



## Speaker and Expert Faculty Biographies

**Christopher M. Coro, Ph. D.** is an Education Program Specialist at the U. S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE). He is currently serving as the Deputy Director for the Division of Adult Education and Literacy. Among his duties, Dr. Coro oversees the implementation of various research and technical assistance activities for OVAE's Division of Adult Education and Literacy. He has also been involved in the development of regulatory and non-regulatory guidance to support implementation of the recently enacted Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Prior to joining the U. S. Department of Education, Dr. Coro directed a large, comprehensive adult education program at Northampton Community College in eastern Pennsylvania. In addition to experience in adult education leadership and professional development, he has 17 years of experience as a classroom teacher—11 years as a high school modern language and social studies teacher and 6 years as an adult ESL instructor. Dr. Coro holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Modern Languages and Communication Arts from Hofstra University. He also holds a Master's of Science degree and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Adult Education—both from Capella University.

**Maria Flynn** is the Vice President of Jobs for the Future (JFF). As senior vice president and the head of JFF's Building Economic Opportunity Group, she leads work to help low-skilled adults advance to family-supporting careers, while enabling employers to build and sustain a productive workforce. Ms. Flynn also leads JFF's federal policy and advocacy strategies, which are focused on advancing the educational needs of low-skilled Americans and developing a skilled workforce. As a leading expert on issues such as career pathways, employer engagement, and sector strategies, Ms. Flynn guides the activities of several key JFF projects and partnerships, including Accelerating Opportunity, Credentials That Work, and JFF's role as implementation partner for the National Fund for Workforce Solutions. Ms. Flynn is also leading JFF's role as a key partner in JPMorgan Chase's New Skills at Work initiative. Her team provides technical assistance, coaching, documentation, labor market analysis, and evaluation support to a wide range of projects supported by public and private funders. Ms. Flynn has over 20 years of experience in the workforce development field. Prior to joining JFF in 2007, she was a member of the federal government's Senior Executive Service and was the Administrator of the Office of Policy Development and Research in the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. In that role, she oversaw development of employment and training policies, managed the agency's research and evaluation strategy, and supported agency budget and appropriations activities. Ms. Flynn also coordinated the agency's legislative, regulatory, and international affairs agendas and outreach to philanthropic organizations. Within the Employment and Training Administration, Ms. Flynn previously led the Division of One-Stop Operations, where she developed the policy and technical assistance framework necessary to enable states and local communities to establish comprehensive One-Stop delivery systems designed to provide quality services to jobseekers, workers, and employers. She also served as team leader for the interagency policy group charged with implementing the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. In the 1990s, Ms. Flynn played key roles in the National School-to-Work initiative and in the launch of the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) Initiative. Ms. Flynn earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in international relations and economics at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia and a Master's of Government Administration at the University of Pennsylvania. She is the proud mom of two young daughters.

**Susan Golonka** is the Deputy Director of the Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). She is a nationally recognized expert on welfare reform, foster care, and related human service issues. Prior to joining ACF, Ms. Golonka served as the program director of the Economic, Human Services and Workforce

Division at the National Governor's Association (NGA). Ms. Golonka directed NGA's policy analysis, research, and technical assistance efforts on welfare reform, low-income families, work supports service integration, and child welfare to help state policymakers and administrators develop and implement sound policies. She oversaw technical assistance to states through on-site consultations, intensive ongoing technical assistance, customized workshops, and policy academies. Ms. Golonka also managed the network of Governors' Human Services Policy Advisors. Ms. Golonka received her Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Virginia.

**Robert Kight, Ed.D.**, is the Director of the Adult Services and Workforce System in the Office of Workforce Investment, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). He oversees comprehensive adult employment services and dislocated worker programs that serve as the foundation of the public workforce system and provide necessary support and infrastructure for the network of approximately 2,600 American Job Centers. He has an extensive background in workforce development and career and technical education. Prior to joining the DOL, Mr. Kight provided leadership in the implementation of workforce development programs at both the state and local levels. He earned a Bachelor's degree in political science from Tuskegee University, a Master's degree in Public Administration from Auburn University and a Doctorate of Education specializing in management of programs from Nova Southeastern University.

