



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON, DC



# School of Education

COLLEGE *of* ARTS & SCIENCES • AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

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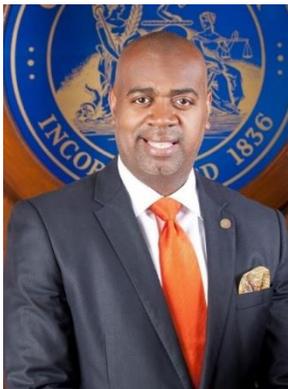


**James Albright**  
Alice Deal Middle School  
*Principal*

James Albright serves as principal of Alice Deal Middle School, a large, successful middle school located in northwest Washington, DC. Previously, he taught students with disabilities, managed International Baccalaureate programs in several schools, and served as an assistant principal in DC Public Schools. He graduated from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and has master's degrees in urban planning, administration and supervision, and educational leadership.

Mr. Albright's childhood was spent overseas; he is bilingual in Spanish and English. Mr. Albright has previous professional experience in the media, energy and economic consulting, and urban planning.

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**Ras Baraka**  
Newark, New Jersey  
*Mayor*

Ras J. Baraka is the 40th Mayor of the City of Newark. His progressive approach to governing has won him accolades from grassroots organizations to the White House. Listed in The Nation's 2015 "Most Valuable Progressives" as "Most Valuable Mayor", Ebony Magazine's "Power 100" and on the front cover of the New York Times, he has defied expectations during his first year-and-half in office. Public safety is his highest priority, connecting law enforcement agencies with the community, providing mentoring, education and job training for at risk youth, and developing programs to help ex-offenders join the workforce, gain counseling and medical treatment, and reunite with their families. Mayor Baraka is an educator with over twenty years of experience in Newark Public Schools (NPS), most recently as the principal of Central High School.

A native of Newark, whose family has lived in the City for more than 70 years, Mayor Baraka was educated in the Newark Public Schools and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and History from Howard University in Washington, D.C. and a Master's Degree in Education Supervision from St. Peter's University in Jersey City. His father, the late Amiri Baraka, was a legendary poet and playwright. His mother, Amina Baraka, is herself a renowned poet.



**Sarah Irvine Belson**

American University, School of Education  
*Executive Director, Institute for Innovation in Education*  
*Director, Master's in Special Education*  
*Associate Professor*

Dr. Sarah Irvine Belson is the Executive Director, Institute for Innovation in Education; Associate Professor, Education; Director, Master's in Special Education in the School of Education, and Affiliate Faculty in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at American University. Her research explores educational opportunity for children with disabilities and teacher education policy with a focus on applied interventions for children at risk. She is the author of *Integrating Technology into Special Education*, (2003). She also has authored more than 50 research papers on practice and policy in special education and education reform.

Dr. Irvine Belson's experience as a K12 special educator and her focus on interventions that can increase educational outcomes for children with disabilities is a cornerstone of her research and teaching. In addition to her work in policy and practice, she also collaborates with colleagues across departments at American University, including environmental science, mathematics and health promotion to inform policy and improve outcomes for children. Dr. Irvine Belson served as Dean of the School of Education, Teaching & Health from 2002-2015. She holds a Ph.D. from Arizona State University in Curriculum and Instruction with a cognate in Special Education.

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**Elizabeth Davis**

Washington Teachers' Union  
*President*

Elizabeth A. Davis is an award-winning educator, education reformer and public education advocate. Before becoming the president of the Washington Teachers' Union in 2013, she taught at Phelps Architecture and Engineering High School. Elizabeth's writings about social justice teaching and teacher leadership have been published in three nationally acclaimed books; *Putting the Movement back Into Civil Rights Teaching: Writing for A Change* and *How Teachers Become Leaders*.

She is a member of Mayor Muriel Bowser's Education Transition team, the American Federation of Teachers PPC, the Metro Labor Council Executive Board, Delta Kappa Gamma International Society for Women Educators, the DC Area Writing Project, the National Commission on Writing and Howard University's Board of Visitors.



