

EdRedesign Fellowship for Cradle-to-Career Partnership Leaders

October 15-18, 2024

Speaker Biographies

Julie Allen, Director of Strategy and Communications, The EdRedesign Lab, Harvard Graduate School of Education



Julie Allen is director of strategy and communications at EdRedesign where she focuses on strategy, communications, and development. Most recently, Julie was senior advisor at EdRedesign from January 2022 to February 2023. Previously, Julie was a Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative 2020 fellow and 2021 senior fellow. Prior to her fellowship, she had a distinguished career in corporate law, focusing on capital markets, public company M&A transactions, and boardroom governance and counsel. Most recently, she was a senior partner at Proskauer Rose, where, in addition to her practice, her management roles included practice group leadership, new business intake, and risk management. She served as senior editor-education for the Harvard ALI Social Impact Review from 2021 through 2023. In addition, Julie is a member of the board of directors of Read Ahead (which she chaired from 2019 through 2023), a reading-based mentoring organization serving NYC public elementary school children, for which she has served as a volunteer reading mentor for over a decade. Julie is also a member of the board of The Trevor Project, the largest suicide prevention and mental health organization serving LGBTQ+ youth in the U.S. and Mexico. She also served as a member of the advisory board of the Harvard Kennedy School Carr Center for Human Rights Policy from 2021 through 2023.

Denisse Arias, Director of the Fellowship for Cradle-to-Career Partnership Leaders, The EdRedesign Lab, Harvard Graduate School of Education



Denisse Arias brings experience in equity-focused leadership development, cross-sector collaboration, education systems transformation, and monitoring, evaluation, and learning within education and international development. Prior to joining EdRedesign, Denisse held various roles at Teach For All, supporting leaders across Asia, Latin America, Africa, and Europe pursuing systems change and collective leadership efforts, most recently as the Director for Leadership Development & Equity. During her time at Teach For All, Denisse also co-led a 17-person team responsible for designing and executing over 50 learning experiences, Fellowships, and communities of practice for network stakeholders. She also supported partnerships with USAID, the European Commission, and the World Bank. Denisse co-led the Leading from Lived Experience Fellowship from 2019-2024, a leadership development opportunity for network members who themselves had experienced inequities within their contexts, that reached over 100 network members.

A Teach For America Alum, Denisse taught in her community and served as inaugural Co-Board Chair for the Teach For America – Massachusetts’ Homegrown Alumni Board, supporting engagement with corps members and alumni from Massachusetts. In June 2024, Denisse was selected as a Hispanics in Philanthropy Lideres Fellow. Denisse serves as a board member for Shout Mouse Press, an organization that supports youth in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia (DMV) area dedicated to centering and amplifying the voices of marginalized youth through writing workshops, book publication, and public speaking opportunities. She holds a B.A and B.S. from Boston University and a Master’s in Public Administration (MPA) from Columbia University’s School of International & Public Affairs.

Dr. Cornell Brooks, Hauser Professor of the Practice of Nonprofit Organizations, Professor of the Practice of Nonprofit Organizations, and Professor of the Practice of Public Leadership and Social Justice at the Harvard Kennedy School



Cornell William Brooks is Hauser Professor of the Practice of Nonprofit Organizations and Professor of the Practice of Public Leadership and Social Justice at the Harvard Kennedy School. He is the Director of The William Monroe Trotter Collaborative for Social Justice at the School’s Center for Public Leadership. Professor Brooks served as the 18th president and CEO of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People from 2014 to 2017. Under his leadership, the NAACP secured 12 significant legal victories, including laying the groundwork for the first statewide legal challenge to prison-based gerrymandering. He is also a civil rights attorney, and a fourth-generation ordained minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Prior to leading the NAACP, Brooks was president and CEO of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice. Additionally, he served as senior counsel and acting director of the Office of Communications Business Opportunities at the Federal Communications Commission, executive director of the Fair Housing Council of Greater Washington, and a trial attorney at both the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and the U.S. Department of Justice. Professor Brooks holds a J.D. from Yale Law School, a Master of Divinity Degree from Boston University’s School of Theology, and a B.A. from Jackson State University.