**Janet LaBreck** is the Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration within the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), U.S. Department of Education. Although Commissioner Janet LaBreck lost her vision by the age of ten, she has never let her disability get in the way of her dreams. In 2007, after more than 20 years as an advocate for the blind community, LaBreck was appointed Commissioner of the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind by Governor Deval Patrick. As an ambassador for more than 30,000 legally blind residents, LaBreck has organized campaigns that have effectively increased employment opportunities for the blind. There is no better testament to her profound influence than the Commission's award-winning internship program which is being replicated throughout the country. Commissioner LaBreck has an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from the New England College of Optometry, a Masters of Education degree from Springfield College and Bachelor of Arts in Human Services from the University of Massachusetts, Boston. In August of 2013, the United States Senate confirmed Commissioner LaBreck as the Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) within the United States Department of Education. In 2013, the Urban League of Springfield selected Commissioner LaBreck as their Urban League 2013 Community Builder Award Recipient, as a result of her exemplary leadership and commitment to build strong and vibrant communities. In 2013, President Barack Obama announced some key administration posts, including his intent to nominate Janet L. LaBreck as Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) within the United States Department of Education. In 2012, Commissioner LaBreck was recognized by Healing Winds, the Lanesboro, Massachusetts-based American Indian cultural and educational nonprofit organization as the 2012 Rock, Rattle & Drum honoree. In 2011, Commissioner LaBreck was the recipient of the "Profiles in Vision" award, given to her by the New England College of Optometry for her pioneering efforts and extensive involvement in the launching of the New England Eye On-Sight Mobile Eye Clinic. In 2010, she was presented with the Heroes Among Us Award by the Boston Celtics and the Massachusetts State Lottery. In 2008, New England College of Optometry selected her to deliver the first commencement address in the history of the college to be delivered by a person who is blind.

**Laurie Bouillion Larrea** is honored to serve as President and CEO of Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas, the Dallas County Workforce Development Board for 25 years. Capping a career in employment systems spanning more than thirty-six years, service to the Dallas workforce system has proved a rewarding commitment. Ms. Larrea is immediate Past President of the United States

Conference of Mayors, Workforce Development Council (WDC), supporting workforce executives from the largest cities and regions in the nation. The WDC is a premiere member organization contributing to the national dialogue, documenting best practices and defining the needs for a competitive workforce. Prior to service in Dallas, Ms. Larrea directed workforce systems in Houston and Southeast Texas. As a private employment and training consultant, her work included conference planning; procurement, negotiation and contract training; and planning for various councils and contractors – the Texas Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of Labor. An alumnus of Lamar University in Beaumont, Ms. Larrea earned a Bachelor's degree in Psychology with emphasis in Industrial Psychology. Her expertise in workforce development was earned through multiple college, government and private training initiatives.

**Elizabeth Lower-Basch** is the Policy Coordinator and Director of Income and Work Supports at the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP). Her expertise is federal and state welfare (TANF) policy, other supports for low-income working families (such as refundable tax credits), systems integration, and job quality. From 1996 to 2006, Ms. Lower-Basch worked for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In this position, she was a lead welfare policy analyst, supporting legislative and regulatory processes and managing research projects. Ms. Lower-Basch received a Master of Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

**Sara Muempfer** is the Director of Workforce Development at Maryland's Department of Human Resources (DHR), leading both TANF and SNAP E&T workforce development programs. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Human Development Family Studies from Penn State University and began her 17 year career in workforce development as a Job Developer at a community based organization in Columbia, MD. Subsequently, she worked in a local workforce investment board and Maryland's Department of Labor, focused on disability and youth workforce development. She recently earned her Global Career Development Facilitator credential and is a current participant in DHR's Leadership Development Initiative, the Weinberg Sector Skills Academy and the HHS OFA Systems to Family Stability Academy. Ms. Muempfer currently lives in the Baltimore area with her active, fraternal twin sons.

