed the use of individual student growth norms for AEC students on the NWEA MAP assessment.



**Shannon Varga**

Shannon M. Varga, Ph.D. is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Center for Promise, Boston University School of Education. Her research focuses on taking ecological approaches to promote healthy development for youth, particularly in optimizing relationships, settings, and curricula to best meet youths’ needs. She also aims to have a deeper understanding of the complex role that race, ethnicity, and culture play in youth development.



Buckeye Community Hope Foundation is a recognized leader in authorizing high quality charter schools in Ohio. Since 2004, BCHF has focused on improving public school choice for all students. Our portfolio of schools includes those which serve students who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out. We provide outstanding school improvement supports, professional development, and technical assistance geared toward the success of our schools and their students. BCHF believes charter schools are an innovative approach for developing high quality educational options and is committed to promoting high student achievement. We are proud to be part of AAPF2017! For more information, please visit [www.buckeyehope.org](http://www.buckeyehope.org).



### **Diana Walsh-Reuss**

Dr. Diana Walsh-Reuss has a life-long focus on supporting students with the greatest needs through a career in education spanning almost 40 years. Currently the Associate Superintendent of Schools, she has served the Riverside County educational community leading Alternative Education and Special Education, Head Start, State Preschool, Child Care, Migrant Head Start, and Migrant Education in a variety of capacities during her tenure. In addition, Dr. Walsh-Reuss facilitated the creation of Come Back Kids, a drop-out recovery program and Riverside County Education Academy, a military-themed charter high school. Her career experiences include teaching pre-K through adult education, assistant principal, principal, director, and assistant superintendent.



### **Molly Ward**

Molly Ward is the Director of High School Completion at South Seattle College. Her role in this position is helping to oversee Career Link High School's enrollment coordination, course offerings and development, diploma processing, and student transition to college. In addition, Molly works closely with the High School 21+ program on campus and also teaches classes for Career Link. With 20 years of experience in alternative education, Molly has used her passion for student success to help students graduate and transition to post-secondary education or training.



### **Christina Weeter**

Christina works in KDE's Office of Continuous Improvement and Support as the Director of the Division of Student Success, which oversees alternative education, school safety, and dropout prevention and reengagement. She represents KDE on a number of interagency groups related to juvenile justice reforms, behavioral health, school safety, alternative education, and chronic absenteeism. Prior to joining KDE, she worked at the U.S. Department of Education (ED) on school turnaround and grants for high schools, with a special interest in dropout prevention and recovery, rural education, and wrap-around supports to prepare students to graduate high school with clear pathways to college and career.



### **Darren Woodruff**

Dr. Woodruff has long been involved in education research and policy. Currently, he serves as chair of the public charter school board in Washington DC and is the director of education at the DeBruce Foundation. The focus of his work is on the role of schools and education in transforming underserved communities. Prior to this, Darren worked as a principal research analyst at the American Institutes for Research where he focused on a wide range of educational topics including supports for at-risk youth, special education, and closing the achievement gap. Before joining AIR, Darren was a faculty member at the Yale Child Student Center. Darren has authored several research papers and book chapters on education including minority issues in special education and effective programs for at-risk students. He has also taught and counseled students at the elementary through college levels.

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The philanthropic vision of Sam and Helen Walton has driven the work of the Walton Family Foundation for the past thirty years. Their legacy is more important than ever as we accelerate our efforts to improve K-12 education for all students in America, to protect our rivers and oceans and the communities they support, and to give back to the region that first gave Sam and Helen Walton opportunity. For more information, please visit us at [www.waltonfamilyfoundation.org](http://www.waltonfamilyfoundation.org).



Collaborative Learning Solutions (CLS) is a comprehensive educational services and consulting firm serving education and social service agencies throughout the nation. The company was founded on the promise of genuine collaboration and partnerships to implement innovative solutions that are effective, efficient and fiscally responsible. For more information, please visit [www.clsteam.net](http://www.clsteam.net).

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Renaissance® is the leader in K-12 learning analytics—enabling teachers, curriculum creators, and educators to drive phenomenal student growth. Renaissance's solutions help educators analyze, customize, and plan personalized learning paths for students, allowing time for what matters—creating energizing learning experiences in the classroom. For more information, please visit us at [www.renaissance.com](http://www.renaissance.com).