Dr. Shanda Crowder, Vice President, Capacity & Implementation, Partners for Rural Impact



Dr. Shanda Crowder has 20 years of experience in strategic planning as well as developing and implementing educational programs for youth and families. Before joining PRI, she was a senior associate within the leadership development unit at the Annie E. Casey Foundation. She has a bachelor’s in biology from North Carolina Central University, a master’s in school psychology from Howard University, and a doctorate in urban educational leadership from Morgan State University.

Sagar Desai, Senior Consultant, The EdRedesign Lab, Harvard Graduate School of Education



Sagar Desai (he/him) is a continuous learner who brings more than 15 years of experience in improving education and economic mobility outcomes, having worked with nonprofits, for-profits and NGOs in start-up, scaling and sustaining roles. He is currently an Executive Coach and Consultant for Nonprofit Leaders and Organizations helping clients move toward their hoped-for future and impact. In every engagement, he brings his experience creating more equitable systems, facilitating to make clear and collective decisions, and synthesizing information into a set of actionable recommendations. Over nearly two decades, Sagar has built and scaled training programs for community leaders to transform systems in service of more equitable outcomes, invested \$35 million in national training and fellowship organizations, and launched a statewide campaign to equitably increase public education funding by \$3+ billion. Sagar received his MBA from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and graduated from the University of Texas at Austin. He currently sits on the Board of Directors for Govern for America and Brooklyn Prospect Charter Schools.

Cecilia A. Gutierrez, Managing Director, Portfolio Lead, Blue Meridian Partners



Cecilia A. Gutierrez provides strategic and executional leadership on critical business priorities and leads innovation efforts which will expand Blue Meridian's work as it evolves. She explores new philanthropic investment opportunities, leads due diligence on potential Blue Meridian investees, and manages relationships with current investees. Cecilia leads Blue Meridian's Place Matters portfolio. In 2017, Cecilia was recruited as the Deputy Director of My Brother's Keeper Alliance (MBKA), Obama Foundation. She co-led the development and launch of the MBK Framework to Affect Systems Change, a foundational standard of excellence outlining a set of principles, indicators, and processes to accelerate progress on complex social conditions for boys and young men of color. By 2018, she certified and onboarded 180 cities, towns, and tribal nations across the country as part of the MBK Network. She also orchestrated a 50-member team in planning and executing MBK Rising!. Prior to this, Cecilia spent five years as President and CEO of the Miami Children's Initiative, a place-based cradle to career strategy in the community of Liberty City in Miami, FL. She previously held roles with National Academic Educational Partners, a turnaround company, as Acting COO and Strategic Consultant, and served as Executive Director of Breakthrough Miami, an academic enrichment program that uses a student-teaching-students model to ensure that motivated, under-resourced middle-school students have access to excellent high-school opportunities, graduate from high school on time, and attend college. Cecilia earned a Master of Public Administration from Baruch College, a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Boston College, and she was a National Urban Fellow.

Abel Habte, Associate Portfolio Manager, Ballmer Group



Abel Habte is a Portfolio Manager for Ballmer Group's Community Impact team focusing on research to inform strategies and potential investments designed to reduce racial disparities and improve economic mobility at scale through Place-Based Partnerships. Abel brings to the role a multidisciplinary set of skills honed through many years of experience in the nonprofit sector, previously serving as the Learning, Evaluation, and Research Manager for Martha's Table where he led the design, monitoring, and evaluation of several flagship programs.

Dr. Shadae Harris, President & CEO, Groundwork Consulting, Professor in Residence, Virginia State University



Dr. Shadae Harris, formerly the Chief Engagement Officer at Richmond Public Schools, earned national recognition for her significant contribution to reducing chronic absenteeism by nearly 20% during her tenure. Dr. Harris has also served as an elementary school principal and began her career as a 4th-grade teacher. She holds a Master's degree in Learning and Teaching and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership, both from Harvard University.

Currently, Dr. Harris leads Groundwork Consulting, where she assists school districts and organizations nationwide in developing robust engagement systems that place families at the center. Additionally, she is a distinguished Professor in Residence at Virginia State University and a founding faculty member of the VSU Engagement Institute. As a national expert on engagement, Dr. Harris was recently selected to speak at the White House on her innovative approach to decreasing chronic absenteeism.

