



Equity Champion Consultants (ECCs)

Biographies



The REACH Collaborative is focused on creating clear paths for more Black, Hispanic, and Native American adults to grow their skills and advance their careers. Community colleges in California, Colorado, New York, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia are working to develop academic pathways that align incremental credentials with associate degree pathways and identify resources to support students' needs at different stages in their pathway experience. Guided by our Equity Champion Consultants (ECCs), these states are working to identify and eliminate barriers to success and adopt culturally sustaining practices to support racially minoritized adult learners in their chosen pathways.







CALIFORNIA



Dr. Edward Bush

President

Cosumnes River College

Edward C. Bush PhD has 25 years of experience in higher education with 23 of those years serving in the California Community College System. He is well known throughout the State of California as a leader who has been able to reimagine traditional institutional practices. Dr. Bush holds a PhD in Urban Educational Leadership from Claremont Graduate University, a Master of Arts Degree in Public Administration from California State University San Bernardino, and a Bachelor of Arts

degree in Political Science from the University of California Riverside.

Dr. Bush currently serves as the President of Cosumnes River College in Sacramento. He is a student success focused leader with a clear vision and expertise in leading organizations through periods of change and structural disruption. Dr. Bush is an educational visionary whose innovative approach has improved student outcomes while reducing both achievement and opportunity gaps for students of color and other historically marginalized student populations. Dr. Bush is dedicated to creating teams of Educators who are committed to work towards meeting the evolving needs of students and the communities in which they serve.



Dr. Mayra Padilla

Dean of Institutional Effectiveness & Equity

Contra Costa College

Dr. Mayra Padilla holds a bachelor's degree in applied physics from UC Davis and a doctorate in neuroscience from UC Berkeley. She has worked as a neuroscientist at the San Francisco Brain Institute, SRI International (formerly the Stanford Research Institute) and Sands Research Inc. As a result of seeing too few Latinx and black scientists, Dr. Padilla returned home to take on the role of director for the Hispanic Serving Institution's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics and Articulation (HSI STEM) Program at Contra Costa College (CCC) to encourage students of color to pursue careers in STEM. She is currently the dean of institutional effectiveness & equity at CCC.



COLORADO



Dra. Reyna Anaya

Senior Student Affairs Officer/Dean of Student Success

Community College of Aurora

Dra. Reyna Anaya (she, her, ella) joined the Community College of Aurora (CCA) in July 2018 as the Dean of Students, and in November 2021 was promoted as the Senior Student Affairs Officer and Dean of Student Success reporting directly to the President. In her role, Dra. Anaya directly oversees student service programs, including: the Aspen Institute Accelerated Partnership Grant, CARE & Compliance Team, Colorado Scholarship Opportunity Initiative Grants, Mental Health & Counseling Services, Student Advocacy Services, Student Life, and the Truth Initiative Grant. Prior to her role at CCA, Dra. Anaya served as an Assistant Director of Community Standards & Conflict Resolution at the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) from 2013 to 2018. Dra. Anaya also has served as a Faculty Fellow and Faculty Member for the Association for Student Conduct Administrators (ASCA) Gehring Academy, and currently sits on the ASCA Board as a Director At-Large for Community Colleges. In addition, Dra. Anaya is the Past-President for the Colorado Coalition for the Educational Advancement of Latinxs (COCEAL), a coalition of post-secondary and professional educators devoted to the educational success of the state's Latinx population. Dra. Anaya received her PhD in Higher Education & Student Affairs Leadership program from UNC in 2019, Masters of Arts in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from UNC in 2009, and Bachelor of Science in Human Development & Family Studies from Colorado State University in 2007. She is also a published scholar with works focused on intersectionality theory and graduate student mothers of color, self-care, and student conduct in higher education. Last and most importantly, Dra. Anaya is a mom of three to Aiyana, Mateo, and Antonio.