For company profile, see page 7.



Learn4Life is a constantly growing network of non-profits that includes accredited high school diploma programs, job training and wraparound services, and exclusive Workforce Investment Act partnerships. Learn4Life partners have resource centers throughout California, and each student receives an individualized education. No two students are alike, and we don't believe they should be educated that way either. With dozens of centers throughout California, the opportunity for independent learning is available to hundreds of thousands of students. For more information, visit [www.learn4life.org](http://www.learn4life.org).

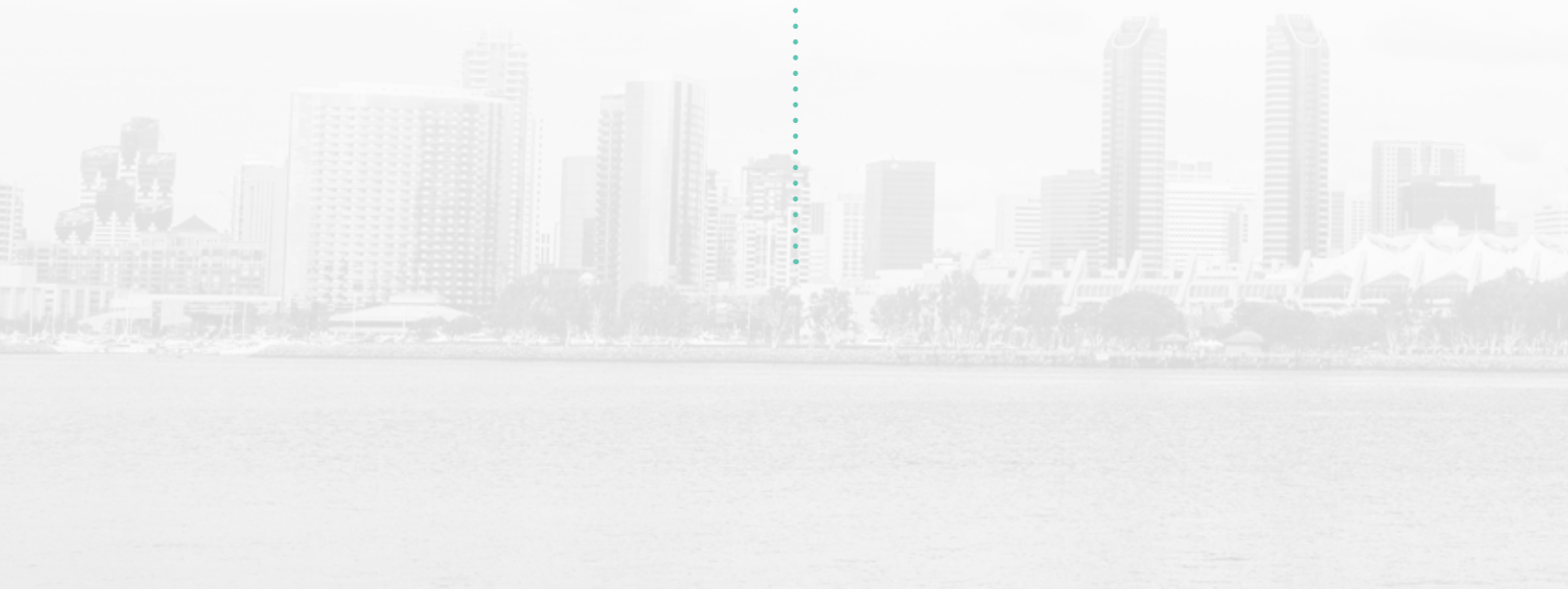


The Stuart Foundation is dedicated to improving life outcomes for young people through education. We work to ensure that effective education systems in California and Washington provide opportunities for all students to learn, achieve, and thrive. Primarily working through education systems, we promote strategies that nurture students to be self-reliant, succeed in education and careers, and engage meaningfully in their communities. Our guiding principle, or North Star, is an education system that values the Whole Child by strengthening the relationships between students, educators, families, and communities. For more information, please visit [www.stuartfoundation.org](http://www.stuartfoundation.org).



