

THE MATHEMATICS OF OPPORTUNITY:

MEETING #THE MOMENT

APRIL 15 & 16



2026

Introduction

Math is an essential tool for navigating and improving the world around us. But, year after year, too many students are being disconnected from math or being routed to math courses that do not relate to their interests or career paths.

Fortunately, education leaders across the country are reimagining math education to engage students and prepare them for college and career success. Just Equations' eighth annual conference explores the transformative forces and voices behind the movement to redesign math education.

The Mathematics of Opportunity: Meeting the Moment brings together educators, advocates, and students to discuss key issues and emerging trends in high school and postsecondary math education, and how K–12 and higher education systems are working together to prepare students for college, civic life, and the workforce of the future.



Through a series of plenary sessions and interactive discussions, experts and stakeholders will address the most pressing issues in math education, including how to:

- + Align K–12 and higher education systems to prepare students for college, civic life, and the workforce of the future.
- + Redesign admissions policies to expand equity in college access and ensure students have the math preparation they need to be successful.
- + Streamline the path to a four-year degree for transfer students.

Together, we will discuss how we are meeting the moment and ensuring that math becomes a gateway to opportunity for all students.

**+ MATH AS A VEHICLE FOR DEMOCRACY + FROM
STUDENT VOICES TO SYSTEM CHANGE +
ADVANCING IN MATH THROUGH
DUAL ENROLLMENT + RETHINKING THE
CALCULUS OF COLLEGE ADMISSIONS
+ MAKING MATH WORK FOR THE FUTURE +
MAPPING THE TRANSFER TERRAIN
FROM MATH MAZE TO PATHWAYS +
DATA IS POWER: STUDENTS AS AI ETHICS
RESEARCHERS + ENGAGING COMMUNITIES
AND CLASSROOMS THROUGH MATHEMATICS +**

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Sessions



Sessions

MATH AS A VEHICLE FOR DEMOCRACY

Redistricting. Ranked choice voting. Determining a state’s eligible voting age population. These processes all influence our ability to effectively participate in our democracy. Understanding each of these practices requires a strong grounding in mathematical principles—ranging from statistics to percentages to graphing. With many feeling overwhelmed by the current political climate, and unsure of how they can civically engage in the present moment, this opening keynote dialogue will highlight how essential it is that all students have the opportunity to hone their quantitative skills so that they can proactively take part in the democratic process.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15
10:00 AM PDT



Moderator

Andrea McChristian
National Policy Director, *Just Equations*

Speakers

Ryan Haygood
President & CEO, *New Jersey Institute for Social Justice*

Ashley Stone
Senior Director, Center for Policy Analysis and Research, *Congressional Black Caucus Foundation*

Ben Blum-Smith
Assistant Research Scientist, *Johns Hopkins University*

Co-Sponsor



Benjamin Banneker
Association

Sessions

FROM STUDENT VOICES TO SYSTEM CHANGE

What happens when students lead the conversation about the future of math education? This session will begin with a student conversation that sheds light on what today’s learners value most—expanding on insights from recent surveys on students’ math experiences. Students will share their aspirations and experiences—what sparks their interest, what disconnects them, and how they envision “real math” supporting their future pathways. In the second half, educators reflect on these insights and share practical strategies for strengthening math identity, student confidence, and real-world relevance.

Co-Sponsor



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15
11:30 AM PDT



Moderator

Ji Yun Son
Professor of Psychology,
California State University, Los Angeles

Speakers

Jay Gillen
Teacher & Organizer,
A New Constitution for Public Education

Benito Aranda-Comer
K-12 Policy Analyst, *EdTrust-West*

Annie Shan,
Student, *BASIS Independent Brooklyn*

Brianna Wright
Doctoral Student, *UCLA*

Sessions

ADVANCING IN MATH THROUGH DUAL ENROLLMENT

Dual-enrollment mathematics is a promising strategy for improving postsecondary outcomes. Math preparation is required across college majors, and participation in dual enrollment has been linked to higher college completion rates. Getting a leg up on math courses may be especially important in STEM fields. However, students of color and low-income students have historically been underserved by advanced math opportunities, including dual enrollment. Changing this requires intentional structures and policy strategies, including aligning the course pathways around a program of study that leads to credentials and career opportunities. This session will focus specifically on how to use dual-enrollment mathematics to expand opportunities in STEM and beyond for underserved students.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15
01:00 PM PDT



Moderator

Naomi Castro
Chief Program Officer,
Career Ladders Project

Speakers

Mike Spencer
Secondary Mathematics Specialist,
Utah State Board of Education

Aurely Garcia Tulloch
Research Analyst, *Community College
Research Center Teachers College, Columbia
University*

Lya Snell
Director of Building Capacity for
Innovation, *The Charles A. Dana Center,
University of Texas-Austin*

Co-Sponsor



Sessions

RETHINKING THE CALCULUS OF COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

Admissions professionals are increasingly aware that using calculus as an across-the-board admissions screen can be both arbitrary and inequitable. Arbitrary because calculus doesn't align with all students' educational goals. Inequitable because access to calculus in high school is highly stratified by race and income. But entrance criteria aren't determined by admissions officers alone. At many colleges and universities, faculty have considerable sway. And when it comes to math readiness, faculty in math and other STEM fields often have strong feelings. This panel engages math faculty from selective public and private institutions to explore how admissions policy can address the twin goals of expanding equity in college access and ensuring students have the math preparation they need to be successful.