**Luke Murren** is presently the Supervisory Workforce Analyst within the Office of Policy Development and Research, Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor. He has served in ETA for five years. Mr. Murren's primary responsibilities of this office include: Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Wagner-Peyser Act reporting, various performance accountability guidance letters, and technical assistance to state grantees. Before joining ETA, Mr. Murren served for five years at the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry in various capacities including: Quarterly Census of Earnings and Wages, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, and WIA performance reporting.

**Brent Orrell** is a Vice President with the Health, Education, and Social Programs division of ICF International. Mr. Orrell has over 20 years of experience working in the Legislative and Executive branches of the U.S. government, developing a wide range of experience and extensive knowledge in a variety of policy areas including workforce and talent development, healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood education, welfare, and human services. In his most recent federal role, Mr. Orrell was nominated by the President to serve as Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA), where he oversaw the nation's \$10 billion Workforce Investment Act (WIA) including Trade Adjustment Assistance, discretionary and formula grant funding, youth employment and development, unemployment insurance, and foreign labor certification. At ICF, Mr. Orrell provides strategic direction and management to a portfolio of human services initiatives including three U.S. Department of Labor projects that seek to improve

employment opportunities for court-involved youth across the U.S. He also helps lead ICF's effort to foster collaboration between human services and workforce development and job training programs.

**Nisha Patel** is the Director of the Office of Family Assistance, which administers Federal grant programs that foster family economic security, including the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program and the Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Tribal TANF) program, Native Employment Works, Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood, and Health Profession Opportunity Grants. Ms. Patel has nearly two decades of experience developing, managing, and implementing initiatives to increase economic opportunities for low-income families in the U.S. She was most recently deputy director of Ascend at the Aspen Institute, where she played a key role in national efforts to expand two-generation approaches to improve outcomes for children and their parents. At the Aspen Institute, Ms. Patel directed the Ascend Fund and Ascend Network of 58 organizations in 24 states and the District of Columbia, working together to create innovative two-generation policy and practice solutions. Prior to the Aspen Institute, Ms. Patel was a program officer in the U.S. Program at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, where she managed a \$40 million portfolio focused on reducing inequity and increasing postsecondary success through community partnerships and policy development. She previously held positions as Director of Programs at the Washington Area Women's Foundation and Senior Policy Analyst at the Center for Law and Social Policy, where she co-authored numerous publications and provided technical assistance to states and communities focused on welfare reform, workforce development, and work supports for low-income families. Earlier, Ms. Patel worked at the National Legal Aid and Defender Association. She has also served as an adjunct professor at the George Washington University. Ms. Patel is a graduate of Vanderbilt University and holds an M.S.W. with a concentration in Social and Economic Development from Washington University in St. Louis.

**David Socolow** is Director of the Center for Postsecondary and Economic Success at the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP). Mr. Socolow leads CLASP's work to advance state and federal policies that increase access to and success in workforce development, career pathways, and postsecondary education for low-income, lower-skilled adults. Mr. Socolow has worked to promote workers' economic security in federal and state government, on Capitol Hill, and in both union and corporate roles. He served for four years as Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, after serving as Director of New Jersey's Unemployment Insurance Division, and as Senior Advisor to the Deputy Secretary in the U.S. Department of Labor. Mr. Socolow was also Vice President of Corporate Affairs at Pinnacle Foods Inc.; as chief of staff to a Member of Congress; and as legislative representative at the AFL-CIO. He has an undergraduate degree in social studies from Harvard University and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Rutgers University.

**William "Ed" Trumbull** has more than 15 years of management experience in the for-profit, nonprofit, and U.S. government sectors. His experience includes advising a governor, a president, and a chairman of a nonprofit organization and consulting for the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Mr. Trumbull has a portfolio of successful management, communications, government affairs, and marketing solutions. His clients have included the New York City Economic Development Corporation, the New York State Department of Labor, the U.S. Census Bureau, DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA), and the University of Baltimore. He has managed the legislative and membership efforts for clients such as the National Job Corps Association (NJCA), and the NJCA Foundation for Youth Opportunities. Mr. Trumbull has a Master's degree in Public Management from the University of Maryland and a B.A. in Political Science from Claremont Men's College.

