



What We Need Skills for: A Research-to-Action Conference

December 10-11, 2015

Presenters, Moderators, and Discussants' Biographies

[Thursday, December 10th]

Introductory Remarks

David Myers, *President and CEO, American Institutes for Research*

David Myers, a nationally recognized education researcher, became President and Chief Executive Officer of AIR in January 2011 after serving as AIR's Senior Vice President and Director of the Education, Human Development and the Workforce Division from 2006-2010. Prior to joining AIR, he served as Senior Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer at Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

Dr. Myers is a leading authority on the design, implementation and analysis of experimental studies of education programs. During his career he has played a major role in some of the largest randomized control trials on education conducted in the United States.

He has directed policy analyses of elementary, secondary, postsecondary, and adult education issues, including such diverse topics as the effects of compensatory education programs and school vouchers on student achievement, the impact of high school achievement on college enrollment of black and white youth, and differences in learning trajectories of children as they progress through elementary school.

Keynote Speaker

Peggy Carr, *Acting Commissioner, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education*

Peggy Carr is the Acting Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics in the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. As Acting Commissioner, she oversees the collection, analysis, and reporting of education data ranging from preschool through graduate education.

During her appointment as Acting Commissioner, Dr. Carr continues to serve as the Associate Commissioner of Assessment for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), a role she has held for 16 years. She is responsible for the Department's national and international large-scale assessments. She oversees the administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), as well as the International Activities Programs, which include: the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), Progress in International Student Assessment (PISA), and the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS). Dr. Carr has been a Senior Executive Service (SES) official for the Department of Education since 2001, and was awarded the Meritorious Executive Rank Award for sustained superior accomplishments in management of programs in 2008 by President George Bush.

Work, Education, and Skills

Gerri Fiala, *Deputy Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor*

Gerri Fiala is Deputy Assistant Secretary of Employment and Training for the U.S. Department of Labor. She is currently responsible for guiding the Department's implementation of WIOA -- the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Prior to her time at DOL, Gerri served as Staff Director to the HELP Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety chaired by Senator Patty Murray. Here Gerri drafted Senator Murray's "Innovations in 21st Century Careers" bill to make education more relevant for high school students. She also developed bills introduced by Senator Murray during the economic stimulus debate. Key components of these bills were ultimately included in Recovery Act funding provisions for the Department of Labor.

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Gerri served for nearly eight years as Administrator, Office of Policy Development, Evaluation and Research, in the U.S. Department of Labor. This includes a year as a loaned executive to serve as Senior Counselor for Economic Development to the American Association of Community Colleges. As Administrator, she led interagency efforts to drive job training reform. This work culminated in the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, and Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000 (creating the Senior Community Service Employment Program). Her leadership on interagency teams also secured the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, and Welfare to Work program, and provided direction to a DOL effort to craft and implement regulations for each of these programs.

Gerri has a Masters of Labor and Industrial Relations from Michigan State University, a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Iowa, and Associate of Arts from North Iowa Area Community College.

David Baker, *Professor of Education and Sociology, Pennsylvania State University*

David Baker is Professor of Education and Sociology in the Center for the Study of Higher Education at Pennsylvania State University where he leads multidisciplinary research projects on the worldwide education revolution's impact on postindustrial society and global development. His work includes examining education's effects on human cognition, population health, and science productivity. Specific studies cover the impact of education on rising population IQ, the HIV/AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa, obesity in Latin America, the smoking epidemic in China, and global mega science worldwide over the 20th Century. Baker's most recent book is *The Schooled Society: The Educational Transformation of Global Culture*.

Karly Ford, *Assistant Professor in Education Policy Studies, Pennsylvania State University*

Karly Ford is an Assistant Professor in the Education Policy Studies department at The Pennsylvania State University. Her research focuses on the relationship between education and social stratification. Ford is the co-editor of a reader now in its third edition: *The Structure of Schooling: Readings in the Sociology of Education*. Her work has appeared in the Teachers College Record Online, Education Leadership, and Research & Practice in Assessment.

