

Washington Week 2023

June 4-7, 2023

**Sarah Abernathy**  
**Executive Director**  
**Committee for Education Funding (CEF)**



Sarah Abernathy is the executive director of the Committee for Education Funding (CEF), a non-profit and non-partisan coalition of more than one-hundred education associations and institutions, where she has worked since 2016. She has nearly thirty years of experience staffing Congress and the Executive Branch on education and budget issues. Abernathy worked for eighteen years on the House Budget Committee Democratic staff focusing on education, social services, and job training, and earlier worked for several House members. Abernathy graduated from Williams College and earned a master's in public affairs from the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs.

**Estee Aiken, Ed.D.**  
**Associate Professor**  
**The University of Montana Western**  
**President, Montana Association of Colleges for Teacher Education**



Estee Aiken served as an elementary classroom teacher and differentiation coach for more than a decade before transitioning to higher education. She has spent the last thirteen years educating pre-service teachers and consulting about gifted education and differentiation. Her areas of research and writing focus on gifted education, early childhood, and very young children with special needs. She is currently a professor in and chair of the Division of Education at the University of Montana Western.

**Ana Blaine, Ed.D.**  
**Professor**  
**EPI Coordinator & Clinical Supervisor**  
**Daytona State College**  
**President, Florida Association of Colleges for Teacher Education**



Ana Blaine has been in education for over twenty years. Her past work experience includes teaching high school mathematics to students with Emotional and Behavior Disorders as well as serving as a Behavior Management Teacher within Miami-Dade County Public Schools. She is currently a professor at Daytona State College in Florida and has taught in the School of Education since 2008. She serves as the clinical supervisor, coordinator of the Educator Preparation Institute, and liaison to the Florida Department of Education. She presented at many local, statewide, and national conferences discussing topics like social justice and meeting state education standards. Additionally, she has represented State Colleges and Educator Preparation Institutes throughout Florida as a participant and leader in several local school districts and Florida Department of Education committees. Most recently, Blaine serves as the President of FACTE, the Florida Chapter of AACTE.



**Kaitlyn Brennan, Ph.D**  
**Consultant to AACTE**

A personnel preparation grant recipient, Kaitlyn Brennan earned her Ph.D. in special education from the University of Pittsburgh in 2017. She currently serves as the lead facilitator for the Pittsburgh Learning Collaborative, an adjunct faculty member at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and as an education policy consultant and contributing author to the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children's (TED's) weekly Washington Update. Brennan's policy work focuses primarily on addressing the special education teacher shortage and diversifying the educator pipeline. Brennan is a former board member for the Council for Exceptional Children and lives in Pittsburgh.



**Andy Brewer, Ed.D**  
**Assistant Dean for School Engagement, College of Education**  
**Florida Atlantic University**  
**President-Elect, Florida Association of Colleges for Teacher Education**

Andrew Brewer is assistant dean for School Engagement in Florida Atlantic University (FAU)'s College of Education (COE). Brewer began his new role in July 2020. In this position, he oversees both the Office for Accreditation, Assessment, and Analytics and the Office for School Engagement. He is also the COE administrator at the Jupiter campus. Brewer received the 2008-2009 Excellence and Innovation in Undergraduate Teaching award from FAU's COE. Brewer accepted the Literacy Alive! 2011-2012 Gold Achievement Award on behalf of Kappa Delta Pi's Omega Chapter, where he served as co-counselor from 2009 to 2012. He served as a representative on the COE Faculty Senate during the 2012-2013 school year. He also served as DTL representative on the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Standard 2 Committee, Secondary Teacher Education Coordinating Committee (STECC), and the COE's Faculty Assembly. Brewer is the president-elect of the Florida Associate for Colleges of Teacher Education (FACTE).