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Dr. Susana Muñoz

Associate Professor

Colorado State University-Fort Collins

Dr. Susana Muñoz is Associate Professor of Higher Education, Program Coordinator of the Higher Education Leadership (HEL) Program, and Co-Director of CSU initiatives for the Race and Intersectional Studies for Educational Equity (RISE) Center in the School of Education at Colorado State University (CSU). Her scholarly interests center on the experiences of minoritized populations in higher education. Specifically, she focuses her research on issues of equity, identity, and campus climate

for undocumented Latinx students, while employing perspectives such as legal violence, racist nativism, Chicana feminist epistemology to identify and deconstruct issues of power and inequities as experienced by these populations. She utilizes multiple research methods as mechanisms to examine these matters with the ultimate goal of informing immigration policy and higher education practices. Her first book *“Identity, Social Activism, and the Pursuit of Higher Education: The Journey Stories of Undocumented and Unafraid Community Activists”* (Peter Lang Publishing) highlights the lives of 13 activists who grapple with their legality as a salient identity. Her research can also be found in the *International Journal of Qualitative Studies*, the *Review of Higher Education*, the *Journal of Student Affairs, Research, and Practice*, and *Teachers College Record*. Dr. Muñoz has been honored by the White House Initiative for Educational Excellence for Hispanics for her teaching and research, she was also recognized as a Salzburg Global Fellow and named one of the “top 25 most influential women in higher education” by *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* magazine. She also brings 13 years of student affairs experience in multicultural affairs, greek life, diversity and leadership training, TRiO programs, and residence life.

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Dr. Michael Baston

President

SUNY Rockland Community College

Dr. Michael A. Baston is a national thought leader amplifying the role community colleges play in redefining educational success, leading diversity, equity, and inclusion campus-wide reform efforts, and developing executive leadership teams. Dr. Baston has led Rockland Community College in Suffern, New York, as its president since 2017. Under Dr. Baston's leadership, he helped RCC launch a Hospitality and Culinary Arts Center, a new guided pathway influenced academic school model, Career and English Skills Academies to address middle-skills workforce needs, and secured \$30 million in grant, capital, and other fundraising efforts, including back-to-back Title V Developing Hispanic-Serving Institution awards, the largest grants in RCC history. Dr. Baston's Steps Beyond Statements Initiative has helped to signal specific steps that educational institutions can take to foster inclusive excellence. He is on the Board of Directors of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the primary advocacy organization for the nation's community colleges. Dr. Baston is also a contributing author to *Race, Education, and Reintegrating Formerly Incarcerated Citizens*, and the *Handbook for Student Affairs in Community Colleges*. Recently, he was elected to the Board of Trustees for Teachers College, Columbia University.



Dr. Mara Lazda

Associate Professor

Bronx Community College

Mara Lazda is an associate professor of history at Bronx Community College (BCC), City University of New York, where she also has worked as a faculty co-coordinator of the First Year Seminar program from 2017 to 2019. Lazda serves on BCC's Senate Committee for Diversity and Inclusion. Believing that community colleges have a particular role in fostering social justice, Lazda has co-organized over thirty campus community conversations and is a member of the executive board of the BCC Social Justice Network. In Fall 2021, Lazda helped design the BCC Social Justice Student Leadership Certificate series. These BCC programs aim to provide student-centered forums of civic engagement, emphasizing the links between classroom learning, professional development, and students' personal goals and experiences.



NORTH CAROLINA



Dr. Ereka Williams

Vice President for Impact-Education

Dogwood Health Trust Foundation

Ereka R. Williams, PhD joins Dogwood Health Trust as the Vice President of Impact – Education, bringing more than 20 years of P-12 and postsecondary teaching, scholarship and leadership to the organization. Most recently, Dr. Williams served as the Associate Provost for Academic Strategy and Institutional Effectiveness at Winston Salem State University. Prior to that role, she served as Associate Dean of Education, Quality Assurance and Community Engagement at WSSU and Associate Dean of Education at Fayetteville State University (her alma mater). At both institutions, she facilitated curriculum revisions, resource restructuring, the creation of Teacher Residency models and initiated regional and national partnerships aimed toward strengthening valid and reliable quality assurance systems for teacher education programs.

As Departmental Chairperson in the College of Education at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Dr. Williams collaborated with public schools, community leaders and colleagues to secure over \$3.9 million dollars in federal funding aimed at leveraging equitable outcomes for rural districts in North Carolina. She also collaborated with community college leaders to establish pipelines to the teaching profession through learner-centered, responsive 2+2 articulation agreements. Those pathways supported adult learners toward completion and seamless transfer of their two-year, post-secondary credentials into the teacher education programs of the university.

Dr. Williams has served as a coach, speaker, researcher, board member and reviewer for rural and urban schools across the mid-west, northeast and southeastern US. Her scholarship includes research, publications and presentations with a focus on equity, diversity, assessment, accreditation and leadership. A native North Carolinian, she earned a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.