Co-Sponsor



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15
01:00 PM PDT



Moderator

Angel B. Pérez
CEO, *National Association for College Admission Counseling*

Speakers

Brendan Kelly
Director of Introductory Math,
Harvard University

Edray Herber Goins
Professor of Mathematics & Statistics,
Pomona College

Mike Wolf
Mathematics Professor & Department
Chair, *Georgia Institute of Technology*

Tara Holm
Mathematics Professor & Department
Chair, *Cornell University*

Sessions

MAKING MATH WORK FOR THE FUTURE

The digital revolution is recreating how individuals live and interact—with profound implications for the jobs of the future. To ensure economic prosperity for individuals and the nation, our education systems must prepare students for a very different and more complex world. Ensuring the quantitative skills of the next generation means equipping those who will create the AI models of the future while also meeting the demand for durable skills such as critical thinking, resilience, collaboration, and digital literacy. Yet many of today’s high school and college math classrooms still resemble those of the prior century. This panel of experts will explore the question: ***How can math education, which is so central to preparing the growing STEM workforce, respond to this evolution to help build the diverse and flexible talent—as well as the quality jobs—that the future will demand?***

THURSDAY, APRIL 16
10:00 AM PDT



Moderator

Aly Martinez
Math Chief Program Officer,
Student Achievement Partners

Speakers

Quincy Brown
Principal, *Futures & Innovation*

Allison Scott
CEO, *Kapor Foundation*

Kiera Brodsky Chase
Director, *Instructional Design & Research, ConnectED*

Co-Sponsor



Sessions

MAPPING THE TRANSFER TERRAIN: FROM MATH MAZE TO PATHWAYS

For students navigating the path from community college to university, the terrain is often far from smooth, particularly when it comes to math requirements. Math misalignment is one of the key barriers for students seeking to transfer, particularly in STEM majors. Students often must contend with the gate of math anxiety while navigating a maze of complex, inconsistent, and often opaque requirements at a pace that is too often dictated by scheduling conflicts beyond their control. In recent years, some state systems have been working to smooth these paths. Join this session to learn from state leaders and researchers about some of these initiatives.

Co-Sponsor



THURSDAY, APRIL 16
11:30 AM PDT



Moderator

Heather Adams
Principal, *Sova Solutions*

Speakers

Aisha Lowe
Associate Vice Chancellor, Planning,
Research & Institutional Effectiveness,
Los Rios Community College District

Donna Linderman
Senior Vice Chancellor for Student Success,
State University of New York

Janie Valdés
Assistant Vice President, Enrollment
Management and Services, *Florida
International University*

Alexis Robin Hale
Research Fellow & Doctoral Student,
Just Equations; UCLA Graduate School
of Education

Sessions

DATA IS POWER: STUDENTS AS AI ETHICS RESEARCHERS

This session at the intersection of critical data literacy, AI ethics, and mathematics education examines programs that equip students and educators to interrogate data-driven technologies. Panelists share their experiences applying mathematical concepts—such as proportional reasoning and sampling—to evaluate algorithmic bias and its social impact. The discussion will highlight the implications of AI usage for equity and representation, and point to pathways for connecting data literacy to policy advocacy. Practical strategies for collaboration will be shared, emphasizing the roles of educators, researchers, industry, and community members in preparing young people for civic leadership in an increasingly AI-mediated society.

Co-Sponsor



THURSDAY, APRIL 16
11:30 AM PDT



Moderator

Evan Shieh
Executive Director,
Young Data Scientists League

Speakers

Karen Cangialosi
Director of Open Education
& Open Science, *RIOS Institute*

Lybroan James
Chief Education Officer,
Stemulate Solutions

Angela Ngoc Nguyen
Student, *Stanford University*

Sessions

ENGAGING COMMUNITIES AND CLASSROOMS THROUGH MATHEMATICS

How can mathematics bring communities together to deepen understanding and catalyze transformation? This session will highlight how statistical tools can amplify community voices and spark math learning. Participants will hear from practitioners who bring these ideas to life through their experiences engaging students and community members in meaningful mathematical research projects. This closing keynote dialogue explores the power of participatory research to center lived experiences and turn statistical insights into meaningful action. Join to help us answer how mathematics can be a driver of insight and impact.