Liang Sun, *Pennsylvania State University*

Liang Sun is a Ph.D. candidate and Graduate Research Assistant in the Higher Education Program at Pennsylvania State University. She received her bachelor's degree in statistics from Wuhan University and a master's degree in education from Central China Normal University in China. Her research interests include the internationalization of higher education and the research productivity of universities. For her dissertation she is currently examining how international student mobility influences the research capacity of both host and origin countries for her dissertation. As a research assistant, she is also conducting quantitative analyses of PIAAC data with her colleagues at Pennsylvania State University.

Yuan Chih Fu, *Pennsylvania State University*

Yuan Chih Fu is a Ph.D. candidate in the Higher Education Program at the Pennsylvania State University. His research interests include higher education policy, science policy and their impacts on university operation. He works for the Taiwan Ministry of Education as a policy maker, focused on the learning outcomes of college education. He is one of the pioneers in promoting data-driven decision making and analytic learning systems for university governance and operations in Taiwan.

Frank Fernandez, *Graduate Research Assistant, Higher Education Program, Pennsylvania State University*

Frank Fernandez is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Higher Education program at the Center for the Study of Higher Education at The Pennsylvania State University. Frank's research interests include graduate (Ph.D.) education and pathways to the professoriate, community colleges, nontraditional students (such as immigrants, minorities, and

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student veterans) and their educational and skill development, and the politics of higher education. He prefers to use an international approach to understanding U.S. education, comparing U.S. findings with those from other countries.

Mark Umbricht, *Graduate Research Assistant, Higher Education Program, Pennsylvania State University*

Mark Umbricht is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Higher Education program at Pennsylvania State University, as well as a Graduate Research Assistant for the Center for the Study of Higher Education. His research focuses on the topics of institutional research, finance, student outcomes, and first-generation students in higher education. Mark is also the editor of *Higher Education in Review*, a publication run by graduate students at Pennsylvania State University.

Maureen Conway, *Vice President and Executive Director of the Economic Opportunities Program, Aspen Institute*

Maureen Conway is a Vice President of the Aspen Institute and Executive Director of the Institute's Economic Opportunities Program (EOP). Ms. Conway founded EOP's Workforce Strategies Initiative (AspenWSI) and has headed up workforce research at the Aspen Institute since 1999. A featured speaker at numerous national and regional conferences, she is a nationally recognized expert on sectoral workforce development. Under her leadership, EOP's Workforce Strategies Initiative has investigated the outcomes of sectoral workforce development, provided innovation seed grants to leading programs in order to illuminate promising practices and explored key operating features of programs in specific industry sectors. Maureen is the author of numerous publications including research reports, case studies and policy briefs. Together with Robert P. Giloth, she has also co-edited *Connecting People to Work: Workforce Intermediaries and Sector Strategies*, a collection that brings perspectives from philanthropy, policy, research, and practice, together to chart how sector-based workforce development has evolved and its implications for the future.

The Skills of Immigrants

Brenda Dann-Messier, *CNA Principal Research Scientist for the Institute for Public Research in Arlington VA and former Assistant Secretary for Career, Technical, and Adult Education, United States Department of Education*

Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier is a Principal Research Scientist at the Institute for Public Research in Arlington VA., and serves as a Coach for the CCSSO Career Readiness Initiative. Dr. Dann-Messier served as Assistant Secretary for Career, Technical, and Adult Education (2009-2014) and as Acting Assistant Secretary for the Office of Post-Secondary Education (2013-2014) in the United States Department of Education. Prior to joining the Department of Education she worked in Providence, R.I. as the President of Dorcas Place Adult & Family Learning Center for more than a decade. From 2006-2009 she also served on the RI Board of Governors for Higher Education.

Jeanne Batalova, *Senior Policy Analyst, Migration Policy Institute*

Jeanne Batalova is a Senior Policy Analyst at the Migration Policy Institute. She has conducted extensive research on a range of critical issues including: the literacy and skills of immigrant adults, college enrollment and completion among immigrant-origin youth, educational outcomes for English language learners, the underemployment of college-educated immigrants, and estimates of unauthorized youth eligible for immigration benefits under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. She also manages the MPI Data Hub - a one-stop, web-based resource that provides instant access to the latest facts, statistics, and maps covering U.S. and global data on immigration and immigrant integration.

