

# THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES OF SCIENCES, ENGINEERING, AND MEDICINE

Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education  
Board on Science Education (BOSE)

## Committee on the Equity of PreK-12 STEM Education, Meeting #2

### Presenter Biographies

**BRONWYN BEVAN, Ph.D.**, is the Director of Research at The Wallace Foundation where she commissions studies in the areas of arts, youth development, and education leadership. She was previously at the University of Washington for four years and the Exploratorium for more than twenty. She has produced books on the topics of learning in out of school time settings (2012), research-practice partnerships (2018), and equity in museums (2021). Dr. Bevan's research examines how science learning can be organized to empower individuals and communities. She served on the National Academy of Sciences' *Committee on Out-of-School Time STEM Learning* and its *Committee to Assess NASA SMD's Science Activation Portfolio*. She is on the editorial board of *Science Education*. Dr. Bevan received a B.A. from Barnard College, Columbia University, and a Ph.D. in urban education from the Graduate Center, City University of New York.

**DANA N. THOMPSON DORSEY, Ph.D.**, is the David C. Anchin Endowed Chair in Education Innovation, Director of the David C. Anchin Center for the Advancement of Teaching, and an Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of South Florida. Her research and teaching focuses on education law and policy issues, as well as critical race studies. Specifically, Dr. Thompson Dorsey critically examines federal, state, and local education laws and policies, as well as PreK-20 school and university practices, and how they influence equity, access, and opportunities for historically minoritized students and communities. Her research focuses primarily on issues related to school segregation, school discipline and school-to-prison-pipeline, race-based admissions policies in higher education, school choice policies, as well as implicit bias and culturally responsive school policies and practices. Moreover, Dr. Thompson Dorsey designs and conducts professional development programming that addresses racial equity and culturally proficient policies and practices for school districts, corporations, and other organizations and governmental entities. She is published in numerous leading education journals, and she has received grant funding from the Spencer and Gates Foundations for her research. She is often interviewed on or quoted in national and local media outlets, including the New York Times and National Public Radio (NPR), where she is recognized as an expert on racial equity and education law and policy issues.

Prior to Dr. Thompson Dorsey's working in academia, she was a practicing attorney for two civil defense litigation law firms in Pittsburgh, PA, where her areas of concentration were employment discrimination and products liability. She also had a private practice focused on civil rights litigation. Dr. Thompson Dorsey received a Ph.D. in Education from the University of Pittsburgh School of Education and specialized in Social and Comparative Analysis in Education and Policy Studies. Additionally, she earned a J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, and a B.S. in Accounting from Lincoln University of Pennsylvania. Prior to her faculty and administrative appointments at the University of South Florida, Dr. Thompson

Dorsey was an Associate Professor and the Associate Director for the Center for Urban Education at the University of Pittsburgh. Moreover, Dr. Thompson Dorsey was an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a Senior Research Analyst for COSMOS Corporation, a research, evaluation and policy firm in the Washington, DC area, and a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Virginia.

**NIYONU FATIU, B.Sc.**, is the mother of three children. She began working as a Baltimore Algebra Project member in 2005 when she was in the 10th grade. Her work included math tutoring and student advocacy. Niyonu coordinated a successful city-wide organizing campaign in 2009 to oppose the construction of a \$100 million youth jail. After graduating from Morgan State University with a B.Sc. in Family Sciences, Niyonu worked as an assistant math teacher with the Algebra Project and as a one-to-one teacher and behavioral intervention specialist in Baltimore City Public Schools. Niyonu also facilitated an after-school program, the Urban Youth Initiative Project, where she taught African History and Culture. Niyonu is currently the Site Director for the Baltimore Algebra Project's National Science Foundation research project.

**JAY GILLEN, Ph.D.**, has taught and organized in and around Baltimore City Public Schools since 1987. In 1994, after a two-year organizing campaign, he became teacher-director of the new Stadium Middle School, the first community-controlled public school in Baltimore in many years. Working with graduates of the Stadium School, Gillen developed the peer-tutoring Baltimore Algebra Project (BAP) in 2001. Students working for the BAP as math literacy workers and student organizers have earned more than \$5,000,000 since then. In 2009, Gillen returned to full-time math teaching, co-teaching with BAP graduates to create near-peer learning communities for high-school students having trouble with math. In 2019 Gillen was named Teacher of the Year for the Maryland State Juvenile Services Education System. He is also the author of numerous articles and of two books, *Educating for Insurgency: The Roles of Young People in Schools of Poverty* and *The Power in the Room: Radical Education through Youth Organizing and Employment*. Currently he is Principal Investigator for *Youth-Directed Math Collaboratories and Mathematical Identity*, a 4-year, \$3 million research project on paid peer-teaching funded by the National Science Foundation.

**JON GRAY**, 20, from East Baltimore is currently lead organizer at the Baltimore Algebra Project. He is an Alum of Baltimore City Public Schools. Jon started organizing five years ago and hopes to take what he's learned to create concrete change.

**BRITNEY JONES** is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Connecticut where she studies Culturally Relevant Pedagogy/Culturally Relevant Science Teaching and educators' sociopolitical consciousness. She earned her B.A. in Education Studies and an M.A.T. in Elementary Education, both from Brown University. She taught and developed curriculum as a teacher/teacher leader in Brooklyn, NY for four years before pursuing her doctorate. Over the past few years Britney has facilitated workshops and professional development sessions for college students, teachers, school/district leaders as well as organizational leaders in the areas of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Social Justice Education.

**NICHOLE PINKARD, Ph.D.**, is an Associate Professor in the School of Education and Social Policy at Northwestern University and Faculty Director of the Office Community Education Partnerships. She is the founder of Digital Youth Network and L3, a social learning platform that connects youth's learning opportunities across the school, home, community, and beyond.