Co-Sponsor



THURSDAY, APRIL 16
01:00 PM PDT



Moderator

Shakiyya Bland
Director of Educational Partnerships,
Just Equations

Speakers

Nathan Alexander
Assistant Professor, Department
of Curriculum and Instruction
Howard University School of Education

Felisha Shepard-White
Graduate Student, Applied Data Science
& Analytics, *Howard University*

Kagba Suaray
Professor, Department of Mathematics
and Statistics, *California State University,
Long Beach*

Omayra Ortega
Associate Professor of Mathematics
& Statistics, *Sonoma State University*

Speakers





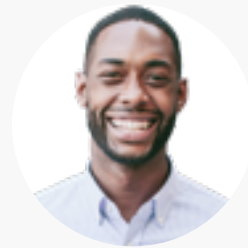
Speakers



Heather Adams

Principal, *Sova Solutions*

Heather Adams is a principal at Sova Solutions and an architect of learning mobility systems—where learner experience, policy, practice, and technology meet. She leads and supports multipartner initiatives that make transfer and credit movement more predictable and equitable, including the California Common Course Numbering Project, Michigan transfer pathways efforts, and national learning mobility collaborations (including the AI Transfer and Articulation Infrastructure Network and Transfer Nation California). Adams, who holds a doctorate in education, is known for translating complex policy and technical work into clear implementation steps and learner-ready guidance, and for convening cross-segment partners to move from alignment to action. She founded Transfer Nation, a national community advancing transfer as a core feature of higher education and strengthening the field through professional learning and shared problem-solving—so learning counts wherever it happens, and learners keep their momentum.



Nathan N. Alexander

Assistant Professor,
Howard University

Nathan N. Alexander is an assistant professor of curriculum and instruction at the Howard University School of Education and holds a joint appointment at Howard's Center for Applied Data Science and Analytics. He received his doctorate from Columbia University in 2015. His research focuses on the history and development of quantitative and mathematical literacy, and he examines the role of context in probability theory, statistical data analysis, and mathematical education. He is the founder and director of the Quantitative Histories Workshop, a computational curriculum collective and community-centered teaching and learning lab. His research and writing have appeared in the *Journal of Humanistic Mathematics*, *Notices of the American Mathematical Society*, and *PRIMUS: Problems, Resources, and Issues in Mathematics Undergraduate Studies*. He is a 2025–2028 MAA NAM section lecturer. His work is inspired by the legacy of Bob Moses—civil rights and mathematics literacy activist, and founder of the Algebra Project.



Benito Aranda-Comer

K–12 Policy Analyst,
EdTrust-West

Benito Aranda-Comer is a K–12 policy analyst at EdTrust-West, where he leads and supports state-wide efforts to strengthen and diversify California's educator workforce and advance equitable access to high-quality instruction. A Houston native and former eighth grade English language arts teacher, Aranda-Comer grounds his policy work in classroom experience and a deep understanding of how systemic inequities shape outcomes for students of color and multilingual learners.

At EdTrust-West, Aranda-Comer co-leads the California Educator Diversity Action Network, driving cross-sector collaboration on educator recruitment, retention, compensation, and pathways into the profession. He also contributes to EdTrust-West's math policy portfolio, supporting advocacy through the High-Quality Instructional Materials Learning Partners Coalition to improve student access to rigorous, inclusive mathematics through implementation of the California Math Framework. Aranda-Comer brings a practitioner-informed lens to policy, centering educators as essential partners in building systems that allow all students to thrive.

Speakers



Shakiyya Bland

Director of Educational Partnerships,
Just Equations

Shakiyya Bland is a longtime math educator and curriculum specialist with deep experience in culturally responsive education. She was an Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellow in 2020-22, serving in the U.S. Congress and U.S. Department of the Interior. A consulting educator, she has over 27 years of experience in math instruction, in roles including PreK-12 mathematics educator, district mathematics curriculum instructional learning coach, and certified Courageous Conversations About Race practitioner. Her curriculum unit, which applies geometric modeling to address food apartheid and promote food security, was published in *High School Mathematics Lessons to Explore, Understand, and Respond to Social Injustice*. She also has written culturally responsive lessons, strategies, and research in partnership with BetterLesson, Inc. Master Teacher Project and Balance the Equation: A Grand Challenge for Algebra 1. Her research focuses on the histories of STEM using Africana, Indigenous, and other culturally responsive ways of contributing to and applying scientific and mathematical literacies. She holds a B.S. in Education, M.A. in Education-Curriculum Instruction and Mathematics, and an Ed.D. in Education Leadership. Shakiyya joined Just Equations as Math Educator in Residence in 2022.



Ben Blum-Smith

Assistant Research Scientist,
Johns Hopkins University

Ben Blum-Smith is a research mathematician with roots in K-12 mathematics education and a lifelong interest in mathematics for all. He serves as an assistant research scientist in the applied mathematics and statistics department at Johns Hopkins University, and as mathematician-in-residence at Bridge to Enter Advanced Mathematics (BEAM), an organization that works to broaden access to advanced mathematics. He is also affiliated with the NYU Center for Data Science, where he founded and organizes the Math and Democracy Seminar.



Quincy K. Brown

Principal, *Futures & Innovation*

Quincy K. Brown is the principal of Futures and Innovation, leading education and workforce strategic development and advising. With more than 25 years of experience in engineering and technology, she specializes in STEM education and workforce development.

Most recently, Brown served as director of Space STEM and Workforce Policy for the White House National Space Council. She has held senior policy roles across two presidencies in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and been senior director for innovation research at AnitaB.org, program director for STEM education research at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a computer science professor at Bowie State University.