**BARNEY & BARNEY™** LLC

For company profile, see back of front cover.





The Labor Occupational Health Program (LOHP) is a community outreach program of the Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (COEH) at the University of California, Berkeley. LOHP's Young Worker Project develops and promotes strategies to educate and protect young workers, through training, research, and policy solutions. Educational materials and leadership programs serve youth, educators, parents, employers, job trainers, labor unions and others. For more information, visit [www.youngworkers.org](http://www.youngworkers.org).



Founded by educators nearly 40 years ago, Northwest Evaluation Association™ (NWEA™) is a global not-for-profit educational services organization known for our flagship interim assessment, Measures of Academic Progress® (MAP®). More than 7,400 partners in U.S. schools, districts, education agencies, and international schools trust us to offer pre-kindergarten through grade 12 assessments that accurately measure student growth and learning needs, professional development that fosters educators' ability to accelerate student learning, and research that supports assessment validity and data interpretation. For more information, please visit [www.nwea.org](http://www.nwea.org).



For company profile, see page 25.



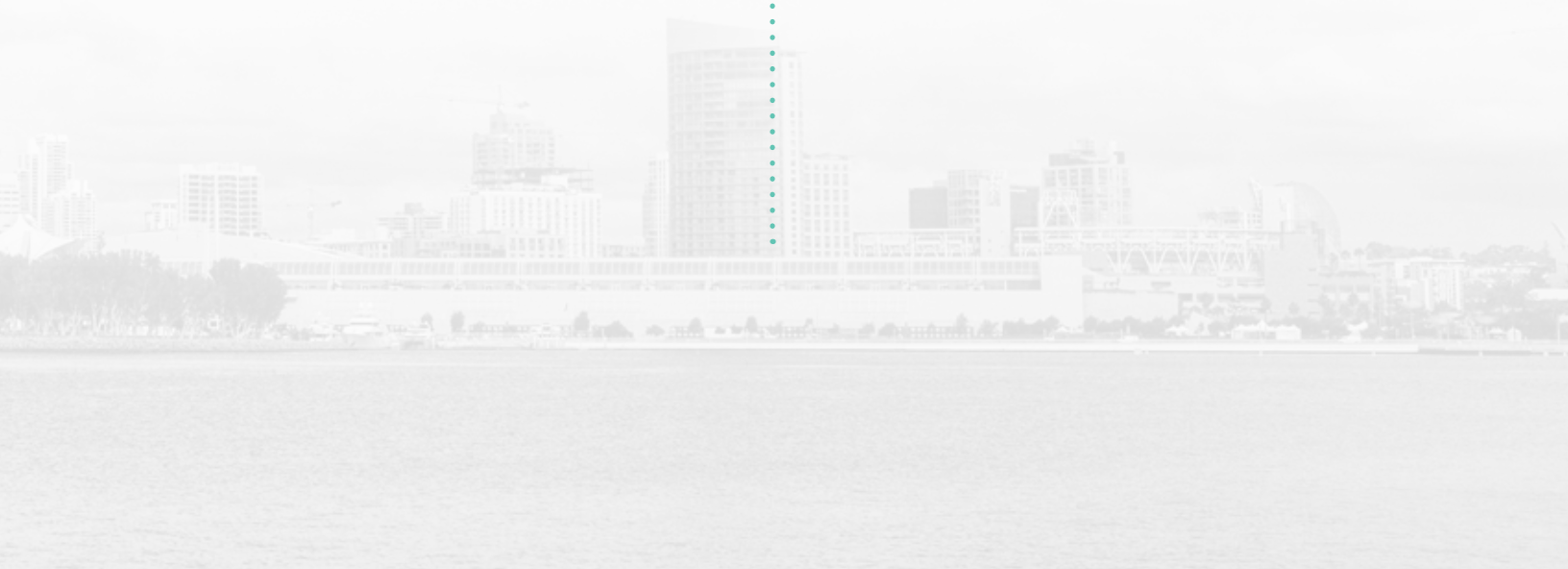
In 2007, the Reaching At-Promise Students Association (RAPSA) was created to establish a professional network devoted to reaching the over-age and under-credit student population, with the desire to transform them from "at-risk" to "at-promise." Today, RAPSA is a leading professional development and networking organization in this area. Since its inception, RAPSA has sponsored a variety of conferences and workshops, including the Alternative Accountability Policy Forum, webinars, as well as an online resource library. By 2013, membership in RAPSA had grown to 6,000 national and international partners including teachers, principals, district leaders, advocacy and accountability groups, revered speakers, workforce organizations, and community business leaders. For more information, please visit [www.rapsa.org](http://www.rapsa.org).