**Damon Waters** is a Family Assistance Program Specialist in the Office of Family Assistance of the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Mr. Waters

is a nationally recognized technical assistance and capacity-building provider and policy professional with nearly 20 years professional experience in the public, private, nonprofit and academic sectors. He has a broad program and policy understanding of a variety of topics relating to preventative healthcare, higher education, political empowerment, poverty, and public policy. In his current role, Mr. Waters develops, collects, maintains and disseminates information essential to TANF programs under the auspices of the state TANF Bureau. He develops technical assistance products and works across poverty and TANF stakeholder groups to improve program and recipient outcomes. Prior to joining OFA, Mr. Waters was a technical specialist in welfare and workforce policy and programming at ICF International. Mr. Waters was also the program director of a fast-paced consulting firm where he managed a series of public health and education initiatives and conducted numerous qualitative analyses of public policies and programs impacting underserved populations. Commencing his career, he was a political science researcher and instructor at Howard University in Washington, DC. A published author, he has written on the effectiveness of community coalitions in delivering social services, employment and training, welfare and poverty, linked networks of prevention, treatment and care services, higher education desegregation, political empowerment and voting rights for District of Columbia residents. Mr. Waters received a Masters of Arts in Political Science and Masters of Public Policy from Howard University.

**Lisa Washington-Thomas** is the Self-Sufficiency Branch Chief within the Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She has experience in a wide array of social services programs, such as TANF, AFDC, Job Opportunities and Basic Skills, Emergency Assistance Group, the Rapid Response to Technical Assistance Contract, Healthy Marriage Resource Center, and Community Planning Grants. Ms. Washington-Thomas earned a B.A. from Georgetown University.

## Team Facilitator Biographies

**Dr. Nicole Bossard** has fifteen years of experience specializing in qualitative research and inquiry, community-based leadership training and development, and technical assistance provision in child welfare, children's mental health, and education, particularly systems of care. Her areas of expertise include family and community engagement, systems change and sustainability, and collaborative partnerships between communities and child- and family-serving systems. Her recent research interests include meaningful family engagement in child welfare driven systems of care, parent leadership in child welfare, and evaluation capacity building, namely technical assistance on building evidence informed practice within TANF programs. Recognized for her enthusiasm and creativity, Dr. Bossard brings joy and resourcefulness to the work of strengthening communities and programs. She has worked with diverse stakeholders and partners to address the needs of children and families in the Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, and Western regions of the United States as well as Tribal communities throughout the country. Dr. Bossard currently provides training and technical assistance for several national projects turning attention away from compliance driven performance to measurable improvements in the lives and communities of those served. She resides in Baltimore, MD with her family.

**Lynn Carrier** is a Senior Associate with the Health, Education, and Social Programs division of ICF International. Since 2010, Ms. Carrier has been assisting the ICF International team in providing technical assistance to TANF and workforce development projects for the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Labor. Currently, she supports the planning and execution of training, technical assistance, and evaluation initiatives for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families' Office of Family Assistance (OFA). Ms. Carrier provides technical assistance and capacity building support to a variety of stakeholders including state, local, tribal, and community-based organizations, as well as community colleges and workforce agencies.

**Rebecca Eaton**, an Oregon resident, is a Principal with the Health, Education, and Social Programs division of ICF International. Recent highlights in Ms. Eaton's 28+ year professional career include managing workforce development projects for ICF, where she leads complex teams that develop and deploy tools and services that help caseworkers and program administrators more effectively understand and address the needs of vulnerable populations. She leads the Online CaWORKs Appraisal Tool (OCAT) project for the California Department of Social Services, developing the strategic plan and leading the implementation team for the project. In addition, she led the company's U.S. Department of Labor-funded green Labor Market Information workforce survey and related research projects for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Collaborative Green Consortium, working closely with state workforce agencies in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia while surveying 35,000 regional employers to assess needs and conducting a comprehensive workforce gap analysis with regional universities. Ms. Eaton has led the targeted training and technical assistance services to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance, Region IX's States and Tribes TANF program, including Arizona, California, Guam, Hawaii, and Nevada. Her team manages the California Advanced Lighting Controls Training Program, a training program designed with labor organizations that has spread to five states. Ms. Eaton earned a Master's of Science degree in Environmental Management and Policy from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