Dr. James Honan, Senior Lecturer, Harvard Graduate School of Education



James Honan is a highly respected senior lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE). With a wealth of experience and expertise in financial management of nonprofit organizations, organizational performance measurement, and higher-education administration, he plays a pivotal role in shaping educational leadership. As the educational cochair of the Institute for Educational Management (IEM) and a faculty member in various Executive Education programs, James imparts valuable knowledge to educational leaders and nonprofit administrators. He has also worked as a consultant, providing guidance on strategic planning, resource

allocation, and performance measurement to colleges, universities, schools, and nonprofit organizations on a national and international scale. With a tenure at Harvard that spans over three decades, James has made significant contributions to both HGSE and the Harvard Kennedy School (HKS). As a faculty member at HGSE and an affiliate faculty member at the Center for Public Leadership (CPL) at HKS, he has played an integral role in advancing leadership development in the

education sector. James also serves on the Faculty Executive Committee of the Advanced Leadership Initiative (ALI) at Harvard University. His extensive teaching experience extends to various executive education programs and professional development institutes around the world, where he shares his expertise in nonprofit financial stewardship and effective management practices. Additionally, James has acted as a consultant to numerous colleges, universities, schools, foundations, and nonprofit organizations, assisting them in areas such as strategic planning, resource allocation, and performance management. He holds advanced degrees from prestigious institutions such as George Washington University and Harvard University, complementing his rich academic and professional background.

Tauheedah Jackson, Deputy Director and Director of the Institute for Success Planning, The EdRedesign Lab, Harvard Graduate School of Education



Tauheedah Jackson serves as the Deputy Director of EdRedesign and the inaugural director of EdRedesign's Institute for Success Planning at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She partners with local communities, nationwide, to design personalized, relationship-based systems of support for children and youth through cross-sector collaboration. EdRedesign advances cradle-to-career, community-based personalized systems of support and opportunity for all children and youth, particularly those living in poverty and champions a broad, holistic model of child development and education that goes beyond schools. Prior to joining EdRedesign, she was the director of Place Based Strategy & Community School Initiatives at the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL). In this role, she was responsible for engaging networks of leaders in local communities and supervising the programs, logistics, and daily operations of the national Coalition for Community Schools. In June 2023, Tauheedah joined IEL's board of directors.

Tauheedah brings to EdRedesign nearly 24 years of experience working in youth development, local government, philanthropy, school districts and out-of-school time programs. As the previous director of the Hartford Partnership for Student Success, Tauheedah led a cross-sector collaborative partnership that founded and funded the local Community Schools initiative in Hartford, Connecticut. Under Tauheedah's leadership, Hartford Community Schools became locally and nationally recognized as an exemplar for its systems-building work. She also served as the Vice President for Strategic Partnerships for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford, after fulfilling several operations and program capacities within the organization.

A native of Bridgeport, Connecticut, Tauheedah is a first-generation college student. She earned her bachelor's degree from Connecticut College in government and secondary education and holds a master's degree in education policy and management from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Tauheedah is a sought-after presenter and facilitator and serves on various nonprofit boards. She has received several awards recognizing her leadership in the field, including Hartford Business Journal's 40 Under Forty. As a mother of 3 sons, Isaiah, Isaac, and Ian, she is committed to working toward ensuring more equitable access and opportunity for all.

Bridget Jancarz, Vice President, Network Impact, StriveTogether



As Vice President, Network Impact, **Bridget Jancarz** leads StriveTogether's strategy to support Cradle to Career Network members to accelerate their progress through the Theory of Action™ toward better and more equitable outcomes for young people. This includes proactive and responsive network supports, impact investment and a comprehensive network member experience. Bridget leads a team focused on building and disseminating knowledge critical for place-based partnership success and provides thought leadership to the field of place-based partnerships. Most recently, Bridget served as chief of staff, helping to develop and implement StriveTogether's strategy and accelerate the vision of its

president and CEO. Since joining StriveTogether in 2013, Bridget has played a key role in establishing the StriveTogether Theory of Action and national Cradle to Career Network. In her various roles, including senior director of network advancement and associate director of network quality, she oversaw a national evaluation that validated the Theory of Action, oversaw the strategy for "network effect" offerings and built membership standards. Prior to StriveTogether, Bridget worked with Fostering Success Michigan, a statewide collective impact initiative focused on improving educational outcomes for youth and alumni of foster care. Bridget began her career working in advertising and finance. Bridget holds a master's of social work and a bachelor of business administration from Western Michigan University. She serves on the board of Indigo Hippo and volunteers for local philanthropic efforts in the community. She was named to the 2024 Cincinnati Business Courier's Forty Under 40 class.