Brown drives high-impact programs at the intersection of education, workforce development, and technology, leveraging data-driven insights and strategic partnerships to shape national policy and scale innovative initiatives.

Speakers



Pamela Burdman

Executive Director,
Just Equations

Pam, founder of Just Equations, is an expert on college access, readiness, and success. A thought leader on the role of mathematics in education equity, she works at the intersection of research, policy, and practice to synthesize knowledge from the field and advance strategies that support student success. Pam has written 18 reports and more than 70 articles on math education policy issues over the last 10 years. Her work helped lay the groundwork for new policies designed to improve equitable college opportunity in California. She has also been a featured speaker, convener, and advisor to educators, policymakers, foundations, and think tanks. Pam's experience in journalism, including covering issues such as the University of California's reversal of affirmative action as a San Francisco Chronicle reporter, informed her commitment to education equity. As a program officer for the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, she devised and implemented strategies for strengthening college readiness and success, which led to several California initiatives that continue today. She earned a Bachelor's degree from Princeton University and Master's degrees in Business and Asian Studies from the University of California at Berkeley.



Karen Cangialosi

Director of Open Education & Open
Science, *RIOS Institute*

Karen Cangialosi is a passionate change agent, dedicated educator, and student advocate with national recognition in open education, STEM ed, and digital pedagogy. As a professor of biology at Keene State College (now emeritus), she brought open education into the biology curriculum and led campus-wide initiatives to make science education more affordable and inclusive. She now serves as director of Open Education and Open Science at the RIOS Institute, which promotes racial justice and openness in STEM education. Her work centers on transforming higher ed systems to better serve students, especially marginalized students. Her *EDUCAUSE Review* article, "An AI-Driven Optimism for Transforming Higher Education (It's Not What You Think)," considers the value of AI, and her recent work explores relationships between open science, open pedagogy, and AI in STEM education transformation.



Naomi Castro

Chief Program Officer,
Career Ladders Project

Naomi Castro is the chief program officer at Career Ladders Project (CLP), a nonprofit engaged in equity-minded community college redesign. Castro provides leadership on CLP initiatives focusing on transitions to college, including dual enrollment, development of pathways, and integrated student supports. She holds a bachelor's degree in history, a post-baccalaureate teaching credential, and a master's degree in teaching and teacher education, all from the University of Arizona. Her doctoral degree is in education, leadership, administration, and policy from Pepperdine University's Graduate School of Education and Psychology. Her dissertation focused on learning communities for career and technical education students. Castro also serves as an adjunct professor of education at Compton College and has a podcast on educational leadership called *castropod*.

Speakers



Kiera Brodsky Chase

Director, Instructional Design & Research, *ConnectED*

Kiera is committed to challenging the status quo. They come to ConnectED from a 15-year career working in special education and instructional coaching. Kiera’s vision is to ensure access to high quality instruction for all learners. Kiera has worked as a teacher in residential programs, K-12 special education programs, focusing on 9-12 full inclusion. They became an instructional coach supporting other learning specialists. Kiera also developed an interest in designing Blended Learning programs that prioritized the integration of technology and coached teachers who were implementing. They began this work in Algebra 1 classrooms, growing the program to include math classroom 9-12 and assistive technology for student 9-12 in all disciplines.

Kiera has a Ph.D. in Special Education with a Designated Emphasis in New Media. Kiera’s research explores how the tools and technologies that are used in education influence learning, with an emphasis on discovery-based approaches. Using a design-based research approach they have designed alternative approaches to introducing learners to important aspects of algebraic cognition. Kiera’s dissertation focused on how technology-based learning activities can facilitate emergent algebraic understanding that is subjectively transparent and proposes a new pedagogical approach called Reverse Scaffolding.



Jay Gillen

Teacher & Organizer, *A New Constitution for Public Education*

Jay Gillen is a teacher and organizer in Baltimore. He has been affiliated with the youth-run Baltimore Algebra Project as both a classroom teacher and adult facilitator/advisor since 1995. Gillen’s focus is on finding ways for young people to earn money sharing knowledge and skills with peers, as a way to create “crawl spaces” in which those young people can learn to make demands on themselves, on their peers, and on the larger society. Currently, Gillen is developing the idea of a new constitution for public education with this preamble: “Every middle-schooler will have the expectation that when they are in high school, they will have a good-paying job, sharing knowledge or skills with younger children, peers, or other people in the community.”

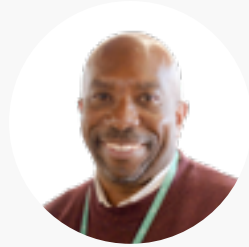


Alexis Robin Hale

Research Fellow & Doctoral Student, *Just Equations; UCLA Graduate School of Education*

Robin is a doctoral student at UCLA in the Social Sciences and Comparative Education Division. She has supported students in academic counseling and advisory services for both Barstow Community College and the University of California, Riverside. Prior to joining Just Equations, Robin served as a research assistant at UCR, studying cardiometabolic health trends in first-year undergraduates. Robin’s current research interests include educational equity efforts involving race, gender, and ethnic studies. Her thesis proposal looks at academic prestige and the influence of racial-spatial privilege on educational pathways of underrepresented students. Robin received a Bachelor of Arts in education, society, and human development with a concentration in community leadership, social justice, and policy from UC Riverside in winter 2022. As a first generation college graduate and Black woman scholar, she is passionate about educational activism and efforts to combat systemic oppression.