**Adele Fabrikant**  
Teach For America  
*Executive Director*

Adele Fabrikant is the executive director of Teach For America's Washington, D.C. region. In this role, she is responsible for managing the region on a daily basis, building community partnerships and cultivating private, public and foundation support. Teach For America has been partnering with District of Columbia's schools since 1992, with 170 current corps members in classrooms and close to 2,400 alumni working throughout the region.

After spending most of her childhood in Washington D.C., Adele graduated from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 1999. She then joined Teach For America, serving first for two years in New York and then teaching for two more years in the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). Since then, she has worked as the founding principal of an alternative high school in Brooklyn, New York, the managing director of a network of schools, and as the Deputy Chief of Youth Engagement at DCPS under Kaya Henderson. Dr. Fabrikant received her doctoral degree in education from Teachers College, Columbia University in 2015.

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**Lynne Ganek**  
Lancit Digital Media  
*Content Consultant*

Lynne Ganek is a clinical faculty member at American University's School of Education. She supervises graduate and undergraduate student-teachers, and helps manage the Ganek Family/American University Student-Teacher Mini-Grant Project for Innovation in Education. Ms. Ganek pioneered the use of media, especially television and video, into U.S. classrooms nationwide while serving as head writer of a media literacy project for WNET/Thirteen. Ganek was on the original creative team and the first Associate Producer of the Emmy Award series, *READING RAINBOW* hosted by Levar Burton. CBS Sportscaster James Brown later introduced Ganek to

JTWO Films where she was a mentor during JTWO's incubation process. She is proud of JTWO's significant growth, accolades and awards.

Ganek is an independent consultant with a client list that includes CBS, A&E, Discovery Communications, Inc., CBS/Fox Home Video, Twentieth Century Fox TV, Lorimar, Scholastic Books, Shanghai TV, and Pearson/PrenticeHall. She served on boards of The National Education Association, WDCA-TV, Dingman Center for Entrepreneurship College of Business and Management at the University of Maryland, Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company, Daytime Emmy Awards, and Action For Children's Television.

Currently she is a strategic and educational consultant to Lancit Digital Media's multi Emmy award winning founders. Responsibilities include advising on design and execution of educational content, strategic relationships, and program content development. Lancit Digital Media is a content creation and community building business specializing in video production and digital marketing.



**Nancy Grasmick**  
Kennedy Krieger Institute  
*Co-Director*

Dr. Nancy Grasmick, Maryland's first female state superintendent of schools, is known for her focus on student achievement, teacher quality, and public school funding. Some of the pioneering policies enacted throughout Dr. Grasmick's twenty-year tenure include instituting an explicit pre-K-12 curriculum, developing statewide assessments, and holding schools and school systems accountable. She served as the sole representative of K-12 education on the National Academies Committee on Prospering the Global Economy in the 21st Century, which produced the groundbreaking study, *Rising Above the Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future* (National Academy of Sciences, 2005).

She currently serves as a member of the National Math and Science Initiative. Dr. Grasmick's career began as a teacher of deaf children at the William S. Baer School in Baltimore City. She subsequently served as a teacher, principal, supervisor, assistant superintendent, and associate superintendent in Baltimore County Public Schools. Dr. Grasmick received her Ph.D. from The Johns Hopkins University, her master's degree from Gallaudet University, and her bachelor's degree from Towson University.

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**Lois Hammond**  
American University, School of Education  
*Graduate Student*

Lois Hammond is a graduate student pursuing her MAT in Secondary Education Social Studies. Her entry into the field of Education was unexpected but not surprising; she has always held a passion for the pursuit of knowledge and as a young child, the statement "Education is the key to success" was ingrained in her. Lois holds a BA in Political Science with a concentration in International Relations and is passionate about politics and civic education. She looks forward to teaching and guiding students to be responsible citizens and effective participants in their local, national, and global communities.

