



The Early Advantage 2

Building Systems That Work for Young Children

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

M. Caridad Araujo: Principal Economist, Inter-American Development Bank

Araujo is a principal economist in the Social Protection and Health Division of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) where her work has focused on early childhood development and anti-poverty programs. Before joining IDB, Araujo worked as an economist at the World Bank where she focused on the areas of poverty, education and social protection. She also taught at the Public Policy Institute of Georgetown University.

Betsy Brown Ruzzi: Vice President, National Center on Education and the Economy

Brown Ruzzi directs NCEE's efforts to help the United States understand the principles, policies and practices that top-performing countries use to drive their education systems. She oversees a grant program supporting scholars from around the world to study the practices of countries whose students regularly top the PISA league tables. She helps states redesign their primary and secondary education systems to match the performance of the world leaders in education. During her career at NCEE she helped create the National Institute for School Leadership, the National Skill Standards Board, the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, all initiatives to improve the academic performance of our nation's students and strengthen the skills of our workforce. Brown Ruzzi also worked in the Congress, the British Parliament and the Governor's Office in Massachusetts.

Rebecca Gomez: Program Officer, Heising-Simons Foundation

Gomez is a program officer for the Education program at the Heising-Simons Foundation. Prior to this role, Gomez was an assistant research professor at Rutgers University's National Institute for Early Education Research where she led the State of Preschool Yearbook data collection and analysis process and provided technical assistance to states via the Center for Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes. She has also served as a graduate and postdoctoral research fellow at the National Center for Children and Families at Teachers College, Columbia University and is a former board member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. She received her doctorate in curriculum and teaching with a concentration in early childhood education policy from Columbia University. Gomez began her career in early education as a preschool teacher.

Lisa Guernsey: Senior Advisor, Early and Elementary Education Policy, New America

Guernsey focuses on new approaches to help students and families succeed in the Digital Age, leading teams of analysts and writers in the translation of research, examination of policies and generation of new ideas for developing high-quality learning opportunities for underserved and historically disadvantaged populations. That work is conducted in her role as the director of the newly named Teaching, Learning, and Tech project at New America, which she runs while also serving as senior advisor to the Early and Elementary

Policy program and as co-founder of the organization's Learning Sciences Exchange fellowship program. Previously, Guernsey worked as a staff writer at *The New York Times* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and authored, co-authored and contributed to multiple books. She has served on several national advisory committees on early education, including the Institute of Medicine's committee that led to the seminal 2015 report, *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*.

Jacqueline Jones: President and CEO, Foundation for Child Development

Jones is responsible for developing and implementing the Foundation for Child Development's strategic vision and goals. Prior to her role at the Foundation, Jones served as a senior advisor on early learning to Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and as the country's first deputy assistant secretary for policy and early learning in the U.S. Department of Education. She also served as the assistant commissioner for the Division of Early Childhood Education in the New Jersey State Department of Education and as a senior research scientist at the Educational Testing Service in Princeton for more than 15 years. Jones has been a visiting faculty member at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and full-time faculty member at the City University of New York.

Michael Levine: Chief Knowledge Officer, Sesame Workshop

Levine is a child development, early learning and social policy expert. In his role at Sesame Workshop, Levine is responsible for driving organization-wide learning, educational partnerships, knowledge exchange and policy leadership. Previously, Levine was vice president for Asia Society, managing interactive media and educational initiatives to promote knowledge and understanding of other world regions, languages and cultures. In that role, Levine conceived and directed the *I am Your Child* campaign that led to major state and national investments in health care, early learning and parenting education. He also previously oversaw Carnegie Corporation's work in early childhood development and educational media and was a senior advisor to the New York City Schools Chancellor. Levine serves on several boards, including We Are Family Foundation, Jump Start, Woot Math and Digi Learn. He is also the founding executive director of the Joan Ganz Cooney Center.

Anthony Mackay: President and CEO, NCEE

Mackay has advised organizations, governments and school systems on every continent. Before leading NCEE, he was the CEO of the Centre for Strategic Education in Australia. Mackay is an expert advisor to OECD and consultant advisor to IBE UNESCO and Asia Society's Global Cities Education Network. Mackay moderates the annual International Summit on the Teaching Profession and the Global Education Industry Summit and facilitates key debates at the events of the World Innovation Summit on Education (WISE). He is also the Chair of the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER), Deputy Chancellor of Swinburne University, Melbourne and Deputy Chair of the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand. His policy advice, consultancy and facilitation work focuses on education strategy for government departments, agencies, think tanks and leadership teams internationally.

Craig Rice: Councilmember, Montgomery County, Councilmember, Kirwan Commission
Rice was elected to his first four-year term on the County Council in 2010 and reelected in 2014. His commitment to public service includes serving as a member of the House of Delegates in the Maryland General Assembly from 2006 to 2010 where he was on the legislative body's Ways and Means Committee. Currently, Rice chairs the Council's Education Committee and also serves on its Health and Human Services Committee. Additionally, he serves as the Council's representative to the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo), chairs MACo's Education Sub-Committee and is currently president of the MACo diversity caucus. Rice is also a member of the Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, known as the Kirwan Commission.

Linda Smith: Director, Bipartisan Policy Center's Early Childhood Initiative

Smith directs the Bipartisan Policy Center's (BPC) Early Childhood Initiative. Before joining BPC, she served as the deputy assistant secretary for early childhood development in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services where she provided overall policy coordination for the Head Start and Early Head Start programs and the Child Care and Development Fund. She also served as the department's liaison to the U.S. Department of Education and other federal agencies. Previously, Smith served as the executive director for the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), a legislative fellow and professional staffer on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee and director of the Office of Family Policy for the Secretary of Defense. She began her career in early childhood on the North Cheyenne Reservation in Montana.

Albert Wat: Senior Policy Director, Alliance for Early Success

Wat leads a portfolio of state and national partnerships and investments focused on pre-K and the education continuum birth through grade three at the Alliance for Early Success. He is also responsible for leading the learning policy strategy for the organization. Prior to this role, Wat was a senior policy analyst in the Education Division of the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and a research manager at Pre-K Now, an advocacy campaign at the Pew Center on the States. In 2014, he served on the committee of the Institute of Medicine's study on *The Science of Children Birth to Age 8: Deepening and Broadening the Foundation for Success*.