

WEBINAR:

Strategies for Centering Equity in Early Care and Education
Thursday, November 7, 2019 | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EDT

PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

Beverly Lawrence

Steering Committee, Opportunity Knocks for Middletown's Young Children

Beverly Lawrence is a parent and a community leader. Beverly Lawrence has been part of the Opportunity Knocks collaborative since 2005. She is a member of the Steering Committee and participates in both the Social, Emotional and Behavioral Health workgroup and the Nutrition and Physical Activity work group. Beverly facilitates the parents group, Parents of Preschoolers (POP). She is on many boards and committees. For instance, the Middletown School Readiness Council, NAACP - youth division, Girls Inspired For Total Success (GIFTS) and Middletown Area Transit (MAT). Beverly is also a founding member of the Middletown Racial Justice Coalition and serves on their Steering Committee.



Susan Macary

Steering Committee, Opportunity Knocks for Middletown's Young Children

Susan Macary is the Senior Associate for Health Initiatives at the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI) in Farmington, Connecticut. In this role, Susan contributes to the design, implementation, and management of practice quality improvement initiatives that integrate health and mental health care in pediatric primary care sites and test innovations in child health delivery services and systems. Susan is a member of the Opportunity Knocks steering committee and the Women and Children's Health Sub-Committee of the Connecticut Medical Assistance Program Oversight Council. Prior to joining CHDI in 2012, Susan was the Program Planner for Opportunity Knocks. Susan earned her Master of Public Health at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. She resides in her home state, Connecticut.



Monica Belyea

Program Planner, Opportunity Knocks for Middletown's Young Children, Middlesex Hospital

Monica Belyea is a private consultant with expertise in Early Childhood health and education systems and cross sector collaboration as well as content expertise in infant and young child feeding and nutrition. She currently provides oversight and coordination for Opportunity Knocks, Middletown's early childhood health and education collective impact collaborative, through Middlesex Health. She also provides infant feeding expertise and Baby Behavior training through UConn Health, Center for Population Health. She is the Chair of the Connecticut Breastfeeding Coalition and Chair of Middletown's School Readiness Council. Monica earned her MPH from the University of California, Berkeley and her BS in Human Nutrition and Foods from UMaine. She brings her commitment to becoming more anti-racist to all aspects of her personal and professional life.



Dr. LaWanda Wesley

Director, Quality Enhancement & Professional Development of Early Learning, Oakland Unified School District

Dr. LaWanda Wesley earned a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Management with a concentration in Higher Education from Drexel University. She is personally and professionally moved by issues of equity and social justice. She is dedicated to changing the lives of all children, especially those from communities of color, poverty, and furthest reach from opportunity. LaWanda has trained on trauma informed practices and building resilience for the past three years. She is the co-author of the book Nicholson, Shimpi Driscoll, Kurtz, Márquez and Wesley (2020), *Culturally Responsive Self-Care for Early Childhood Educators*.



Neva Bandelow

Early Learning Program Manager, Alameda County Office of Education

Neva Bandelow is an Early Learning Program Manager at the Alameda County Office of Education, where she manages the QRIS fiscal contracts, serves on the QRIS Infrastructure and Leadership team, and facilitates the Alameda County Office of Education's Early Learning programs. Her career in ECE has spanned nearly 30 years. In addition to her work at the Office of Education, she serves as adjunct faculty at local community colleges where she teaches students on topics focused on equity, diversity, and teaching practice. Neva is passionate in raising equity issues and is honored to be a graduated fellow from BUILD's Equity Leaders Action Network. Neva holds a bachelor's degree in liberal studies, early



childhood education, and human and community services, and a Master of Arts degree in 21st century leadership.

Ronda Alexander (Moderator)

Director of Operations, Vital Village Network at Boston Medical Center

Ronda Alexander is a native Detroit native dedicated to working with communities to reach their desired goals by aligning and leveraging their resources. Ronda joins us from the United Way for Southeastern Michigan where she served as the Director of Corporate and Community Alignment on the organization's College and Career Pathways team. In her role at United Way Ronda worked to help external corporate partners find meaningful ways to engage with both students and educators; as well as worked across teams within the organization to align and leverage resources. Prior to joining United Way Ronda worked on the premier education initiative of Ford Motor Company Fund – Ford Next Generation (Ford NGL) for nine years. While at Ford Fund Ronda served a variety of roles including Professional Development/Technical Assistance Specialist and Program Manager for STEM initiatives. In all of her roles with Ford Fund Ronda worked with and supported multiple communities across the country as they worked to transform their communities through education. *Learn more about Vital Village at: <https://vitalvillage.org>*



About the Webinar

Research and practice continue to point to the powerful impacts of racial, economic, and social inequities that start early in life and persist across the life course. Across the country, communities are seeking to address these challenges through innovative solutions and collaborative strategies that seek to undo systemic and structural racism within early care and education systems, policies and practices. This webinar, hosted by the Networks of Opportunity for Child Wellbeing (NOW) at Vital Village, will provide an opportunity to learn from NOW peer mentor coalitions around challenges, successes, and lessons learned as they work to address equity for children and families in their communities. The California Consortium for Equity in Early Care and Education will discuss their efforts to build pathways for emerging and current leaders of color in early care and education who have directly experienced inequity, trauma, and social injustice. In Connecticut, the Opportunity Knocks for Middletown's Young Children Community Collaborative, will share their ongoing efforts to center parent voices and promote aligned policies and programs that ensure all children enter kindergarten physically and emotionally healthy and ready for school success.