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Michael Fix, *President, Migration Policy Institute*

Michael Fix is President of the Migration Policy Institute (MPI), an independent, non-partisan think tank, which provides analysis, evaluation and thoughtful development of immigration, immigrant integration and refugee policies at U.S. and international levels. He joined MPI in 2005, and most recently served as Senior Vice President and Director of Studies, as well as Co-Director of MPI's National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy. Fix's work focuses on immigrant integration and the education of immigrant children in the United States and Europe, as well as citizenship policy, immigrant children and families, the effect of welfare reform on immigrants and the impact of immigrants on the U.S. labor force. Prior to joining MPI he directed the Immigration Studies Program at the Urban Institute from 1998-2004.

Terrence G. Wiley, *President and CEO, Center for Applied Linguistics*

Dr. Terrence G. Wiley is President of the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, DC, and serves as Special Professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership and Graduate School, University of Maryland, College Park, MD. He is also Professor Emeritus at Arizona State University, where he served as Executive Dean of the Mary Lou Fulton Institute and Graduate School of Education and Director of the Division of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies.

Dr. Wiley's teaching and research have focused on educational and applied linguistics, concentrating on educational language policies; language diversity and immigrant integration; teaching English as a second and international language; bilingualism, literacy and biliteracy studies; and bilingual, heritage and community language education.

Keynote

Johan Uvin, *Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education*

Johan Uvin joined the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) in December 2009 as Senior Policy Advisor to Assistant Secretary Brenda Dann-Messier. In 2011, Uvin was appointed to the position of Deputy Assistant Secretary for policy and strategic initiatives. In that capacity, he coordinates all policy and strategy development for OCTAE.

In 2012, Uvin assumed additional responsibilities as the acting director of the Policy Research and Evaluation Services Division of OCTAE and the co-chair of the Interagency Forum on Disconnected Youth, a multi-agency federal collaboration to improve the outcomes of disconnected youths. In May 2014, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan named Uvin Acting Assistant Secretary for OCTAE.

Since 2010, Uvin has been a member of the steering committee of the Domestic Policy Council's New Americans Citizenship and Integration Initiative, which developed a framework for federal efforts on immigrant integration. Uvin also leads the Department's Pay for Success work and coordinates the Department's responsibilities related to the implementation of the Presidential Memorandum on Job-Driven Training.

Skill Gain and Loss

Dana Kelly, *Branch Chief, International Assessment Branch, Assessments Division, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education*

Dr. Dana Kelly is Branch Chief of the International Assessments Branch at the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education. In this role, she oversees U.S. implementation of international assessments and surveys, including PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS, PIAAC, and TALIS. Dr. Kelly is also the U.S. representative to

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the PISA Governing Board and on the Standing Committee of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). She has worked on international assessments for more than 20 years.

T. Scott Murray, *President, DataAngel Policy Research Inc.*

T. Scott Murray currently serves as the President for DataAngel Policy Research Inc. He was formerly the Director General, Institutions and Social Statistics of Statistics Canada, the Director of Education Outcomes for the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, and the International Director for both IALS and ALL. Dr. Murray is an expert in the economics of productivity growth, inequality and educational performance. He has written extensively on public policy using the data from various international assessments to study social and economic disadvantage.

Marilyn Binkley, *Consultant, DataAngel Policy Research Inc.*

Marilyn Binkley, Ed.D. has been involved with large-scale assessments since she joined the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, in 1985. Her responsibilities have included item development for the NAEP, serving as the national project monitor for the IEA Reading Literacy Study, the International Adult Literacy Study, PISA, PIRLS and ALL. She has also been a member of the subject matter expert groups on all of these international large-scale assessments and codirected research and development for ALL. She is currently a consultant and continues to work on large-scale assessments.