**Akua Gyabaah** is a Technical Specialist with the Health, Education, and Social Programs division of ICF International. In this capacity, she provides leadership and technical expertise on several workforce and poverty reduction projects funded by a myriad of agencies including the U.S. Department of Labor and the Office of Family Assistance. Ms. Gyabaah has worked on projects that

directly impact TANF participants, in several capacities including serving as a trainer, evaluator, technical expert, and technical assistance provider. For instance, Ms. Gyabaah has served on both the Online Work Readiness Assessment (OWRA) and Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool (OCAT) projects as part of the training and evaluation teams and has been instrumental in moving the goals of the programs forward. Ms. Gyabaah has over eighteen years of professional experience and over that time has provided her training design and implementation expertise on several state- and federally-funded projects—she has done so for audiences ranging from federal funders to community based organizations. Ms. Gyabaah holds both a Bachelor's degree in Biology and a Master's degree in Management from the University of Maryland and has completed several courses through the Joint Program in Survey Management's (University of Maryland, College Park, University of Michigan, Westat) Citation Program.

**Yvette Lamb** is a Senior Fellow with the Health, Education, and Social Programs division of ICF International. Dr. Lamb brings over 20 years of experience and a deep understanding of evaluation, policy and practice in the fields of community based interventions, education and health care delivery. Her work reflects a deep understanding of implementation analysis and research. Prior to joining ICF, Dr. Lamb developed her unique skill set by conducting numerous evaluations of national and international initiatives in the areas of health and education; directing and supporting the planning and evaluation processes of community based partners involved in child health, family support and early literacy. She has over ten years of third-party evaluation experience, including demonstrated experience leading federally funded grant evaluation teams.

**Renee Rainey** is a Senior Manager with the Health, Education and Social Programs division of ICF International. She has over fourteen years of experience in research, evaluation, analysis, project management and organizational assessment. Her areas of expertise include performance data and indicators, evaluation capacity building and technical assistance, logic models, data analysis, and research. Ms. Rainey is currently the Project Director for two third party implementation and outcome evaluations of Round 4 Department of Labor (DOL) Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grants focused on building career pathways in cyber security and advanced manufacturing. She also serves as a technical specialist and development liaison for the Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool (OCAT), an online standardized work readiness assessment being implemented across California. She was recently the Project Manager for the \$7 million contract responsible for providing Federal technical assistance to State and Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs under the Administration of Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance (OFA). She also led the development of logic models, performance measures, and data reporting technical assistance for OFA's Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood grantees. Ms. Rainey was previously a public sector management consultant at Booz Allen Hamilton where she worked with high level executives within the Federal government to define organizational problems, identify and prioritize solutions, and create roadmaps for organizational change. Ms. Rainey is a skilled analyst and project manager easily able to synthesize data from multiple sources using quantitative and qualitative methods (e.g., interviews, document review, surveys, data models, and cost-effectiveness analysis) to deliver efficient solutions, recommendations, research briefs, and technical assistance products to solve client issues.

**Joe Raymond** is a Fellow in the Health, Education and Social Programs division at ICF International. He is formerly the Director of the Guilford County, North Carolina, Department of Health and Human Services. Prior to that role, Mr. Raymond was Director of the Forsyth County Department of Social Services, located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. From 2000–2005, Mr. Raymond was co-owner of Peterson, Raymond and Associates, a national consulting organization that focused on results-focused board governance, CEO leadership work, and strategic change processes for private and public local and state organizations and communities. From 1991-2000, he served as the founding

Chief Executive Officer of the Georgia Academy, one the nation's most innovative resources for professional development and technical assistance to public and private sector professionals and organizations. Mr. Raymond also served as Executive Director of the State of Maryland's Income Maintenance Administration from 1990–1991. In the 1980's Joe was a County Director of Social Services in Pamlico and Onslow counties, located in North Carolina. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Guilford College, a Master's of Social Work from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a Master's of Public Administration degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.