**Jessica Cardichon, Ed.D.**  
**Education Policy Director,**  
**Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT)**

Jessica Cardichon's most recent position is serving as the director of the Washington D.C. Office and director of Federal Policy at the Learning Policy Institute (LPI) where she plays a leadership role in the organization, including developing and advancing LPI's federal policy agenda. She is also the lead author of *Advancing Educational Equity for Underserved Youth*, among numerous other LPI publications. Cardichon began her career teaching in New York City for seven years and then worked for Teachers College, Columbia University, as a program manager for the implementation of early career educator induction programs. Upon moving to Washington, D.C., she served as education counsel to Sen. Bernie Sanders, a member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. She then served as senior director for federal policy and advocacy at the Alliance for Excellent Education.



**Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett**  
**Texas, United States House of Representatives**

As a public defender, civil rights attorney, State Representative, and United States Congresswoman, Jasmine Crockett dedicates her life to public service, with the goal of serving justice and ensuring equality for all. In the midst of political turmoil, economic distress, and racial inequality, Congresswoman Crockett laced up her shoes to march for justice and run for the Texas House of Representatives. The sole Black freshman and youngest Black lawmaker in Texas during the 87th Legislative Session, Congresswoman Crockett navigated what has been marked as the most conservative session in Texas history. She was a founding member of both the Texas Progressive Caucus as well as the Texas Caucus on Climate, Energy, and the Environment. Congresswoman Crockett earned her B.A. in Business Administration from Rhodes College and her J.D. from the University of Houston. She is also a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated



**Nadine M. DiStefano**  
**Director of Marketing & Public Relations**  
**Verasolve**

Nadine DiStefano is a director of marketing & public relations at Verasolve. She offers her 20+ years of experience in advertising, marketing, and public relations to assist clients with brand messaging, public relations, trends tracking/analysis, scripting executive leadership, preparation for on-camera or print interviews, and more. Prior to joining Verasolve, DiStefano was the advertising & publicity manager for Seneca Gaming Corporation in Niagara Falls, New York. She has corporate, agency, and consulting experience having operated her own marketing and public relations consulting service prior to her role at Seneca Gaming Corporation. In addition to her breadth of first-hand experience, she earned her Bachelor of Arts in Communications with an emphasis in Broadcasting from SUNY College at Buffalo.



**Bryan Duke, Ph.D.**  
**Interim Dean, College of Education and Professional Studies**  
**ACSR Southern Region Representative**

Bryan L. Duke, Ph.D., is dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies at the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO). For 11 years, he was a junior high and high school English teacher and assistant principal prior to joining UCO in 2002 as a professor in the Educational Sciences, Foundations, and Research Department. He is an executive committee member and the Southern Region Representative for the Advisory Council of State Representatives (ACSR) for the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE). Duke is also a governing board member for the Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest (REL SW), is a trustee for the Oklahoma City-based non-profit, Pivot: A Turning Point for Youth, and was an accreditation councilor for the national Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).



**Eric Duncan**  
**Director of Policy**  
**Ed Trust**

Eric Duncan, J.D., is a P-12 data and policy senior analyst, specializing in policies related to educator quality and increasing the racial diversity of the educator workforce at The Education Trust. Duncan previously was a state policy advisor at WestEd where he used his policy experience to support WestEd's federal and state policy strategy and to help build and strengthen key relationships at the state level. Prior to joining WestEd, Duncan worked as a senior program associate at CCSSO where he supported state efforts to diversify the teaching workforce and ensure that teachers are culturally responsive in practice. He also worked as the director of district initiatives at the National Council on Teacher Quality and at the U.S. Department of Education, Office of the Secretary as a LEE Public Policy Fellow. Duncan started his career in Atlanta as a high school social studies teacher. He received his undergraduate degree at Emory University and has a Juris Doctor from Wake Forest University.