Speakers



Edray Herber Goins

Professor of Mathematics & Statistics,
Pomona College

Edray Herber Goins is professor of mathematics and statistics at Pomona College. He has worked as a researcher at both Harvard University and the National Security Agency, and has taught at both the California Institute of Technology and Purdue University. Goins has published more than 25 journal articles, in areas such as applied mathematics, graph theory, number theory, and representation theory; and on topics such as Diophantine equations, elliptic curves, and African Americans in mathematics. In fact, he has an Erdős number of 2. Goins has given more than 300 invited addresses on his research, acted as a referee for nearly 20 mathematics journals, served on dozens of panels for the National Science Foundation, and been awarded more than \$1.37 million in external funding. Goins currently maintains the Mathematicians of the African Diaspora (MAD Pages) website and runs Pomona Research in Mathematics Experience, a federally -funded Research Experience for Undergraduates.



Ryan P. Haygood

President & CEO,
*New Jersey Institute for
Social Justice*

Ryan P. Haygood is president and CEO of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice. He leads the institute's work to expand and strengthen democracy, reform the criminal justice system, and close New Jersey's racial wealth gap.

Previously, Haygood served as deputy director of litigation at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund Inc., where he litigated some of the most important civil rights cases of our time.

He received a law degree from the University of Colorado Law School and graduated *cum laude* with a Bachelor of Arts in American history and political science from Colorado College, where he was nominated for a Rhodes Scholarship and earned academic and athletic All-American and hall of fame honors as a football player.



Tara Holm

Mathematics Professor & Department
Chair, *Cornell University*

Tara Holm is a professor of mathematics and chair of the department of mathematics at Cornell University. She earned a bachelor of arts in mathematics from Dartmouth College and a doctorate in mathematics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Holm started at Cornell after a National Science Foundation postdoc at the University of California, Berkeley, and a year at the University of Connecticut. She has been a Simons Fellow; a von Neumann Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study; an Oliver Smithies Visiting Fellow at Balliol College, Oxford; and a visiting fellow at Clare Hall, Cambridge. Holm's leadership in mathematics and mathematics education is prominent on the national stage, as she has chaired the AMS Committee on Education, is a member of the board of directors for Transforming Post-Secondary Education in Mathematics, and is currently the president/CEO of Pro Mathematica Arte.

Speakers



Lybroan James

Chief Education Officer,
Stemulate Solutions

Lybroan James holds a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics/economics from UCLA and a master's degree in education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. As a teacher for 15 years, James saw inequities in educational opportunities that ignited his passion to support the most underserved, disenfranchised group in public schools—young students of color. James designs and presents curricula and trains teachers on how to instruct students of color effectively in both face-to-face and online environments. As a futurist, James has been studying the future of education and learning for more than 25 years and has been a certified online instructor since 2001.

His company, Stemulate Solutions, addresses common core state standards (with an emphasis on STEM) and issues of equity, cultural competence, and student engagement. James helps teachers engage in rigorous math instruction through professional development, workshops, and seminars, with a focus on preparation for 21st-century skills. His methodology uses music, humor, generative AI, and storytelling to communicate abstract concepts and problem-solving skills.



Brendan Kelly

Director of Introductory Math,
Harvard University

Brendan Kelly is the director of introductory mathematics at Harvard University. In this role, he leads the design and coordination of Harvard's first-year curriculum, overseeing courses that serve undergraduates across STEM and the social sciences. His work focuses on building coherent course pathways, modernizing calculus and quantitative reasoning offerings, and creating structures that actively support students' transition into university-level mathematics.

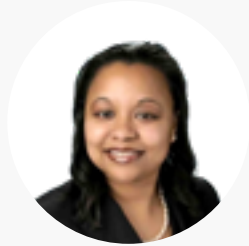


Donna Linderman

Senior Vice Chancellor for Student
Success, *State University of New York*

Donna Linderman is the senior vice chancellor for student success at the State University of New York, where she leads systemwide investments through the SUNY Transformation Fund to expand evidence-based student success initiatives. These include the replication of the ASAPIACE degree-completion model, upward mobility efforts, multicampus transfer partnerships, operational efficiency, and essential student supports. Previously, Linderman served as associate vice chancellor for academic affairs at the City University of New York, where she designed and scaled landmark student success reforms. She was a principal architect of CUNY's Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP), shown through rigorous randomized controlled trials to double community college completion rates, and helped lead CUNY's Accelerate, Complete, Engage (ACE) and CUNY Start. Linderman began her academic career as an assistant professor at Brooklyn College and holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from University of Southern California, a Master of Fine Arts from Brooklyn College, and a doctor of education degree from Northeastern University.