SIATech's public charter high schools are the foundation of its educational ecosystem. Its schools re-enroll students highly at-risk of dropping out and those who have already given up, and guide them to graduation. Locally and nationally accredited, SIATech's innovative schools provide students a renewed opportunity to earn a diploma and realize their full potential. Schools are designed small for individualization, in relevance to the needs of today's workforce. Together, competency-based education, a "high relationship" focus, individualized learning, and state-of-the-art technology, all build the cornerstones of SIATech programs nationwide. SIATech was recently recognized by the California Department of Education as a "Distinguished School". For more information, please visit [www.siatech.org](http://www.siatech.org).



For company profile, see page 31.





YouthBuild Charter School of California (YCSC) holds a unique place in the landscape of California’s public charter schools. As a competency-based dropout recovery school, it seeks to provide a high school education that leads to a diploma for a distinct group of students. YCSC students, who are all between the ages of 16 to 24 years old, come from low-income families and underserved communities, and have previously left or been pushed out of the traditional school system without a diploma. They enroll at YouthBuild programs over-aged, under-credited, or both, in order to receive vocational training, counseling, leadership development and an education. For more information, please visit [www.youthbuildcharter.org](http://www.youthbuildcharter.org).



The California Charter Schools Association advances the charter school movement through state and local advocacy, leadership on accountability, and resources for member schools. CCSA is a trusted source of data and information on California’s charter schools for parents, authorizers, legislators, the press and other interested groups. For more information, please visit [www.ccsa.org](http://www.ccsa.org).



Charter schools help create educational choice. That’s why Charter School Capital only works with charter schools – we believe in the power of charter schools and their leaders to deliver quality education. There are plenty of finance options for public school districts and private schools charge tuition and raise money through their foundations. However, charter schools have a great deal of difficulty accessing capital, typically rely on money in reserves, and have few funding options. The team at Charter School Capital has been helping charter schools reach financial stability and grow with working and growth capital charter funding. For more information, please visit [www.charterschoolcapital.org](http://www.charterschoolcapital.org).



Refresh and rejuvenate your spirit with a getaway to the Coronado Island Marriott Resort & Spa. Away from the crowds, on the quiet side of Southern California’s famed Coronado Island, our secluded hotel possesses a certain life-altering energy, capturing the true essence of the area. Settle in to your luxuriously designed room or suite, indulge in a treatment at our on-site spa, and admire the awe-inspiring views. We invite you to experience the Coronado Island Marriott Resort & Spa, and to celebrate the special connection we have with the tranquility, comfort and relaxation of the sea. For more information, visit [www.marriott.com](http://www.marriott.com).





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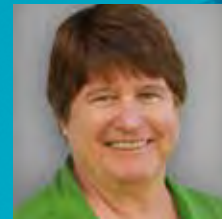
The Advisory and Award Committee provided staff with guidance on topics, speakers, and structure of the event. The success of this event is due to their creativity and generosity.

- **Mary Burke**, Chicago Public Schools
- **Rudy Cuevas**, YouthBuild Charter Schools of California
- **Nicole Pyle**, Utah State University
- **Becky Phillpott**, San Diego
- **Roger Rice**, Ventura County Office of Education
- **Laurie Shannon**, Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- **Scott Smith**, Arkansas Public School Resource Center
- **Leslie Talbot**, Talbot Consulting, New York
- **Diana Walsh Reuss**, Riverside County Office of Education