A product of exceptional teachers, Lois aspires to be a teacher who inspires and encourages her students and fosters a hunger for learning in and out of the classroom. Lois, a native of Ghana and a resident of Maryland, currently works at the Washington English Center in Washington, D.C. providing adult immigrants with English classes as well as citizenship classes to better their experience and improve upon their lives in their new home.



### **Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy**

American University, School of Education  
*Dean and Professor*

Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy joined American University in 2016 as Dean of the School of Education. In concert with her colleagues in the College of Arts and Sciences, she concentrates on recruiting and supporting a more research-active and diverse faculty, developing outstanding new curricula in education, and building bridges to school districts and education industries around the globe. Previously, Dr. Holcomb-McCoy served as the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, Vice Dean of Academic Affairs and Chair in the School of Education at Johns Hopkins University. She has held appointments as Associate Professor of Counselor Education at the

University of Maryland, College Park and Assistant Professor and Director of the School Counseling Program at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York.

Professional colleagues have recognized her with many awards for outstanding multicultural/diversity research, excellence in teaching, and exemplar service. She served as a Faculty Lilly Fellow at the University of Maryland and in 2016, she was selected as an American Counseling Association (ACA) Fellow for her significant contributions in scientific achievement and teaching/training. In recognition of her expertise in college advising and counseling, the Obama Administration selected Dr. Holcomb-McCoy to participate as a consultant to the Reach Higher Initiative, which called for renewed attention and evaluation of practices and interventions that create postsecondary pathways for all students, especially low-income and first generation students.

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### **Tyrone Howard**

UCLA Graduate School of Education & Information Studies  
*Associate Dean for Equity & Inclusion, Professor*

Tyrone Howard is a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles in the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies' Urban Schooling division. He is the Director of Center X, which is a consortium of school professionals dedicated to improving urban schools and communities. Dr. Howard is also the founder and Director of the UCLA Black Male Institute, which is an entity concerned with improving educational outcomes and life chances for Black males. Howard's research is concerned with academic achievement of youth in urban schools. His work has centered on the achievement gap facing African American and other

culturally diverse students, and the importance of providing teachers the skills and knowledge to assist them in reversing persistent underachievement.

In 2007, he received the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies Distinguished Teaching Award. Howard has been a contributor on National Public Radio, and is an educational expert for *The New York Times*. His bestselling book is, *Why Race and Culture Matters: Closing the Achievement Gap in America's Classroom's* was published by Teachers College Press in 2010.



**Yvette Jackson**  
National Urban Alliance  
*Senior Scholar*

Yvette Jackson currently serves as the chief executive officer of the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education, founded at the College Board and Teachers College/Columbia University. She works with school district administrators and teachers across the country to customize and deliver systemic approaches to literacy development through instructional practices that integrate culture, language, and cognition to expand and accelerate student learning and achievement. She is an adjunct professor at Teachers College/Columbia University, a visiting scholar for both the Panasonic Foundation and the Brazilian Department of Education. She has also been a visiting lecturer at Harvard University, a member of ASCD's Differentiated Instruction Cadre, and a keynote presenter at national and international conferences.

She has published in numerous educational journals. Her most recent book (co-authored with Dr. Veronica McDermott): *Aim High, Achieve More: How to Transform Urban Schools Through Fearless Leadership*, follows her previous bestseller: *The Pedagogy of Confidence: Inspiring High Intellectual Performance in Urban Schools* which received the 2012 ForeWord Reviews' Silver Book Award.

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**Bryan Riley**  
Francis Scott Key Elementary School  
*Assistant Principal*

Bryan Riley is an assistant principal at Francis Scott Key Elementary School in Washington D.C. Prior to working in a school leadership position, he was a classroom teacher in DCPS, including Key Elementary School. While in the classroom, Bryan was selected to serve on Chancellor Kaya Henderson's Teacher Cabinet and was featured in a joint project between the DC Public Education Fund and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation meant to showcase exemplary teaching in the elementary classroom.