Richard Shillington, *Principal, Tristat Resources*

Richard Shillington is the Principal of Tristat Resources, a private statistical consulting company that specializes in the empirical analysis of income and poverty distributions and poverty. He has worked with the Canadian Council on Social Development, the Fair Tax Commission, and the Department of Health for the Government of Saskatchewan. Dr. Shillington has published extensively on tax policy, social policy, health policy, labor markets, and literacy.

Richard Desjardins, *Associate Professor, Graduate School of Education & Information Studies, University of California, Los Angeles*

Richard Desjardins is an Associate Professor of the Political Economy of Education at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Between 2010-2013 he worked at the OECD Directorate for Education on the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) and the Skills Strategy; from 2005-2010 he was an Associate Professor in comparative social science at Aarhus University. Desjardins obtained a PhD in International and Comparative Education from Stockholm University in 2004 and a PhD in Economics from Lund University in 2014. He has been involved in large scale assessment of adult skills for over 15 years, namely as part of the 1994-1998 International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) and the 2003-2007 Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey (ALL), and the 2012 PIAAC teams.

Jeongwoo Lee, *Researcher, Graduate School of Education & Information Studies, University of California, Los Angeles*

Jeongwoo Lee is a Ph.D. student in the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, University of California – Los Angeles, with a concentration in Social Science and Comparative Education. His primary research interests include international and comparative education, education policy, and lifelong learning. He has a diverse academic background – a B.A. in Political Science and Master's degrees in International Relations, International Economic and Development, and International Education Policy and Management – which has enabled him to conduct research on educational issues from a variety of perspectives.

Louis Soares, *Vice President, Center for Policy Research and Strategy, American Council on Education*

Louis Soares joined ACE in 2013 as Vice President for Policy Research and Strategy to lead ACE's Center for Policy

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Analysis. Prior to joining ACE he served as Director of the postsecondary education program at the Center for American Progress (CAP). While at CAP, his research focused on community college reform, worker training, consumer information for college students, career and education counseling and the role of technology in higher education innovation. Soares also served as director of business development under Rhode Island Governor Donald L. Carcieri and as director of education and training for the Rhode Island Technology Council. In 2011 Soares was appointed by the Secretary of Education to serve on the National Board of the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education.

A Closer Look at Numeracy

Catherine Brown, *Vice President, Education Policy, Center for American Progress*

Catherine Brown is the Vice President of Education Policy at the Center for American Progress. Previously, Brown served as the Vice President of Policy at Teach for America, Senior Consultant for Leadership for Educational Equity, and Senior Education Policy Advisor for the House Committee on Education and Labor. In 2008, Brown served as the Domestic Policy Advisor for presidential candidate Hillary Clinton.

Alka Arora, *Senior Researcher, American Institutes for Research*

Dr. Alka Arora is a senior researcher in the Education Program at the American Institutes for Research (AIR). She has 15 years of experience in large-scale comparative studies of educational achievement. She serves as a senior mathematics and science content expert for NAEP Assessment Operations Support and U.S. participation in international assessments.

Before joining AIR, Dr. Arora worked at the TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center at Boston College where she had primary responsibilities coordinate all stages of TIMSS and TIMSS Advanced assessment. Prior to that, she served as a senior secondary science and mathematics teacher in India. Dr. Arora has a Ph.D. in Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation from Boston College.

Emily Pawlowski, *Research Associate, American Institutes for Research*

Emily Pawlowski is a Research Associate at the American Institutes for Research (AIR) in Washington, DC. She has worked on the Program for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) team at AIR in support of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) since 2012. She works on tasks varying from conducting quantitative analyses to assisting in dissemination efforts.

Claus von Zastrow, *Chief Operating Officer and Director of Research, Change the Equation*

Claus von Zastrow is the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Research for Change the Equation. Before joining Change the Equation, Dr. von Zastrow served as Executive Director of the Learning First Alliance, a partnership of 16 major education associations that represent over ten million parents, educators and policymakers. At the Alliance, he worked with the Executive Directors and elected leaders of Alliance member organizations to facilitate collaboration at every level of the education system and promote the continual and long-term improvement at public education.