Dr. Denise Henning

Director

UNCW/3C Collaborative

Professor in Higher Education Leadership

University of North Carolina Wilmington

Dr. Denise Henning has a career in higher education that has spanned 23 years in both the United States and Canada, as well as working as graduate faculty in New Zealand. Denise has served as president and CEO at Medicine Hat College, president and CEO of Northwest Community College, president and vice-chancellor for University College of the North and Vice-President of Academic and Research at First Nations University of Canada. Denise is a proud Cherokee/Choctaw/British woman, born in Creek County in Oklahoma.

Most recently, Dr. Henning developed and now serves as CEO of the collaborative of Kiona – Oxendine & Associates, LLC which works with women who aspire to be tenured faculty and administrators in both higher education and K-12 school districts. Dr. Henning serves as the Director and Professor of Practice at the University of North Carolina Wilmington in the Higher Education Leadership – Community College Leadership graduate program.

Dr. Henning believes in the principles of Appreciative Inquiry, asking the right questions and being part of the solution. She has earned a reputation for cultivating and sustaining positive relationships, building collaborative teams and energizing people in ways that foster their innovative spirit through an appreciative environment.

Her approach to leadership is valued by those who have had the good fortune to work with her. Graduates from the National Education Leadership Institute for potential Vice-Presidents (VPNeli) and the CHERD Women’s Leadership Institute, value her authentic and “REAL” approach. Her passion for employee wellness, and strong focus on the needs and inclusivity of students, communities, economic and social development has earned Dr. Henning a reputation for being a wholistic and visionary leader.

Denise lives in Carolina Beach, North Carolina and continues to work on initiatives for higher education in both the US and Canada.

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TEXAS



Dr. Luis Ponjuan

Research Director

Investing in Diversity, Equity, Access, and Learning (IDEAL)

Dr. Luis Ponjuan received his Ph.D. in Higher Education from University of Michigan in 2005. He joined the Educational Administration and Human Resources Development Department as an Associate Professor in 2012. He is the Research Director of the IDEAL (Investing in Diversity, Equity, Access, and Learning) research project. He teaches undergraduate courses in Human Resources Development and graduate courses in Higher Education. He has also graduated 12 doctoral students and over 50 masters students. His social justice research agenda focuses on Latino male students, Faculty members of color, and STEM learning outcomes. He has received over 1.6 million in external and internal research funding from the TG Foundation, Greater Texas Foundation, and the National Science Foundation. He has met President Obama and Vice President Biden and spoken at the White House for the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence. He serves on the editorial board for the ASHE Higher Education Report Series. He has published peer-reviewed journal articles, an edited book, and national policy briefs. He has received the 2016 CEHD Climate award, 2014 CEHD Outstanding New Faculty Award, the 2014 CEHD Aggies Commit to Transforming Lives Administrative Fellowship, and the 2010 SAGE Publications most downloaded journal article award.



Dr. Richard Reddick

Associate Dean and Distinguished Service Professor

University of Texas at Austin

Richard J. Reddick, Ed.D. (CEF '10) is the inaugural associate dean for equity, community engagement, and outreach and professor in educational leadership and policy and professor in educational leadership and policy for the College of Education at The University of Texas at Austin. He is also faculty co-chair of the Institute for Educational Management (IEM) and Bravely Confronting Racism in Higher Education at the Harvard University Graduate School of Education. Most recently, he has served on the Advisory Council of UNESCO's Countering Racism in Textbooks and Learning Materials Committee. As of April 1, 2022, Dr. Reddick will be dean designate for the School of Undergraduate Studies and Senior Vice Provost for Curriculum and Enrollment at UT Austin.

Dr. Reddick conducts ethnographic research on the experiences of faculty of color in predominantly White university settings, mentoring relationships in higher education, Black families in American society, and work-family balance in junior faculty fathers. Dr. Reddick's research has been highlighted on NPR, the Associated Press, PBS, the BBC, the Chronicle of Higher Education, and he regularly presents his research at the annual meetings of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE). Dr. Reddick has published articles in the top journals in education, and is the co-author and co-editor of four books.