Gustavo Luna, Cross-Sector Leadership Advisor, The EdRedesign Lab, Harvard Graduate School of Education



Gustavo Luna is the Cross-Sector Leadership Advisor at EdRedesign and a Doctor of Education Leadership candidate at Harvard. He supports leaders of cradle-to-career systems and communities across the U.S. Gustavo is an award-winning educator, entrepreneur, and leader. He is renowned for his creativity, fostering connections, and unwavering commitment to uplift communities. His work has focused on enrichment programs and leadership development. At the age of 23, Gustavo launched his first education organization, rapidly expanding it, employing 120 educators, and serving thousands of students across 50 school

districts. He then led a non-profit focused on youth leadership development. In 2018, Gustavo founded his second education company, [Kern Tutoring](#). The organization provides after-school and day-time intervention services for school districts across California. His project, *EDGE*, provides individualized academic coaching to support fostered youth earn high school diplomas.

Today, Gustavo empowers non-profit, business, and school leaders around the globe using the power of coaching. He is a Public Narrative and [Data Wise coach](#). His work has earned him various recognitions including Bakersfield's 20 under 40, [Harvard's Presidential Public Service Fellowship](#), Latinos for Education Board Fellowship, the Krinsky Entrepreneurship Fellowship, and Class Marshal

at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Gustavo holds a Bachelor's in Public Administration from California State University, Fresno, and a Master of Education degree from Harvard.

Prof. Kimberlyn Leary, Senior Fellow, Bloomberg Center for Cities, Harvard Kennedy School, and Associate Professor, Department of Health Policy and Management, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health



Kimberlyn Leary, Ph.D., MPA is a senior fellow at the Bloomberg Center for Cities at Harvard University, an associate professor of psychology at the Harvard Medical School, and an associate professor in the Department of Health Policy and Management at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. She served as an adviser to the Obama White House from 2014–2016, working with the White House Council on Women and Girls to develop the Advancing Equity initiative, which focused on improving life outcomes for women and girls of color. Most recently, she served as a senior policy advisor in the Biden White House to the Domestic Policy Council and as a senior equity

fellow with the Office of Management and Budget, helping in both roles to implement the President's executive order on equity. She is also an executive vice president at the Urban Institute. Dr. Leary has a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Michigan, an M.P.A. from the Harvard Kennedy School, and an A.B. from Amherst College.

Nonie K. Lesaux, Interim Dean, Roy E. Larsen Professor of Education and Human Development, Harvard Graduate School of Education



Nonie K. Lesaux is the Roy E. Larsen Professor of Education and Human Development at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE). She leads a research program on strategies and innovations to improve learning opportunities and literacy outcomes for children and youth. Her teaching focuses on literacy development and reform, early learning, and leading system-level change. Lesaux's research-practice partnerships with large urban school districts, to improve literacy rates, include seven years with San Diego Unified and ten years with the New York City Department of Education. With Stephanie Jones, Lesaux leads the [Saul Zaentz Early Education Initiative](#) at HGSE, which

addresses the pervasive global challenge of simultaneously scaling and improving the quality of early education. Lesaux's research appears in numerous scholarly publications, and its practical applications are featured in several books for school leaders and educators. She is co-editor of the Handbook of Reading Research (2022) and wrote a widely circulated state literacy report, Turning the Page: Refocusing Massachusetts for Reading Success, that inspired a third-grade reading proficiency bill passed in Massachusetts. Lesaux has earned the William T. Grant Scholars Award and the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers, the highest honor given by the U.S. government to young professionals beginning their independent research careers. Lesaux is a member of the National Academy of Education and the board of the Spencer Foundation.