Dr. von Zastrow has also worked at the Council for Basic Education where he published research on the impact of state and federal policy on school practice. He also served as a Policy Director at the National Alliance of Business, where he developed and managed policy initiatives to improve student achievement at all levels, promote universal access to higher education, and formulate sound workforce development strategies focused on lifelong learning.

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[Friday, December 11th]

Reflections of Day 1

Mary Alice McCarthy, *Senior Policy Analyst, Higher Education Policy Program, New America*

Mary Alice McCarthy is a Senior Policy Analyst in the Education Policy Program at New America where she examines the intersection between higher education and workforce development policy and practice. Since joining New America in the Fall of 2013, she has been conducting research on federal higher education policy, competency-based education, and non-credit education at community colleges. She writes on a variety of topics including career pathways, career technical and adult education, credentials, and the relationship between employers and higher education.

Laura Salganik, *Consultant and former Director of Quality, American Institutes for Research*

Laura Salganik was Director of Quality and Senior Vice President at AIR. She has conducted research on a broad range of education topics including key competencies, national and international education surveys and statistics, education indicators, and educational attainment. She also participated in international teams of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to improve the quality of international education statistics. In addition to numerous other publications, she is the co-editor with Dominique Simone Rychen of *Defining and Selecting Key Competencies* and *Key Competencies for a Successful Life and a Well-Functioning Society*.

Health

Iris Feinberg, *Assistant Director of the Adult Literacy Research Center, Georgia State University*

Dr. Iris Feinberg holds a PhD in Public Health from Georgia State University with specialization in Health Literacy. She is currently the Assistant Director of the Adult Literacy Research Center at GSU. Her research interests include health information seeking behavior through the PIAAC data, oral medical discourse analysis, and employee engagement in health and wellness plans.

Dr. Feinberg was the founder and CEO of The Trillium Group, Ltd., a medical claims processing company serving medical clinics and physicians in the Southeastern United States from 1989-2010. She has served on the State of Georgia Health Strategies Council and the Clinton Administration's Administrative Health Care Task Force.

Jane Seymour, *Doctoral Candidate, Department of Epidemiology, School of Public Health, Boston University*

Jane Seymour, M.P.H. is a doctoral student in the Department of Epidemiology at the Boston University School of Public Health where her work is funded through the Training Program in Reproductive, Perinatal, and Pediatric Epidemiology. Jane's research focuses on how modifiable social factors such as literacy impact women's reproductive health and how these relationships can be leveraged to improve health outcomes.

Rosemary Frasso, *Director of Education, Masters of Public Health Program, University of Pennsylvania*

Dr. Rosemary Frasso is the Director of Education for the University of Pennsylvania's Master of Public Health program. She earned her Ph.D. at Penn's School of Social Policy & Practice in 2011, after earning two Masters Degrees at the Harvard School of Public Health - one in Maternal Child Health and the other in Society, Human Development and Health. Frasso is also a faculty member in Penn's Mixed Methods Research Lab where she collaborates on a host of qualitative projects.

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Ian M. Bennett, *Professor, Department of Family Medicine, University of Washington*

Ian Bennett is a Professor in the School of Medicine at the University of Washington and studies social determinants of health. His interest in literacy relates to the novel aspects of this risk variable for interventions and its role in the life course of vulnerable populations. Dr. Bennett has a particular interest in the role of literacy in women's health throughout life.

A Closer Look at Adult Reading Skills

Liza McFadden, *President and CEO, Barbara Bush Foundation*

Liza McFadden is President and CEO of the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, an organization that has championed the cause of literacy as a civil right for all Americans for the past 25 years. The Foundation's efforts have focused on the power of early childhood education and support parents who, driven by their desire to provide a better life for their children, are learning to read, write and gain critical job skills. With more than 20 years of success leading visionary change, Liza is recognized for her entrepreneurial efforts.

During the past two years she successfully transitioned the Barbara Bush Foundation from a donor-advised fund to a public charity, instituting a talented and respected board to oversee these efforts. In June 2014, she received the inaugural Women Who Mean Business Service Award by *Tallahassee Woman Magazine*.