## PRESENTING ORGANIZATIONS

- American Youth Policy Forum
- America's Promise Alliance
- Boulder Valley School District
- Caltrans
- Collaborative Learning Solutions
- Colorado Department of Education
- Come Back Kids, Riverside COE
- CONNECT2Careers/SDWP
- DC Public Charter School Board
- Ed Trust-West
- Education Northwest
- FHI360
- High School for Recording Arts
- Jeffco School District
- Jobs for the Future
- Kentucky Department of Education
- Kern High School District
- Momentum Strategy and Research
- National Association of Charter School Authorizers
- National Youth Employment Coalition
- Opportunity Youth Initiative
- Opportunity Youth Partnership
- Poudre School District
- RAPSA
- Renaissance
- Rose Operating System of Education
- San Diego Continuing Education
- San Diego Unified School District, Dropout Prevention
- San Diego Workforce Partnership
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**THANK YOU** TO ALL THE SIATECH VOLUNTEERS WHO HAVE HELPED MAKE THIS YEAR'S POLICY FORUM A SUCCESS.

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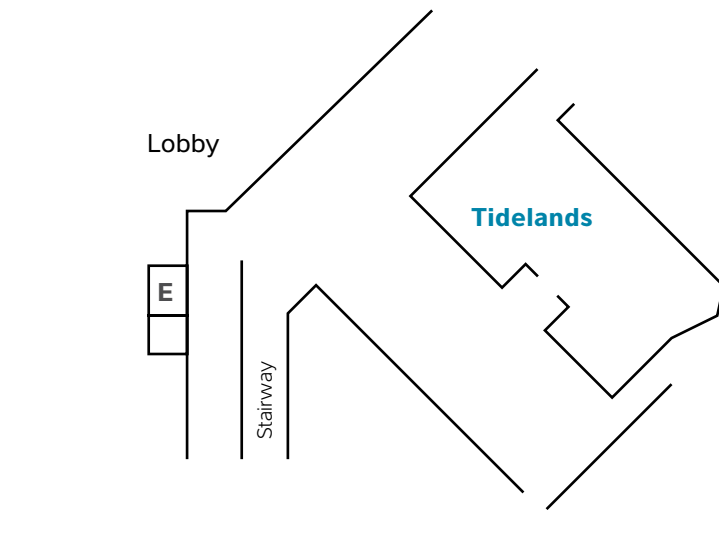


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Session Assistant

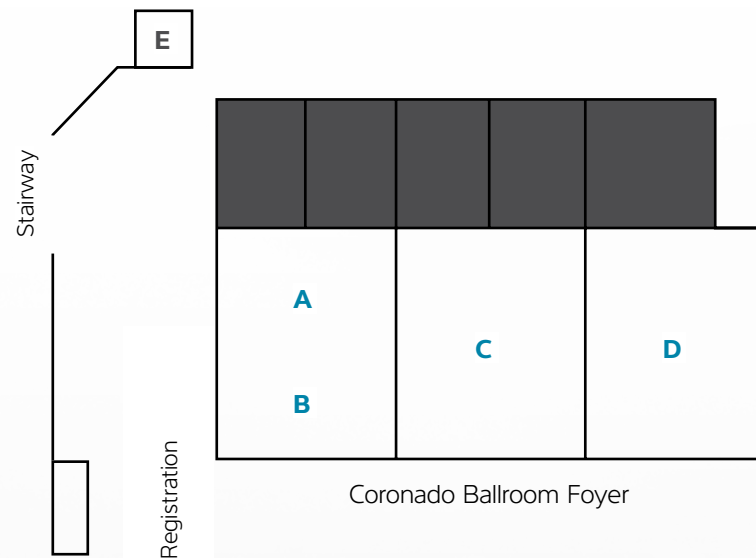


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# 1ST FLOOR



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School Services of California, Inc., (SSC) was founded in 1975 by Ken Hall, former Deputy Director of the Department of Finance during the Reagan administration. It has since evolved into the premier business, financial, management, and advocacy resource for educational agencies in California. Since 1999, our company has been led by its current CEO, Ron Bennett. More than three decades of leadership by only two long-serving CEOs has given the company and its employees the continuity necessary to provide a finely focused array of services to public education in California. For more information, please visit [www.sscal.com](http://www.sscal.com)

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An aerial photograph of a city skyline, likely Singapore, viewed from across a body of water. The skyline features several prominent skyscrapers and modern buildings. The water in the foreground is calm and blue.

**AAPF**

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