**Jacob Easley II, Ph.D**  
**Dean, Graduate School of Education**  
**Touro University**  
**ACSR Northeast Region Representative**

Prior to serving as dean of the Graduate School of Education at Touro University, Jacob Easley served as dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies at Eastern Connecticut State University. In that role, he strengthened a multitude of academic programs departments and collaborated with leadership to promote quality undergraduate and graduate teacher education programs. He also chaired the Education Division at the University of Pittsburgh-Johnstown. Easley earned his Ph.D. in Educational Leadership (Curriculum and Supervision) from the Pennsylvania State University, an M.A. in applied linguistics/English from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and his bachelor's degree in Spanish from Morehouse College. He also holds a graduate certificate in Educational Administration from Georgia State University.



**Stacey Edmonson, Ed.D.**  
**Dean, College of Education**  
**Sam Houston State University**  
**Member, AACTE Board of Directors**

Stacey Edmonson has served as dean of the College of Education at Sam Houston State University since 2014. She previously served as chair of the Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling for 5 years and has been a professor of educational leadership since 2000. She has also served Texas public schools as a teacher, principal, and central office administrator. Edmonson has served in a variety of leadership and service roles, including president of the Teacher Education Council for State Colleges and Universities (TECSCU) and president of the Texas Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (TACTE), the national and state organizations that represent deans of colleges of education, respectively. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from Texas A&M University and master's and Doctorate of Education in educational administration from Texas A&M University-Commerce. She has authored a number of books and articles on topics including trust, stress and burnout among educators, legal issues in education, and educator ethics.





**Karen Escalante, Ed.D.**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**California State University, San Bernardino**  
**President-Elect, California Council for Teacher Education**

Karen Escalante is an assistant professor in the Watson College of Education at California State University San Bernardino, teaching pedagogical courses grounded in social justice and humanizing pedagogy. Escalante is an executive board member and president-elect of the California Council on Teacher Education (CCTE) and serves as part of the research team and advisory board for UCLA's Center for the Transformation of School's California Educator Diversity Project. Her line of research focuses on the through line between culturally responsive teaching and teaching performance assessments, teacher candidate / in-service teacher belonging, and operating within the third space (boundary spanning) to support P-12 and teacher preparation programs. Beginning in June of 2023, Escalante will become the co-director of the CSUSB Ed.D. Program.



**Robin Fuxa, Ph.D.**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Director of Clinical Experiences, College of Education and Human Sciences**  
**Oklahoma State University**  
**ACSR Executive Committee**

Robin Fuxa began her career teaching fifth graders in Bartlesville, OK, and served as a library media specialist for middle and high school students in Pawnee, OK. In teacher preparation since 2008, Fuxa served six years as director of professional education and has now returned to her home discipline of Literacy Education at Oklahoma State University. She received the Distinguished Service Award in 2020, the Jane M. Morse Award for leadership in 2021, and the 2022 Ted Gillespie Advocacy Award, all from the Oklahoma Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (OACTE). She serves as a board member for AACTE and chair for AACTE's Advisory Council of State Representatives (ACSR). Fuxa is president-elect for her local school district's foundation and is a proud parent of two Oklahoma public school students. Her research and teaching focus on equity in education, literacy pedagogy, and every child's right to fully-prepared educators.



**Lynn M. Gangone, Ed.D.**  
**President and CEO**  
**AACTE**

Lynn M. Gangone is the AACTE president and CEO, serving in this role since 2017. As the leading higher education association representing colleges of education and programs of teacher education, AACTE is the voice of educator preparation at the federal and state levels, facilitating the work of its member institutions committed to equity and excellence in educator preparation. Gangone's credentials include an Ed.D. and M.Ed. from Columbia University-Teachers College and an M.S. and C.A.S. from the University at Albany-SUNY. This is her fourth higher education association leadership role.



**Christine Gentry, Ph.D.**  
**Clinical Assistant Professor & Residency Director**  
**New York University**  
**Member, AACTE Advisory Committee on Government Relations**

Christine Gentry is a clinical assistant professor in the NYU Teacher Residency, where she serves as residency director for the Democracy Prep and NYC DOE partnerships and leads the data, assessment, and continuous improvement efforts of the program. Prior to her current role, Gentry served as director of teacher development and licensure for a network of public high schools in Boston, where she managed and implemented all facets of The Urban Teaching Fellowship, a teacher residency program. Gentry currently serves on the advisory committee on government relations and advocacy and co-chairs the LGBTQ+ advocacy and inclusion topical action group for AACTE. Before her work in teacher preparation, Gentry taught English, creative writing, and oral storytelling in the public schools of Boston and New York City for 13 years.