John Sabatini, *Principal Research Scientist, Educational Testing Service*

John Sabatini is a Principal Research Scientist in the Center for Global Assessment in ETS' Research Division. His research interests include reading literacy development, disabilities, assessment, cognitive psychology, and educational technology, with a primary focus on adults and adolescents. He has been the principal investigator of an IES-funded grant to develop pre-K -12 comprehension assessments as part of the Reading for Understanding initiative. He is co-investigator on projects exploring the reading processes of adolescents and English language learners. He provides technical consulting to national and international surveys such as PIAAC and PISA, including development of reading components for both surveys.

Amy Trawick, *Director, Center for Adult Learning Leadership and Advancement (CALLA)*

Dr. Amy Trawick directs the Center for Adult Learning Leadership and Advancement (CALLA) and provides consulting services to ABE programs in the area of English Language Arts. She directed the Equipped for the Future/NCFL Reading Project and has served as a consultant/trainer for other national projects, such as STAR and SIA. She has also led research-to-practice initiatives related to adult reading education in several states. In 2008, Amy was the recipient of the National Reading Conference's J. Michael Parker Award for contributions to adult literacy research. She is the former Director of the Higher Education Graduate Program at Appalachian State University.

A Closer Look at Digital Problem-Solving

Gabe Martinez Cabrera, *Project Manager, Adult Education Initiatives, Digital Promise*

Gabe Martinez Cabrera has worked with community-based organizations, such as the United Way, Children's Aid Society, and the Mission Neighborhood Center, as a teacher and community organizer for underserved communities in New York, Los Angeles, Boston and San Francisco, for over fifteen years. He has also produced multimedia content and written articles for media outlets including Newsweek, WNYC, the San Francisco Bay Guardian, and others. He holds advanced degrees from Columbia and Harvard, where he concentrated on the intersection of education, literature, and community identity.

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Qiwei (Britt) He, *Associate Research Scientist, Center for Global Assessment, Educational Testing Service*

Dr. Qiwei He is an Associate Research Scientist at the Educational Testing Service (ETS). Her background and expertise are in psychometrics, data mining, text mining and natural language processing with a focus on building applications for educational and psychological technology. She currently focuses on exploration research of process data in large scale assessments such as PIAAC and PISA. Previously, Dr. He conducted research in the areas of text-based online assessments for psychiatric and psychological studies at the University of Twente, the Netherlands. She also won the Best Dissertation Prize of the Abbas Fund in the field of psychological assessments in the Netherlands.

Matthias von Davier, *Senior Research Director, Center for Global Assessment, Educational Testing Service*

Dr. Matthias von Davier is a Senior Research Director in the Research & Development Division at Educational Testing Service (ETS). He joined ETS in 2000. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the British Journal of Mathematical and Statistical Psychology, and co-editor of the journal *Large Scale Assessments in Education* and a book series on methodologies in educational measurement and assessment. He earned his Ph.D. in Psychology from University of Kiel, Germany, in 1996, specializing in psychometrics. At ETS, Dr. von Davier leads a group of researchers working on methodological innovations for large-scale international comparative studies such as PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS. He is the winner of the 2006 ETS Research Scientist Award and the 2012 NCME Bradley Hanson Award for contributions to educational measurement. His research interests involve extensions of item response theory, diagnostic models, latent class analysis, mixture distribution models as well as computational statistics and model-data fit.

Yigal Rosen, *Senior Research Scientist, Vice Provost for Advances in Learning (VPAL) Research Team, Harvard University*

Yigal is a Senior Research Scientist and The Vice Provost for Advances in Learning (VPAL) at Harvard University. Prior to joining Harvard he was a Senior Research Scientist at Pearson, leading research and development of innovative learning and assessment technologies for higher-order skills for such assessments as PISA, NAEP and PARCC. Yigal was a member of OECD's PISA 2015 Assessment Framework Expert Group. He obtained his Ph.D. degree in Education from the University of Haifa, and was a post-doctoral fellow at Harvard Graduate School of Education. Yigal is a leading editor of the recently published book, "Handbook of Research on Technology Tools for Real-World Skill Development".