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VIRGINIA



Dr. Felecia Commodore

Assistant Professor

Old Dominion University

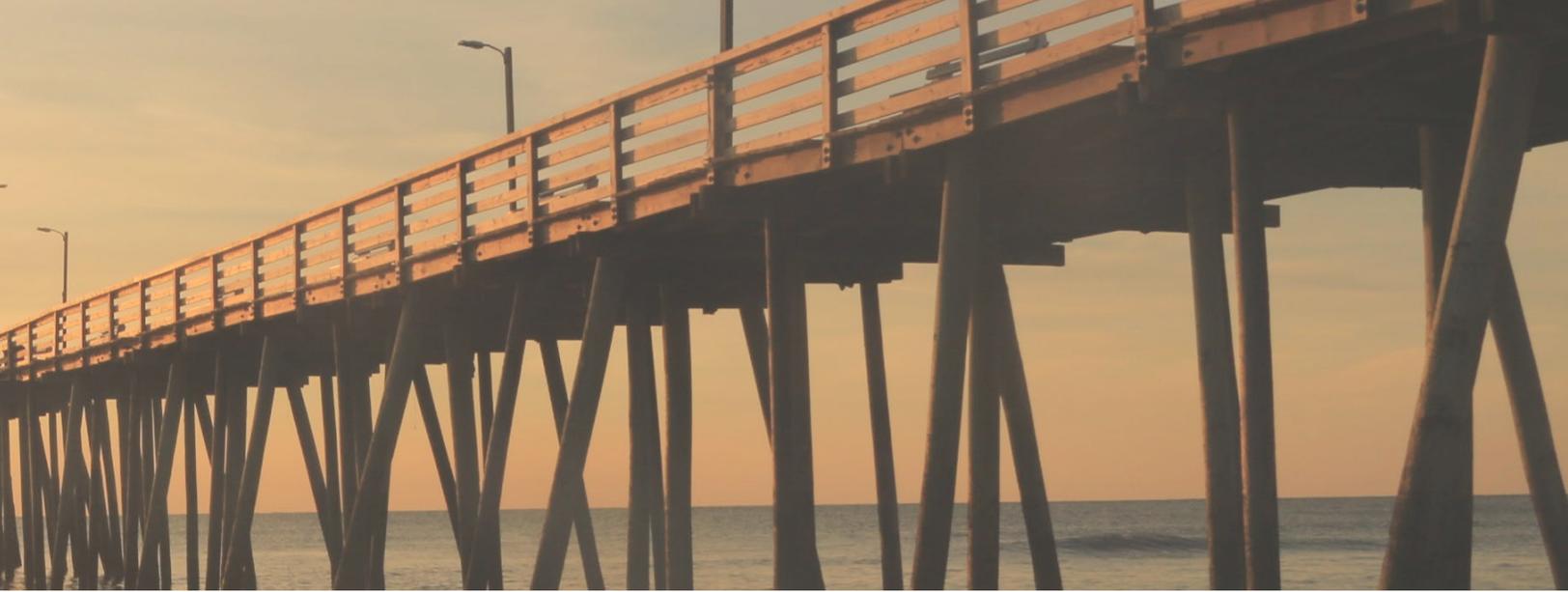
Felecia Commodore is an Assistant Professor of Higher Education in the Educational Foundations and Leadership at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA. Felecia's research focus areas are leadership, governance, and administrative practices with a particular focus on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Minority-Serving Institutions. Felecia's research interests also lie in how leadership is exercised, constructed, and viewed in various communities, and the relationship of Black women and leadership.

Felecia currently has work relating to this research published in the Journal of Higher Education and the Journal of Negro Education. She is also a contributor to HBCULifestyle.com and Diverse Issues in Higher Education. She is co-editor of the book Opportunities and Challenges of Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Graduate Education at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs): A Student Perspective. She is also the lead author of the book, Black College Women: A Guide to Success in Higher Education.

Felecia has a background working as an admissions counselor and academic advisor at Trinity University, Washington, D.C. and University of Maryland, College Park respectively. Felecia received her Ph.D. in Higher Education from the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education. She also obtained an M.A. in Higher Education Administration from the University of Maryland, College Park, MD and a B.S. in Marketing with a minor in Sociology from Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA.

For CHEGC, Dr. Commodore is responsible for all aspects of the team's research process, including the design and development of new research projects.

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Dr. Pamela Eddy

Professor

William & Mary

Pamela Eddy is a professor of higher education and an affiliate faculty member at the Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research. Her research interests include community college leadership and development, organizational change and educational partnerships, gender roles in higher education, and faculty development. Dr. Eddy serves as a consultant for campuses, system offices, and on funded grants regarding strategies to support community college student success and to support leadership development.

Dr. Eddy is the author of multiple books on leadership in higher education and serves on the editorial boards for *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, *Community College Enterprise* and *Innovative Higher Education*. She is the Editor-in-Chief of *New Directions for Community Colleges*. Dr. Eddy was the President of the Council for the Study of Community Colleges in 2011-2012. She was a Fulbright Scholar in Dublin, Ireland in 2009 and continues her research on partnerships there.

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