**David Griffith**  
**Associate Executive Director Policy and Advocacy**  
**National Association of Elementary School Principals**

Prior to his current role, David Griffith was the senior director of advocacy and government relations at the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) where he led ASCD's efforts to influence education decision-making at the federal, state, and local levels and the development and implementation of the association's legislative agenda. He played an instrumental role in promoting multimetric accountability and a whole-child approach to education, as well as being a national speaker and resource expert on the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Prior to joining ASCD, Griffith was the director of governmental and public affairs for the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE). Previously, he served as a congressional aide to two Representatives on Capitol Hill. In addition, he has worked on numerous political campaigns, was the legislative and grassroots coordinator for the American Arts Alliance representing the nation's leading nonprofit arts institutions and traveled the country doing advance work for the 1996 Olympic Torch Relay.



**Rebecca Howard**  
**Legislative Assistant for U.S. Senator Tim Kaine**

Rebecca Howard serves as a legislative assistant for U.S. Senator Tim Kaine. In this role, she covers education, labor, and workforce development issues. She has experience in various policies on and off Capitol Hill. She received her bachelor's in political science from the University of Alabama and her master's in European public policy from King's College London.



**Weade James, Ph.D.**  
**Vice President, Organizational Advancement**  
**AACTE**

Weade James, Ph.D., is vice president of organizational advancement at AACTE where she oversees development, strategic initiatives, and partnerships that deliver on AACTE's priorities to advance educator preparation policy, practice and research. Prior to joining AACTE, she held numerous leadership positions at education nonprofits focused on literacy, disability rights and special education, and family engagement, including serving as the former executive director for the federally mandated Parent Training and Information Center for the District of Columbia.



**Rhonda F. Jeter, Ph.D.**  
**Dean & Professor, College of Education**  
**Bowie State University**  
**Member, AACTE Board of Directors**

Rhonda Jeter is a professor and the dean of the College of Education at Bowie State University. After earning a degree from Taylor in communications and theatre arts, she completed her master's degree in family and community development and her Ph.D. in professional and scientific psychology. She is a Certified Secondary School Teacher, National Certified Counselor, National Certified Psychologist, and Licensed Certified Professional Counselor.



**Paul Katnik, Ph.D.**  
**Assistant Commissioner**  
**Office of Educator Quality, Missouri**  
**Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**

Paul Katnik is the assistant commissioner of the Office of Educator Quality. Katnik has been in education for over three decades working with children of all ages, PK-12, as both a teacher and a building principal. He has served at the Department of Education for over 15 years, as a supervisor, director, and currently as assistant commissioner. He was instrumental in coordinating the state model Educator Evaluation System, revising teacher and leader preparation programs, developing the state's Educator Equity Plan, and creating the Missouri Leadership Development System and Missouri Teacher Development System. He has led the efforts to address teacher shortage issues through the implementation of teacher recruitment and retention grants and increasing teacher compensation. Katnik earned his B.A. in elementary education from Texas Tech University, his master's in educational psychology from the University of Mississippi, and his doctorate degree at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.



**Jacqueline E. King, Ph.D.**  
**Senior Consultant to AACTE**

Jacqueline King is an independent consultant who works with K-12 and higher education leaders to improve student outcomes. She is also a collaborator with Education First consulting group. King has had a long career in education, including 15 years at the American Council on Education (ACE). She is the author or co-author of numerous reports, articles, and book chapters on college readiness, student financing of higher education, access and persistence in postsecondary education, student demographic trends, educator preparation, philanthropic giving to

colleges and universities, and trends in the leadership of higher education. She has authored several reports for the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, including *Colleges of Education: A National Portrait*. Her work has been featured on CNN and in national publications such as *The New York Times*, *Time*, *USA Today*, and the *Washington Post*.