Through collaborations with city agencies (e.g. YOUmedia with the Chicago Public Library, and City of Learning with Mayors Rahm Emmanuel and Lori Lightfoot), Dr. Pinkard and DYN's work has ignited new models for reimagining, visualizing, and documenting learning across spaces through the creation of existence proofs in urban contexts.

Dr. Pinkard is the recipient of a 2010 Common Sense Media Award for Outstanding Commitment to Creativity and Youth, the Jan Hawkins Award for Early Career Contributions to Humanistic Research and Scholarship in Learning Technologies, an NSF Early CAREER Fellowship. She holds a B.S. in Computer Science from Stanford University, an M.S. in Computer Science from Northwestern University, and a Ph.D. in Learning Sciences from Northwestern University.

Her current scholarly interests include the design and use of pedagogical-based social networks and socio-technical systems to support community-level ecological models of learning.

**MICHAEL A. REBELL, LL.B.**, is an experienced litigator, administrator, researcher, and scholar in the field of education law. He is the executive director of the Center for Educational Equity and Professor of Law and Educational Practice at Teachers College, Columbia University. The Center seeks to promote equity and excellence in education and to overcome the gap in educational access and achievement between advantaged and disadvantaged students throughout the United States.

Previously, Mr. Rebell was the co-founder, executive director and counsel for the Campaign for Fiscal Equity. In *CFE v. State of New York*, the Court of Appeals, New York State's highest court, declared that all children are entitled under the state Constitution to the "opportunity for a sound basic education" and it ordered the State of New York to reform its education finance system to meet these constitutional requirements. Mr. Rebell is currently lead counsel for plaintiffs in *Cook v. McKee* (pending, U.S. Court of Appeals, First Circuit), a case that seeks to establish a right to an education adequate for capable citizenship under the U.S. Constitution.

Mr. Rebell is the author or co-author of six books, and dozens of articles on issues of law and education. Among his most recent works are *FLUNKING DEMOCRACY: SCHOOLS, COURTS AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION* (Univ of Chicago Press, 2018), *COURTS AND KIDS: PURSUING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY THROUGH THE STATE COURTS* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 2009) and *The Right to Comprehensive Educational Opportunity*, 47 *HARVARD CIVIL RIGHTS-CIVIL LIB. L. REV.* 49 (2012).

In addition to his research and litigation activities, Mr. Rebell is a frequent lecturer and consultant on education law. In the past, he has also taught at, Yale Law School, Harvard Law School, and Columbia Law School. Mr. Rebell is a graduate of Harvard College and Yale Law School.

**IVAN ROBERTS** is from East Baltimore. He is an Alum of Baltimore City Public Schools. As a youth organizer Ivan has been a part of the Baltimore Algebra Project since 2017. He currently attends Bowie State University studying business and is CEO/Founder of TOP 5IVE Clothing.

**L. VICTORY C. SWIFT, BA**, is the founder and Executive Director of Our Victorious City Inc. Our Victorious City Inc. (OVC) was created on April 7, 2017, to honor 19-year-old Victorious Swift who was brutally murdered on March 26, 2017, in Baltimore City. Victorious

Swift was a youth advocate and math tutor with the Baltimore Algebra Project. He was Co-Founder, Youth Organizing Chairman and Intern-to-the-President with the Afrikan Heritage Walkathon Inc. Fifteen of his nineteen years of life were dedicated to community organizing and outreach. Our Victorious City Inc. is the legacy of Victorious's life.

At 44 years old, seven children, three grandchildren and many years with low-income jobs, social services, and while homeschooling 5 children Victory enrolled into Douglass College for adult learning. Maintaining a 3.5 or above she earned a BA in Business Management. In 2002 Victory became the co-founder, Secretary and in 2007 the President of the Afrikan Heritage Walkathon Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The sole purpose of the AHWI was to hold annual fundraisers, then donating the funds to local, national, and international grassroots organizations who worked with youth of African descent. From 2012-2014 the AHWI established educational summer youth programs serving Baltimore City. In April 2017 the AHWI was renamed Our Victorious City Inc. in honor of Victory's youngest child Victorious who had devoted his life to community organizing, outreach, education, social justice, and fighting for the humanity in us all. Our Victorious City Inc. provides scholarships to Baltimore City High School Seniors in the areas of College (General Education, The Arts, Baltimore Design School Alumni, and Families of Homicide Victims) and Non-College (Entrepreneurial, Trade School, and Jump Start My Life scholarships). In 2021 with funding from the National Science Foundation, OVC extended partnership with the Baltimore Algebra Project (BAP) and the Young People's Project (YPP) as Community Power Coordinator, adding family, community, culture, and Ourstory to math organizing.

**SARAH WOULFIN, Ph.D.**, is an associate professor of Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of Texas at Austin who studies the relationship between education policy and equitable instruction.

Using lenses of organizational sociology and qualitative methods, Dr. Woulfin investigates pressing issues of district and school reform, including how to strengthen instructional coaching and how to develop the capacity of special education teachers. While analyzing institutional structures and organizational conditions within districts and schools, she focuses on leaders' and teachers' roles in policy implementation. Much of her work draws on the research-practice partnership approach to formulate relevant questions, engage with practitioners in substantive ways, and transform practice.

Dr. Woulfin's work has been published in American Journal of Education, Educational Administration Quarterly, Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, and Teaching and Teacher Education. Her research has been funded by the Spencer Foundation and Wallace Foundation. Dr. Woulfin is co-editor of Educational Researcher.

Prior to earning her Ph.D. in Education from UC Berkeley, Dr. Woulfin served as a kindergarten teacher and Reading First reading coach in East Palo Alto, CA.