Speakers



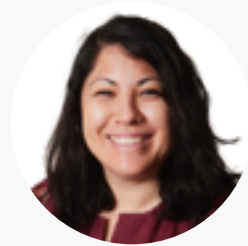
Aisha Lowe

Associate Vice Chancellor, Planning, Research & Institutional Effectiveness, Los Rios Community College District

Over the past 25 years, Aisha Lowe has worked as a K–12 teacher, researcher, nonprofit leader, higher education faculty member, and administrator. She currently serves as associate vice chancellor of planning, research, and institutional effectiveness for the Los Rios Community College District.

Prior to her current role, Lowe served as the executive vice chancellor of the Office of Equitable Student Learning, Experience, and Impact for the California Community Colleges' Chancellor's Office, overseeing academic affairs, student services, and workforce and economic development. Before that, Lowe served as associate professor of education and dean of the Office of Academic Research at Jessup University; executive director of the nonprofit STAND UP for Sacramento Schools; and director of research and evaluation for the California Charter Schools Association. Lowe has taught psychology as an adjunct in the California Community Colleges for more than 10 years..

Lowe received a bachelor's degree in psychology, a master's degree in sociology, and a doctorate in educational psychology, all from Stanford University.



Aly Martinez

Math Chief Program Officer, Student Achievement Partners

Aly Martinez is the math chief program officer at Student Achievement Partners, where she collaborates with and supports colleagues and partners to design, lead, and enact projects, primarily in mathematics, that rehumanize educational systems for all students. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees from University of California San Diego. She also contributed to books such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics' *Success Stories From Catalyzing Change and Partnering With Parents in Elementary School Math*.

After starting her career as a secondary math educator, Martinez went on to work as a math coach and, later, as the district administrator of universal transitional kindergarten mathematics for the San Diego Unified School District, where she led an expansive mathematics initiative to foster student-centered learning and raise the scale of high-quality math instructional materials.

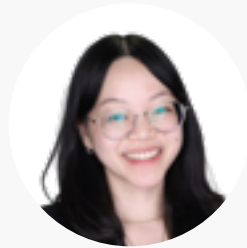


Andrea McChristian

National Policy Director, Just Equations

Andrea McChristian is the National Policy Director for Just Equations. Prior to joining Just Equations, McChristian served as Policy Research Director at the Southern Poverty Law Center. Earlier, McChristian served as the Law and Policy Director for the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, as a litigation associate with a New York law firm, and as a law clerk for U.S. District Judge Petrese B. Tucker of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. McChristian has a bachelor's degree in political science from Yale University, a master's degree in early childhood education from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and a law degree from Columbia Law School. McChristian also served as a Head Start teacher for two years in the Las Vegas Valley as a member of Teach for America.

Speakers



Angela Ngoc Nguyen
Student, *Stanford University*

Angela Ngoc Nguyen is a computer science student at Stanford University. She critically examines U.S. surveillance technologies and AI systems through the lens of ethics and policy, with a focus on their impact on marginalized communities. As a child of Vietnamese refugees and first-generation, low-income student from St. Paul, Minnesota, she brings lived experience to ensuring that technological advancements are equitable and inclusive.

At Stanford, Nguyen serves as Student Assistant at the McCoy Family Center for Ethics in Society, organizing tech policy programming; leads the Public Interest Technology Lab as President; and co-founded the Stanford Critical AI Working Group. Her work has been recognized as a 2025 CS Ed Week Rising Hero, Stanford Tech Ethics & Policy Fellow, and Stanford VPUE STEM Fellow.



Omayra Ortega
Associate Professor of Mathematics & Statistics, *Sonoma State University*

Omayra Ortega is an associate professor of mathematics and statistics at Sonoma State University. She earned a doctorate and a Master of Science in applied mathematics and computational sciences, as well as a Master of Public Health, from the University of Iowa. She double-majored in music and pure mathematics at Pomona College. Ortega has directed the Mathematical Epidemiology Research Group, an undergraduate research group, since 2007. Her scholarly interests—mathematical and computational biology, mathematical epidemiology in developing countries, infectious disease epidemiology, data science, and the participation of women and minorities in sciences—reflect her expertise in mathematics. Ortega has served on the boards of the National Association of Mathematicians and the Association for Women in Mathematics.



Angel B. Pérez
CEO, *National Association for College Admission Counseling*

As the CEO of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), Angel B. Pérez represents more than 25,000 admissions and counseling professionals committed to postsecondary access and success. Pérez is recognized as a national thought leader and is a sought-after speaker on issues of equity, access, and success in American education. Prior to joining NACAC in July 2020, Pérez served in secondary and higher education leadership positions across the country, most recently as vice president for enrollment and student success at Trinity College in Connecticut. A passionate teacher, Pérez has served on the faculty in Trinity's educational studies department, at UCLA Extension's College Counseling Certificate program, and at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. In 2016, the governor of Connecticut appointed Pérez to the New England Board of Higher Education, and Pérez was chosen by the Gates Foundation and the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators to serve on the Higher Education Committee of 50, a group of higher education leaders that presents solutions to Congress. He holds a Bachelor of Science from Skidmore College, a Master of Arts from Columbia University, a doctorate from Claremont Graduate University, and a teaching certification in higher education pedagogy from the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning at Harvard University.