**Victor Klatt III**  
**Principal,**  
**Penn Hill Group**

Victor “Vic” Klatt, III, has been involved in federal education policy for more than two decades — as a senior education official in the executive branch, the top education staff member in the U.S. House of Representatives, and now a principal of Penn Hill Group. Before joining Penn Hill Group, Klatt served as a vice president at Van Scoyoc Associates where he represented some of the biggest names in education policy, from early childhood providers to higher education institutions, nonprofits, for-profits, issue-specific coalitions, and large and small associations. Klatt served three years as GOP staff director for the U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor and spent seven years as education policy director for the U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce. Klatt first began specializing in education in 1989, when he served as director of legislation and deputy assistant secretary for congressional affairs at the U.S. Department of Education.



**James Lane Ed. D.**  
**Senior Advisor, Office of the Secretary,**  
**Delegated Assistant Secretary,**  
**Office of Elementary and Secondary Education**

James Lane most recently served as Virginia’s 25th superintendent of public instruction, a position appointed by the Governor of Virginia. Prior to this appointment, Lane was a division superintendent in three school divisions in Virginia (Chesterfield, Goochland, and Middlesex Counties). Throughout his career, he has served as an assistant superintendent, principal, and assistant principal after beginning his career as a teacher/band director. He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina State University, and the University of Virginia.

**Maira Lenehan-Razzuri**  
**Senior Policy Advisor, Senator Jack Reed (D-RI)**  
**United State Senate**

Maira Lenehan-Razzuri is the senior policy advisor for education, labor, child welfare, arts, and humanities for Senator Jack Reed of Rhode Island. Previously, she worked as the education advisor to Congressman Ruben Hinojosa, who chaired the Education Task Force for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. In addition to her legislative experience, she has worked as an education advocate and has managed college internship programs.





**Diana B. Lys, Ed.D.**  
**Associate Dean Educator Preparation and Accreditation**  
**University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**  
**President, North Carolina Association of Colleges for Teacher Education**

Diana Lys serves as assistant dean for educator preparation and accreditation in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Education. Lys is a teacher educator with 25 years of experience in education in North Carolina beginning as a middle school teacher in rural and Title 1 schools to higher education settings. Her experience leading educator preparation programs spans multiple institutional contexts in North Carolina and regional P-12 partnerships. She successfully led programs through award-winning national accreditation reviews while building critical collegueship among faculty and partners. Lys is a principal investigator on a \$4.8M grant to prepare and retain teachers of color in partnership with Durham Public Schools. Her research focuses on program assessment in educator preparation, linking pre-service and in-service teacher outcomes, and developing research-practice partnerships. In 2022, Lys became president of the North Carolina Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.



**Laura Mogelson, M.Ed.**  
**Director, Multiple Pathways to Teaching Office**  
**University of Minnesota**  
**Legislative Liaison, Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education**

Laura Mogelson is the director of the Multiple Pathways to Teaching Office (MPT) in the College of Education and Human Development. She has worked at the University since 2015. She leads the MPT office which houses the Dual Language and Immersion Licensure program for multilingual elementary education teacher candidates and the Minnesota Grow Your Own Teachers program for non-licensed staff in partner districts seeking licensure in elementary or K-12 ESL. Mogelson also serves as the legislative liaison for the Minnesota Association of Colleges of Teacher Education. Prior to joining the U of MN, Mogelson directed a teacher residency program for science and mathematics teachers in Minneapolis and St. Paul with six university partners. Before working in higher education, Mogelson worked as a K-12 ESL teacher in the St. Paul Public Schools. She's passionate about creating ways for people to enter the field of education and serving district partners as a teacher preparation partner. Professional interests include project management, teacher preparation, legislative advocacy, and working with English Learners. Mogelson has a B.A. and M.Ed. from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.