Using PIAAC to Improve Adult Learning

Heidi Silver-Pacuilla, *Branch Chief, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE), U.S. Department of Education*

Heidi Silver-Pacuilla is the Branch Chief for Applied Innovation and Improvement in the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education in the U.S. Department of Education. She has served in this role for four years, guiding the grants and contracts supported by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act's national leadership fund and providing leadership in the Office on issues of technology integration for teaching and learning. Prior to working at the Department of Education, Dr. Silver-Pacuilla was a senior research scientist at the American Institutes for Research.

Amy Trawick, *Director, Center for Adult Learning Leadership and Advancement (CALLA)*

Dr. Amy Trawick directs the Center for Adult Learning Leadership and Advancement (CALLA) and provides consulting services to ABE programs in the area of English Language Arts. She directed the Equipped for the Future/NCFL Reading Project and has served as a consultant/trainer for other national projects, such as STAR and SIA. She has also led research-to-practice initiatives related to adult reading education in several states. In 2008, Amy was the



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recipient of the National Reading Conference's J. Michael Parker Award for contributions to adult literacy research. She is the former Director of the Higher Education Graduate Program at Appalachian State University.

Donna Curry, *Senior Professional Development Specialist, SABES (System for Adult Basic Education Support), Center for Math and Adult Numeracy, Technical Education Research Centers (TERC)*

Donna Curry is a senior professional development specialist at TERC, a nonprofit organization focused on math, science, and technology. She has almost 30 years of experience in adult education, including workplace, high school completion, and adult basic education. Curry has been involved in both national and state initiatives to develop and implement adult numeracy standards. She is presently Director of the Massachusetts SABES Professional Development Center for Mathematics and Adult Numeracy and oversees all mathematics and numeracy professional development for Massachusetts.

Alisa Belzer, *Associate Professor, Rutgers University*

Alisa Belzer has been teaching at Rutgers University since 1999. Her research areas of interest include professional development, policy implementation, literacy learning, and adult learner perspectives. Belzer is currently Co-Editor of the COABE journal, Program Coordinator of the M.Ed. program in Adult and Continuing Education, and former Director of the Ed.D. program. She typically presents at AERC, COABE, AAACE, and other adult education and adult literacy conferences. Her most recent 2015 publication appeared in the *Adult Education Quarterly*.

Cynthia Bell, *Numeracy Specialist, Literacy Assistance Center*

Cynthia Bell is a Numeracy Specialist at the Literacy Assistance Center. She develops curriculum and specializes in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS/CCRS) for mathematics.

Cynthia conducts numeracy workshops for Adult Basic Education & Out of School Youth instructors and trainings in implementing the standards for High School Equivalency (HSE) instructors. When she is not training she is coaching instructors in the best practices of teaching and learning mathematics. She has presented at international, national, state and regional conferences, and is an active board member of ANN (Adult Numeracy Network) and affiliate delegate of NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics).

David Rosen, *President, Newsome Associates*

David J. Rosen, Ed.D. was Executive Director of the Adult Literacy Resource Institute at the University of Massachusetts in Boston, from 1986 to 2003. As an independent consultant since 2003, he has provided education services to: Jobs For the Future, on competency based higher education; TERC, as an evaluator of the Massachusetts SABES adult basic education mathematics professional development center; and Essential Education, to develop an online guide to blended learning for adult educators. He is the moderator of two U.S. Department of Education-sponsored LINC communities of practice: Technology and Learning, and Program Management.

Daniel McGrath, *Branch Chief, Reporting and Dissemination Branch, Assessments Division, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education*

Daniel McGrath is the Branch Chief for International Activities at the National Center for Education Statistics, where he coordinates U.S. participation in international assessments and other studies, including PIAAC, PISA (the Program for International Student Assessment), TIMSS (the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study), PIRLS (the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study), and TALIS (the Teaching and Learning International Study). He has served as a Co-Chair of the PIAAC Board of Participating Countries since 2010. He was a Vice-Chair of the PISA Governing Board from 2007 to 2013.