Additionally, Bryan served as a cooperating teacher for both undergraduate and graduate teacher candidates at various area colleges in Washington D.C. He is a proud graduate of both the School of Public Affairs and the School of Education at American University and holds both a license in teaching and school leadership. Bryan has also been serving as an Adjunct Faculty within the School of Education since 2012.



### **La' Shawndra Scroggins**

Office of the State Superintendent of Education, OSSE  
*Director of Teaching and Learning*

Dr. La' Shawndra Charlene Scroggins is committed to high-quality in-service training for educators and improved educational and behavioral outcomes for all students. With a background and passion in special education, she believes in the importance of implementing evidence-based and research-based practices with fidelity. Although best practices in classroom instruction and behavior management are most often used by educators, she believes that it is always optimal to utilize those practices that have been used with a variety of students, in a variety of settings to best realize the utility of strategies and interventions.

La' Shawndra has worked in the field of education for over a decade. She spent most of her school level experience in the District of Columbia Public Schools as a special education teacher at the high school level and special education coordinator at the PK-8 level. Currently, she works at the Office of the State Superintendent of Education as the Director of Teaching and Learning for the Division of Elementary, Secondary, and Specialized Education. In this capacity, she oversees (a) K-12 programming (i.e., general education, special education, English learners); (b) educator effectiveness; and (c) educator licensure. In this capacity, she closely collaborates with the data and assessment divisions as well as the early childhood and postsecondary education divisions. She received her Master's degree and Ed.S. in Special Education from The George Washington University and her Ph.D. in Special Education from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

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### **Seteney Shami**

Social Science Research Council  
*Program Director, Middle East North Africa; Inter-Asia*

Seteney Shami has been with the Social Science Research Council since July 1999 and is director of the Middle East and North Africa program as well as the Inter-Asia Program. She also currently serves as founding director of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS), a regional nonprofit organization headquartered in Beirut, Lebanon. She received her doctorate in anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley. Shami's most recent publication is an edited volume, *Publics, Politics and Participation: Locating the Public Sphere in the Middle East and North Africa* (SSRC Books, 2010), and her most recent article (coauthored with Nefissa Naguib) is "Occluding Difference: Ethnic Identity and the Shifting Zones of Theory on the Middle East and North Africa," which will appear in *Anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa: The State of the Art* (Indiana University Press, 2012).

Shami has served on the editorial boards of several publications, including *Central Asian Survey*, *The Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures*, *Cultural Anthropology*, *Ethnos*, and *International Migration Review*.



**James Waller**  
Friendship Public Charter School  
*Chief of School Operations*

James F. Waller joined Friendship Public Charter Schools (FPCS) in June 2008. As Chief of Schools, Mr. Waller leads the school operation functions including, Student Information, Health Services, Food Services, Community and Corporate Engagement as well as Facilities and Building Operations. Prior to his current role he served as the Deputy Chief Academic Officer for FPCS, overseeing school budgets, special education and student support services. Mr. Waller has worked for more than 20 years in various leadership roles to support children and youth development initiatives. Prior to joining FPCS he served as National Executive Director for

EVERYBODY WINS! USA a youth mentoring and literacy program, providing program oversight and fund development for a network of fifteen affiliates around the country.

Mr. Waller also served as Senior Vice President for MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership. In this role he advocated for youth development policy and funding to support youth mentoring at the national and state level. In addition, he served as Chief of Staff for Congressman John Lewis of Georgia. Mr. Waller has been a mentor for more than 10 years and is the founding President of 100 Black Men of Greater Washington, D.C. Mr. Waller has Bachelor of Science in Education from the University of Virginia.