Speakers

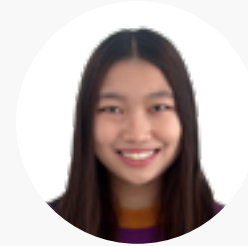


Allison Scott

CEO, *Kapor Foundation*

Allison Scott is CEO of the Kapor Foundation. Under Scott’s leadership, the foundation publishes research on disparities in the technology pipeline, deploys strategic grants to nonprofit organizations and initiatives, supports policy advocacy, and invests in tech entrepreneurs and venture funds aiming to utilize technology to close equity gaps across sectors.

Scott has been a principal investigator on multiple national grants to expand access to computer science education, implement frameworks for culturally responsive-sustaining computing, and build a field of scholarship on women of color in computing. In her previous role as chief research officer, Scott authored research on inequity in CS education, disparities in the tech sector, the landscape of women of color in computing, and effective interventions for increasing participation of marginalized groups in computing disciplines. Scott has been a member of the FCC Advisory Committee on Diversity and Digital Empowerment; the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine’s Committee for Transforming Trajectories for Women of Color in Tech; and the Catalyze Tech Working Group, and on the boards of the Federation of American Scientists, CSforALL, and Mission Bit.



Annie Shan

Student, *BASIS Independent Brooklyn*

Annie Shan is a high school senior at BASIS Independent Brooklyn and the co-founder of Mindset Math, a youth-led nonprofit reimagining how students learn STEM. She has led projects at the intersection of AI and education, including MathVoyagers, a generative AI-powered platform created with a learning scientist at the Concord Consortium to support collaborative problem-solving and competition-style math. Shan has also conducted academic research on how elementary school students use AI to design creative board games and imagine equitable futures for their communities, and her team’s work was recently featured at the 2025 MIT AI & Education Summit. Passionate about expanding AI literacy as an essential skill for student success in a rapidly evolving world, Shan hopes to integrate it more deeply into the way young people learn. She aspires to pursue careers in teaching, educational policy, and nonprofit leadership.



Evan Shieh

Executive Director,
Young Data Scientists League

Evan Shieh is the executive director of the Young Data Scientists League, where he is an artificial intelligence ethics educator, designing and teaching culturally relevant data science and AI justice learning experiences that empower thousands of minoritized K–12 students to use research to make an impact in their local communities. Previously, Shieh worked as a data scientist at Amazon, building culturally responsive, multilingual machine learning systems. His AI ethics work has been published in such leading research venues as *Nature Communications*; ACM FAccT; the Conference on AI, Ethics, and Society; the Conference on Equity and Access in Algorithms, Mechanisms, and Optimization; and the Symposium on Educational Advances in Artificial Intelligence.

Speakers



Felisha Shepard-White

Graduate Student, Applied Data Science & Analytics, Howard University

Felisha Shepard-White is an applied data scientist and master's candidate in applied data science and analytics at Howard University. She currently serves as the business intelligence analyst in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at Spelman College. Her work focuses on using institutional data to make complex decision systems more transparent, accountable, and responsive within the educational environment. Trained in psychology, statistical analysis, and assessment, Shepard-White intentionally structures research questions that reflect real needs, inequities, or decision points.

As a lecturer in introductory statistics, she has guided students through community- and policy- relevant research projects that connect mathematical reasoning to real-world impact. As a current graduate student, she hopes to apply data science skills to participatory research, algorithmic accountability, civil rights research, and other social impact work.



Lya Snell

Director of Building Capacity for Innovation, *The Charles A. Dana Center*

Lya Snell is the director of building capacity for innovation at the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin. Snell's journey in education began at Alabama State University, where she earned bachelor's and master's degrees in mathematics. Her academic pursuits continued with an education specialist degree in general administration from Central Michigan University and a doctorate in educational leadership from Mercer University.

As an education program manager with the Georgia Department of Education, Snell supervised teams in STEM/STEAM, computer science, and mathematics. She led the development of Georgia's K-12 Mathematics Standards in 2021 and spearheaded the modernization of Georgia's mathematics pathways in 2023.

Snell's influence extends beyond Georgia. She co-wrote the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics' High School Mathematics: Reimagined, Revitalized, and Relevant and serves on numerous national and state committees focused on improving mathematics and STEM education. Her work emphasizes phenomenon-based teaching and learning, integrating mathematics with science, engineering, technology, computer science, and literacy to make learning relevant and engaging for students.



Ji Yun Son

Professor of Psychology, California State University, Los Angeles

Ji Yun Son is professor of psychology at California State University, Los Angeles and director of the Cal State LA Learning Lab. She is a co-author of the interactive textbook *Statistics and Data Science: A Modeling Approach*, published using coursekata.org and used by more than 50 high schools and institutions of higher education. Her doctorate in cognitive science and psychology is from Indiana University Bloomington. She is interested in how basic cognitive and perceptual processes foster rich and transferable learning. Her work examines methods of applying psychological insights at scale to issues such as mathematics remediation and student success. Through directing wise interventions at Cal State LA, she has helped develop and validate materials to help students achieve higher and persist longer. The central idea behind Son's work is that learning changes the way we see the world.