**Natifia A. Mullings**  
**Director, Marketing and Communications**  
**University of Maryland College of Education**

As the director of marketing and communications at the University of Maryland College of Education, Natifia Mullings provides strategic communications and marketing direction to elevate the College's vision and priorities. In this role, she leads strategic communications and brand strategy, implements and executes strategic campaigns across traditional, social and digital media, manages creative assets, and oversees the College's web presence. Mullings brings 15 years of public relations experience to the College, working across several industries, including education, healthcare, and nonprofit. Prior to joining the College, she held

two key positions in the University of Maryland's Office of Strategic Communications — media relations manager and director of communications, where she was responsible for leading media relations efforts, developing communications campaigns and managing issues and crises communications. She previously served as a communications specialist at Prince George's County Public Schools. Mullings holds an M.A. in organizational leadership and communications from Gonzaga University and a B.A. in communications from the University of Hartford. She also received a certificate in Nonprofit Leadership and Management from the University of Maryland.



**Katrina Norfleet**  
**Senior Director, Digital Marketing & Communications Strategy**  
**AACTE**

Katrina Norfleet, senior director of marketing & communications strategy at AACTE, leads the execution and assessment of comprehensive strategies, key messaging, and content to advance AACTE's priorities and amplify its voice as the leader in educator preparation. Her experience prior to joining AACTE includes several leadership positions with global and national associations where she developed and implemented successful communications, editorial, public relations, and marketing programs. Norfleet holds a master's in writing from Johns Hopkins University and a B.A. in communications from Howard University.



**Susan Kemper Patrick, Ph.D.**  
**Senior Researcher**  
**Learning Policy Institute (LPI)**

Susan Kemper Patrick is a senior researcher on the Educator Quality team at the Learning Policy Institute. After working in schools as a middle school teacher and volunteer coordinator, her research now examines inequities in the learning opportunities available to both students and their teachers. At LPI, Patrick's work focuses on understanding the experiences of teacher and administrator candidates in California. Prior to joining LPI, she served as a postdoctoral researcher for the Tennessee Education Research Alliance, a research-practice partnership between the Tennessee Department of Education and Vanderbilt University. Patrick received a Ph.D. in educational leadership in policy from Vanderbilt University, a M.Ed. in learning, diversity, and urban studies from Vanderbilt University, and a B.A. in African and African-American studies from Duke University.



**Jon Peters, Ph.D.**  
**Dean, John H. Lounsbury College of Education**  
**Georgia College**  
**Immediate Past President, Georgia Association of Colleges for Teacher Education**

Joe Peters is the dean of education at Georgia College in Milledgeville, GA. He has oversight for the Departments of Teacher Education and Professional Learning and Innovation, as well as the Call Me MISTER program and Early College (Grades 7-12) in partnership with Baldwin and Putnam County Public Schools. He currently serves as a board member of the Oconee Regional Educational Service Agency, the Sandra Dunagan Deal Center for Early Language and Literacy and the Lockerly Arboretum. He is also a board member and immediate past president of the Georgia Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.



**Jill Harvieux Pitner**  
**Chief Growth Officer**  
**National Center for Teacher Residencies (NCTR)**

Jill Harvieux Pitner is NCTR's Chief Growth Officer. She joined NCTR in 2011. In her role, Jill engages with teacher preparation programs, school districts, state education agencies, and community-based organizations to determine the best ways for NCTR to support their goals to address teacher shortages, diversity, quality, and retention issues. Pitner has more than 20 years of experience in education as a teacher educator, educator, teacher leader, staff developer, consultant, and curriculum writer. Prior to joining NCTR, she co-developed Denver Teacher Residency (DTR), the first district-based teacher residency program in the country. At DTR, she worked with The University of Denver Morgridge College of Education to develop and implement teacher resident curriculum, and evaluation metrics to prepare aspiring teachers to meet the needs of Denver Public Schools' students. She earned her B.A. degree in elementary education from the University of Iowa and a M.A. degree in linguistically diverse education from the University of Colorado at Denver.