Ben Lewis, Vice President of Learning & Innovation, Purpose Built Communities



Ben Lewis is the Vice President of Learning and Innovation at Purpose Built Communities. Within this role, he leads the Purpose Built Communities Solutions Lab, coordinates organizational learning, and drives field building efforts. Prior to joining Purpose Built, Ben studied leadership and comprehensive community development at Harvard University. Before that, he led a high school at Strive Preparatory Schools in Denver, CO, elevating the school by two tiers on the Colorado state assessment. He also served as an assistant principal at KIPP and Northeast High School in Philadelphia, where he launched a writing program, coordinated testing, and led a school culture plan that increased on-time student attendance by 60%. Ben began his career as a high school humanities teacher at Freire Charter School, where he

achieved a 92% yearly college acceptance rate as the senior team lead, authored a social sciences curriculum, and coached the varsity track and field team. Ben's accolades include the Penn Club of Philadelphia Social Impact Award, Philadelphia regional representative for the Sue Lehmann Award for Teaching Excellence, Harvard Graduate School of Education Entrepreneurship Award, and The Harvard Krinsky Entrepreneurship and Innovation Award. He also actively participates in advisory boards like Partners in Democracy and is an Aspen Pahara Fellow. Ben earned his doctorate in educational leadership from Harvard University. He also holds a Master of Science in Education and a Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies and Africana Studies, both degrees from the University of Pennsylvania.

Sara Maranowicz, Portfolio Director, Blue Meridian Partners



Sara Maranowicz works closely with Managing Directors to support relationships with investees, including facilitating the development of scaling plans and providing counsel on execution. She also helps to source and conduct due diligence on new investment opportunities and collaborates on innovation initiatives to expand Blue Meridian's work, with a focus on Place Matters.

Prior to joining Blue Meridian, Sara was the Community Programs Director at Bohemian Foundation, a family foundation based in Colorado. There she led a team responsible for place-based investments that advanced equitable outcomes related to youth, economic mobility, and community vibrancy. Before this, Sara led the collaborative implementation of a new, national, resident-led, \$350 million place-based investment program in the United Kingdom, Big Local. She also managed the rapid activation of a national grant and technical assistance program to support organizations impacted by the 2008 financial crisis. Earlier in her career, Sara worked for First 5 LA, which supports the safe and healthy development of young children in Los Angeles County, and for Abt Associates, a consulting firm focused on social impact.

Sara earned a BA in Psychology and Sociology from the University of Colorado, Boulder, and an MA in Educational Policy Analysis and Evaluation from Stanford University.

Antoniya Marinova, Associate Vice President of Programs, The Boston Foundation



Antoniya Marinova is an Associate Vice President at the Boston Foundation, where she leads the Foundation's education, early childhood, and health & wellness strategies, including special initiatives, partnerships, civic leadership, and grantmaking. In 2022, she also served as the interim executive director of the Boston Opportunity Agenda, the city's principal cradle-to-career public-private partnership. She joined the Boston Foundation in 2016 after serving in multiple research roles at Harvard University's Center for Education Policy Research, Mathematica Policy Research, and the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, where her research

work covered a broad span of topics in education and economic policy. Antoniya is a member of the boards of Playworks and Root Cause, Inc. and serves as chair of the board of the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy. Antoniya has a B.A. in economics from Mount Holyoke College and an M.P.P. in social and urban policy from the Harvard Kennedy School.

Rosa Inés Méndez, Director, Training Hub at StriveTogether



Rosa Inés Méndez is a first-generation Black Dominican American born and raised in Chicago. She attended the University of Illinois at Chicago, earning a Bachelor of Psychology with a minor in Spanish. She received her master's degree in mental health counseling from Roosevelt University in 2004. Rosa has over 20 years of experience with community engagement and mental health services. She has served as a case manager, program manager, Community Schools Resource Coordinator and Early Childhood Resource Specialist. In these positions she was able

to bear witness to the racial inequities across multiple systems. She has worked with non-profit organizations, school districts and businesses during her career to promote equitable and just community, parent and family engagement efforts in the Chicagoland area. She is a Seeking Educational Equity & Diversity (SEED) facilitator and has experience-creating mutual aid efforts in Evanston, Ill. She is the board chair for the Village Legal and Community Project serving the South Shore, Woodlawn, and Englewood communities of Chicago. Her purpose is grounded in social and equity justice, empowering individuals and families, and connecting people to resources within their community.