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**Seth Andrew Watring**  
American University, School of Education  
*Undergraduate Student*

Andrew Watring is a sophomore Theatre Arts and Education major at American University from Huntsville, Alabama. When not focusing on academics and obtaining a license to teach theatre, Andrew is the Artistic Director of the Rude Mechanicals, American's on-campus Shakespeare troupe, as well as Chief of Staff of the Residence Hall Association.



**Eric Westendorf**  
LearnZillion  
*CEO and Co-Founder*

Eric Westendorf is Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of LearnZillion, an education venture seeking to help teachers and parents rethink curriculum. Today, LearnZillion's website has 950,000 registered teacher users—or about 25% (!) of all U.S. teachers. He served as a Principal and Chief Academic Officer of E.L. Haynes Public Charter School in Washington, known locally and nationally for its outstanding results and programs. He also founded a non-profit focused on teacher leadership development and served as the Assistant Principal of St. Joseph's School in Harlem, where he raised over \$1 million dollars for technology and other

programs. Prior to E.L. Haynes, he taught for seven years in North Carolina, New York, and Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

He has an MBA from Stanford's Graduate School of Business, a Masters in School Administration from Trinity University, and a Masters in Teaching from Brown University. He graduated from Princeton University with a Bachelors of Arts in Public Policy.

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**Antwan Wilson**  
DC Public Schools (DCPS)  
*Chancellor*

Antwan Wilson became Chancellor of DC Public Schools (DCPS) in February 2017, following a national search led by D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser, and unanimous confirmation by the D.C. City Council. He has devoted his life to improving educational opportunities, particularly for underserved children, and credits dedicated public school teachers with his own rise from a challenging childhood. He is an experienced leader who has achieved significant results throughout his twenty-year career. Prior to joining DCPS, Mr. Wilson was Superintendent of the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD). During his tenure, OUSD saw increased graduation

rates, a decrease in out-of-school discipline, a decade-high investment in teacher pay, and historic improvements in district operations. His commitment to collaborating with partners across the city earned OUSD national recognition for work on the Oakland Promise, a cradle-to-career initiative aimed at tripling the number of college graduates from Oakland, and the Equity Pledge, an emerging partnership between district and charter leaders to create a more equitable school experience for all Oakland children.

Until 2014, Chancellor Wilson served as Assistant Superintendent for Post Secondary Readiness in the Denver Public Schools (DPS). During his tenure, DPS experienced significant improvements in graduation rates, college enrollment rates, and AP course participation and performance. He led the development of the district's Intensive Pathways options, which provide additional supports for struggling students to set them up for success in college and career. He also brings extensive school-level experience to his work. He began his career as a middle and high school teacher in Kansas, Nebraska, and North Carolina, before leading schools as a high school and middle school principal in Denver and Wichita. He graduated with distinction from Nebraska Wesleyan University with a degree in History-Social Science Education and minors in Women's Studies and Minority Studies. He holds an advanced degree in School Leadership from Friends University and is a graduate of The Broad Academy for urban school system leaders.



**Carina Wong**

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

*Deputy Director, K-12 Education*

Carina Wong currently serves as a deputy director at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on the K12 Education team. Carina has managed a variety of portfolios including early efforts to develop and scale a set of teacher-developed literacy and math tools designed to improve student achievement, as well as investments focused on redesigning professional development systems in districts to better support teachers. Her current portfolio includes a variety of investments designed to test the role teacher leaders and their networks play in scaling effective practices and surfacing new classroom innovations. She has worked in education policy and

workforce development for over two decades at the national, state and local levels.

Carina is passionate about the arts and feeding children and their families healthy, local and organic foods. She led the Chez Panisse Foundation started by Chef and Author Alice Waters, where she launched the School Lunch Initiative and managed the Edible Schoolyard Project. She is a Trustee of the Oakland Museum of CA and on the Board of the Lighthouse Community Schools. She has a B.S. in Foreign Service from Georgetown University and a Master's in Education Policy and Administration from Stanford University. She has taught abroad and is a former US Peace Corps Volunteer and the mother of three young children.

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