Speakers



Mike Spencer

Secondary Mathematics Specialist, *Utah State Board of Education*

Mike Spencer holds a master’s degree in education with a concentration in mathematics and a Bachelor of Science in mathematics education, both from Utah State University. Over a 17-year career in the classroom and as an instructional coach, Spencer has championed the belief that every student can excel in mathematics when provided with robust support. He is a dedicated advocate for student-centered learning, leveraging the diverse backgrounds of learners to enrich the classroom community.

As a specialist in teacher development, Spencer has trained educators in best practices at the district, state, and national level. He operates on the principle that quality instruction is the single greatest lever for student achievement and that teachers, like students, thrive when given the right resources and mentorship. Currently, Spencer serves as the secondary mathematics specialist for the Utah State Board of Education, where he works to elevate the quality of mathematics education for students across the state.



Ashley Stone

Senior Director, Center for Policy Analysis & Research, *Congressional Black Caucus Foundation*

Ashley Stone is the senior director of the Center for Policy Analysis and Research at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation. As senior director, she oversees the strategic execution of center’s programming.

Stone is an enthusiastic advocate for racial equity and social justice. She has more than 20 years of experience in academic leadership, community engagement, and policy research, with a record of implementing high-impact programs and cultivating mutually beneficial reciprocal relationships between organizations.

Stone earned a doctorate in sociology from the University of Central Florida, a Master of Arts in sociology from DePaul University, and a Bachelor of Arts in communication from the University of Illinois Chicago. A proud native of Chicago, she attributes her commitment to social justice to her upbringing in the culturally vibrant Bronzeville neighborhood.

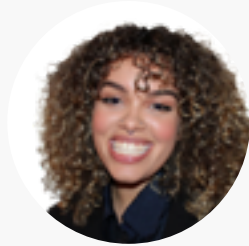


Kagba N. Suaray

Professor, *California State University, Long Beach*

Kagba N. Suaray is a professor of mathematics and statistics at California State University, Long Beach, where he leads initiatives that expand access to data science for diverse learners. His work integrates evidence-based pedagogy, culturally responsive curriculum design, and community-embedded research experiences that help students see themselves as capable practitioners in quantitative fields. Suaray is architect and co-principal investigator of the Long Beach–Compton Data Science Learning Community and founding member of the Hesabu Circle, a collective that cultivates mathematical identity and belonging for Black students across Southern California and beyond. As graduate advisor for applied statistics, he has mentored hundreds of students into industry, research, and graduate school pathways. His teaching and leadership are guided by a vision of a data-science ecosystem in which students from all communities can thrive.

Speakers



Aurely Garcia Tulloch

Research Analyst, *Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University*

Aurely Garcia Tulloch is a research analyst at the Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University. Her work focuses on advancing equitable dual enrollment and transfer pathways by centering students' lived experiences, particularly for low-income, first-generation, and historically underrepresented students. She leads student-centered engagement efforts, including a national student advisory panel, drawing upon both her research expertise and her lived experience as a former dual-enrollment and transfer student.



Janie Valdés

Assistant Vice President of Enrollment Management & Services, *Florida International University*

Janie Valdés is assistant vice president for enrollment management and services at Florida International University (FIU), where she is a long-standing transfer student advocate committed to bridging research and practice. Her work focuses on strengthening transfer enrollment, improving outcomes, and enhancing the student experience end to end.

Serving one of the largest transfer student populations in the nation, Valdés and her team advance transfer-affirming and receptive practices, including FIU's Connect4Success—a nationally recognized guided transfer pathway—along with proactive course equivalency, prior learning assessment, and student engagement initiatives. This work has significantly increased associate degree transfer-in rates, retention, and completion, and the percentage of transfer students graduating without excess credits. Reflecting on the impact, she notes, "Every transfer student deserves a clear path to success, and making that path a reality is central to everything we do."



Mike Wolf

Mathematics Professor & Department Chair, *Georgia Institute of Technology*

Mike Wolf is professor of mathematics and chair of the department of mathematics at Georgia Institute of Technology. Prior to that, he was at Rice University for 34 years, eventually becoming the Milton B. Porter Professor of Mathematics. His research is in geometric analysis, and his studies have led to his being named a Sloan Fellow, a Simons Fellow, and a Fellow of the American Mathematical Society; he has also served several terms as a research professor at the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (now the Simons Laufer Mathematical Sciences Institute).

Wolf received a doctorate in mathematics from Stanford University after completing math and philosophy studies at Yale University as an undergraduate. In 1986, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology named him a C. L. E. Moore instructor, a position for postdocs who show promise in pure mathematics research.

Speakers



Brianna Wright

Doctoral Student, *UCLA*

Brianna Wright is a doctoral candidate in the Higher Education and Organizational Change program at UCLA. Her current research centers on how students of color use assets such as funds of knowledge to persist in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Wright earned a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics Education from Brigham Young University and a Masters of Arts in higher education and organizational change from UCLA. Wright currently leads a research and evaluation team that investigates students' experiences in community college calculus. Additionally, Wright has designed math and data science curriculum for UCLA students and serves as the Project Manager for Latinas in STEM with Latina Futures 2050 Lab (UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center).

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