Richard Raya, CEO, Marin Promise Partnership; By All Means Senior Fellow, The EdRedesign Lab



In his current role as CEO of the Marin Promise Partnership, **Richard Raya** brings deep collaboration and systems-change expertise to the problem of poverty and the challenge of advancing educational equity in Marin County. The Partnership is a cradle-to-career network to advance educational equity across Marin by strengthening the county's system of schools and educational support services. In his previous role as Senior Advisor at the Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA), Richard used Mission Promise Neighborhood's cradle-to-career, collaborative approach to help drive systems change across

the city of San Francisco, moving from Promise Neighborhood to Promise City. Promise City aligns the best practices from Mission Promise Neighborhood with the Mayor's COVID recovery plan, creating holistic, cradle-to-career solutions in the city's hardest hit neighborhoods.

Richard is also a Board Member for the San Francisco Bay Area Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR), co-chair of the African American Latino Action Alliance, and a member of the Executive Committee for End Child Poverty in California. Prior to this, Richard was the Chief of Staff for an Oakland City Council member, and the Director of Administration for the Alameda County Public Health Department. Richard's great-grandparents were indigenous Yaquis who came to the Bay Area after fighting in the Mexican Revolution. His parents worked as farmworkers in Northern California and came of age during the Chicano Movement. They laid the foundation for him to earn a B.A. and Master's in Public Policy from UC Berkeley. He's accompanied on this journey by his urban planner wife, five sons, and their rescue pit bull.

Paul Reville, Founder and Faculty Director, The EdRedesign Lab; Francis Keppel Professor of Practice of Educational Policy and Administration at the Harvard Graduate School of Education



Professor Paul Reville returned to the Harvard Graduate School of Education as the Francis Keppel Professor of Practice of Educational Policy and Administration in 2013, having just completed nearly five years of service as the secretary of education for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. As Governor Deval Patrick's top education advisor, Reville established the Executive Office of Education and had oversight of higher education, K-12, and early education in the nation's leading student achievement state. He served in the Governor's Cabinet and played a leading education reform role on matters ranging from the Achievement

Gap Act of 2010 and Common Core State Standards to the Commonwealth's highly successful Race to the Top proposal.

He is particularly interested in matters of federal and state education policy and is now concentrating his work on the design of 21st-century learning systems, braiding schooling, health/social supports, and enrichments to close learning gaps.

Prior to joining the Patrick Administration, Reville had chaired the Massachusetts State Board of Education, founded the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, co-founded the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education (MBAE), chaired the Massachusetts Reform Review Commission, and the Massachusetts Commission on Time and Learning, and served as Executive Director of the Pew Forum on Standards-Based Reform, a national think tank which convened the U.S.'s leading researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to set the national standards agenda. Reville played a central role in MBAE's development of and advocacy for Massachusetts' historic Education Reform Act of 1993. Reville has been a member of the HGSE faculty since 1997 and has served as Director of the Education Policy and Management Program.

Reville's career, which combines research, policy, and practice, began with service as a VISTA volunteer and youth worker. He served as a teacher and principal of two urban, alternative high schools. Some years later, he founded a local education foundation which was part of the Public Education Network. He is a board member and adviser to a host of organizations, and a frequent

writer and speaker on education reform and policy issues. He edited the book entitled, *A Decade of Urban School Reform: Persistence and Progress in the Boston Public Schools*. He holds five honorary doctorate degrees. Last and most importantly, he is the father of four children.

Lynne Sacks, Research Director, The EdRedesign Lab, Harvard Graduate School of Education



Lynne Sacks is the research director at EdRedesign and leads the organization's research activities. Lynne has over 20 years of research, non-profit, and policy experience. She heads the ongoing By All Means documentation and evaluation study as well as EdRedesign's other research. Before joining EdRedesign, Lynne worked for the Center for Equity and Excellence in Education at the George Washington University and the National Center on Education and the Economy. She has conducted research for the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the American Institutes for Research; she has also served as a consultant to New Profit, the Annenberg Center for School Reform,

the Massachusetts Executive Office of Education, and the Commonwealth Corporation.

Lynne is a former high school and adult English and English as a Second Language teacher. Lynne received her undergraduate degree from Cornell University, and her M.Ed. and Ed.D. degrees from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Chris Shelton, Cross-Sector Leadership Advisor, The EdRedesign Lab, Harvard Graduate School of Education



Chris Shelton's career began as a defense attorney at Bryan Cave, LLP before she discovered her true calling in education. Shelton transitioned and began working as a middle school mathematics teacher with Teach for America in St. Louis, Missouri. She spent a decade at her Teach for America placement school relentlessly fighting to ensure that urban scholars receive a quality and equitable education. After leaving her placement school, Shelton was awarded the Zuckerman Fellowship from the Center for Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School. She is

currently in the third year of the Doctor of Education Leadership program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Shelton also received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Saint Louis University, a Juris Doctor degree from Howard University School of Law, and a master's degree in Education Leadership, Organizations, and Entrepreneurship from Harvard.