**Erica Romero**  
**Vice President**  
**Latinos for Education**

Erica Romero has a breadth of experience in higher education policy development and advocacy, at the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) she advocated for policies that benefit Hispanic-Serving Institutions and Hispanic students across five states and collaborated with HACU's national Government Relations Office. Additionally, Romero previously served as vice president of external relations at the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities and has worked extensively with the California state legislature and with the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. A California native and daughter of Mexican immigrants, Romero earned a master's degree in public policy from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and a Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of California, Berkeley.



**Monika Williams Shealey, Ph.D.**  
**Senior Vice President, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Leadership**  
**Rowan University**  
**Chair, AACTE Board of Directors**

Monika Williams Shealey joined Rowan in 2013 as the dean of the College of Education. Shealey received her B.S. in specific learning disabilities and M.A. in varying exceptionalities from the University of South Florida, Ed.S. in reading and learning disabilities from the University of Miami, and Ph.D. in education from the University of Central Florida. Shealey has held academic appointments at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Florida International University, and University of Missouri at Kansas City. Shealey's research has focused on examining the experiences of traditionally marginalized groups in special education and Black women in teacher education. Shealey is the past co-editor of *Multiple Voices for Ethnically Diverse Exceptional Learners*, a professional journal for the Division of Diverse Exceptional Learners in the Council for Exceptional Children, the leading professional organization in the field of special education. In addition to serving as AACTE board chair, Shealey is a member



of the Board of Trustees for the Center for Family Services and the Friends School at Mullica Hill. She is also the past president of the National Association of Holmes Scholars Alumni; diversity, equity and inclusion council chair for the Chamber of Commerce for Southern New Jersey, and chair of the American Educational Research Association's Committee on Scholars of Color.



**Anne Tapp, Ed.D.**  
**Professor, College of Education**  
**Saginaw Valley State University**  
**Immediate Past Chair, ACSR**  
**Board Liaison to AACTE Committee on Government Relations**

Anne Tapp is a professor of teacher education, College of Education, at Saginaw Valley State University and director of the University of Michigan Center for Digital Curricula. She serves on the executive committee for the AACTE Board of Directors and the AACTE Advisory Council of State Representatives (ACSR) Executive Committee as the past-Chair. She recently served as the ACSR Midwest Region chair and is past president of the Michigan Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. Tapp is PI for federal, state, and foundation grants and has an active research agenda, which includes DEI, technology integration, and STEM in the classroom. She is the author of several publications including *Technology for Interactive Education in the P-6 Classroom*, an interactive textbook for pre- and in-service teachers.



**John Patrick Walsh**  
**Director, Federal Relations and Policy Analysis**  
**American Association of State Colleges and Universities**

As the director of federal relations and policy analysis at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), John Patrick Walsh has a wide range of experience in government relations and federal policy development and advocacy. His professional background includes serving as the chief of staff of the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs at the Department of Labor, as director of federal affairs in the Washington, DC office of former Florida Governor Rick Scott, and as transition team leader for the office of former Governor Rick Scott.



**Sarah Warbelow**  
**Legal Director**  
**Human Rights Campaign**

Sarah Warbelow is the legal director for the Human Rights Campaign, leading HRC's team of lawyers and fellows focused on federal, state, and municipal policy, domestic and international impact litigation, and amicus curiae advocacy. She also coordinates HRC's advocacy efforts as amicus curiae ("friend of the court") in litigation affecting the LGBTQ community. Warbelow joined the Human Rights Campaign in January 2008 as senior counsel for special projects and Justice for All fellow. She then served as HRC's state legislative director, from September 2009 to April 2014, working with state and local legislators and LGBTQ advocacy organizations in pursuing their LGBTQ-related legislative priorities. Before joining HRC, Warbelow served as the program manager for the American Association of University Women Foundation Legal Advocacy Fund, specializing in education and employment discrimination law. Warbelow is also an affiliated professor at George Washington University and George Mason Law School, teaching courses on civil rights law and public policy. She received her bachelor's degrees



in social relations and women's studies from Michigan State University and her masters of public policy and law degree from the University of Michigan. Warbelow is admitted to the bar of Michigan.