Eshauna Smith, National Director of Community Impact, Ballmer Group



Eshauna Smith is Ballmer Group's National Director of Community Impact, where she focuses on improving economic mobility and reducing racial disparities at scale through Place-Based Partnerships and Talent Development. Eshauna holds two decades of experience building and leading organizations to open pathways for youth, including serving as the CEO of Urban Alliance, Senior Policy Advisor for Disconnected Youth and Workforce Development in the DC Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education, and founding Executive Director of the DC Alliance of Youth Advocates.

Wendy Viola, Managing Director, Field Building & Programs, William Julius Wilson Institute at Harlem Children's Zone



Wendy Viola is the Director of Research for the William Julius Wilson Institute at the Harlem Children's Zone. Prior to this role, Wendy was a member of the Harlem Children's Zone's Evaluation Team from 2014-2019, overseeing the Promise Academy Longitudinal Study and the evaluation of HCZ's early childhood and community programs, and helping to lead the planning of HCZ's Emotional Wellness initiative. After serving as the Director of Research for the Mayor's Office of ThriveNYC, shaping strategy for measuring the Office's impact on New York City, Wendy returned to HCZ in the spring of 2020. Wendy holds a BS from Cornell University, and an MS and PhD in Applied Social and Community

Psychology from Portland State University.

Rob Watson, Executive Director, The EdRedesign Lab, and Lecturer on Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education



Rob Watson is the inaugural Executive Director of EdRedesign and Lecturer on Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, having previously served as Deputy Director. At EdRedesign, Rob leads an interdisciplinary team of staff, fellows, consultants, research affiliates, and students supporting communities across the U.S. to develop cradle-to-career systems of opportunity. He presides over many of EdRedesign's signature talent development offerings, including the EdRedesign Fellowship for Cradle-to-Career Partnership Leaders, Summer Institute for Neighborhood Leaders, By All Means Senior Fellows Program, and the By All Means Communities of Practice

initiative. His work has focused on themes of civic engagement, community development, and educational equity in the U.S., Latin America, and Africa. Prior to joining EdRedesign, Rob served as a consultant and advisor to organizations that include the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, Harvard College, Tufts University, The Social Impact Studio, FUSE Corps, The

Foundation for Louisiana, The Institute of Politics at Harvard Kennedy School, The Obama Foundation, and Harlem Children's Zone.

A former Peace Corps volunteer and winner of the Peace Corps' 2023 Franklin H. Williams Award, Rob has co-founded five civil society organizations in Paraguay, including, Teach for Paraguay, member of the global Teach For All Network and the Paraguayan Government's first national youth service program. Additionally, he partnered with the mayor, superintendent of schools and community stakeholders from his hometown of Poughkeepsie, New York to launch the Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet, a collective impact organization that convenes leaders across sectors to develop a citywide cradle-to-career agenda for children, youth, and families. Rob is also a co-founder of the Poughkeepsie Service Accelerator (PSA), a place-based service year collaborative that aims to attract and retain local talent to pursue social impact careers in the Mid-Hudson Valley region of New York State.

In January 2024, Rob was selected as a Presidential Leadership Scholar. Rob is a member of the Board of Directors of the Children's Funding Project, former World Economic Forum Global Shaper, and former Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Millennium Scholar. He holds a B.A. from Harvard College, an Ed.M in Education Policy and Management from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and a Mid-career Master's in Public Administration (MPA) from Harvard Kennedy School.

Keesler Welsch, Collaborations Manager, Bloomberg Center for Cities



Keesler Welch has nearly a decade of programmatic, operational, and research experience while interfacing with executive-level teams. Before joining the Bloomberg Center for Cities, Keesler spent eight years at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) supporting their research transparency and reproducibility initiative, helping launch and manage the American Economic Association's randomized controlled trial registry, and expanding the J-PAL affiliate network. She has conducted field work and convenings in Kathmandu, Nepal and Bangalore, India. Keesler holds a

Bachelor of Arts in political science from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Master of International Development from The New School.