**Madeline Will**  
**Staff Writer**  
**Education Week**

Madeline Will is a reporter for *Education Week* who covers the teaching profession. Since joining the staff in 2016, Madeline has written extensively about teacher morale, recruitment and retention, preparation, unions, salaries and benefits, and other workplace issues. She has also led *EdWeek's* coverage of climate change and schools, receiving an Education Writers Association fellowship for this work in 2022. Will graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



**Reginald Williams, Ph.D.**  
**Professor**  
**South Carolina State University**  
**Member, AACTE Advisory Committee on Government Relations**

Reginald Williams is CAEP assessment coordinator, associate professor, and early childhood coordinator at South Carolina State University. He is the president of the South Carolina Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators and a past president of the South Carolina Association for the Education of Young Children.

Governor Henry McMaster appointed him to serve on the Governor's Advisory Board for Child and Day Care Licensing. He currently serves as vice president for membership of the National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators, and as a member of the NAEYC Early Childhood Higher Education Accreditation Commission. A South Carolina certified early childhood teacher, published author, and former public school prekindergarten lead teacher, Williams is currently researching the use of performance-based coaching to train pre-service early childhood primary school teachers that use developmentally appropriate practice and who are seeking state initial licensure. Williams earned his artium baccalaureus in English from Duke University, his M.A.T. in early childhood education from SC State University, and his Ph.D. in early childhood education from the University of South Carolina.



**James D. Wolfinger, Ph.D.,**  
**Dean, School of Education**  
**St. John's University**  
**Member, AACTE Advisory Committee on Government Relations**

James Wolfinger is dean of the School of Education at St. John's University in Queens, NY. Before coming to St. John's, he served as dean of the College of Education at Illinois State University and associate dean of the College of Education at DePaul University in Chicago. Wolfinger was a high school history

teacher in Atlanta and Augusta, GA before earning his Ph.D. in history from Northwestern University. n advocate for teacher preparation programs focused on urban schools, he has been a member of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) Government Relations and Advocacy Committee since Summer 2021.



**Michael K. Yudin**  
**Raben Group**

Michael K. Yudin brings the expertise of a career spent advocating for equitable opportunities for educationally disadvantaged children and youth to his role as principal at The Raben Group. Prior to joining the firm, Yudin worked on behalf of the Obama administration at the U.S. Department of Education for six years, serving the secretary in a number of capacities, including assistant secretary for special education and rehabilitative services, and acting assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education. Prior to joining the Department, Yudin served nine years as a U.S. Senate staffer, serving as the legislative director for Sen. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, senior counsel to Sen. Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico, and HELP Committee counsel to Sen. Jim Jeffords of Vermont. Working for senior members of the HELP Committee, Yudin helped draft, negotiate, and pass various pieces of legislation, including the No Child Left Behind Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004, the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, and reauthorization of the Head Start Act. Before joining the Senate, Yudin served as an attorney at the Social Security Administration and at the U.S. Department of Labor for nearly 10 years.



**Rangel Zarate**  
**Doctoral Candidate**  
**AACTE Holmes Scholar**  
**California State University, San Bernardino**

Rangel Velez Zarate is a doctoral student at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) studying educational leadership. He has been selected for the inaugural year of the Holmes Scholar Program at CSUSB. His research is focused on developing a community of care in higher education incorporating both academic and mental health support for Filipino American college students who have experienced or have been affected by racially-targeted violence in a COVID-era. Zarate is a two-time recipient of the Educational Doctoral Grant at CSUSB and has worked as a graduate research assistant for Karen Escalante, Ed.D., focused on advocating for antiracist and equitable teaching strategies for pre-service teacher education. Much of Zarate's work is informed by his identification as a biracial Filipino and Mexican student in the Inland Empire and his experiences of identity formation as part of an ethnically marginalized group.