

***Innovation in Early Childhood Development and K-12 Education***  
**Day One—Early Childhood Development**  
**October 23, 2018**

**Mary Brainerd, HealthPartners (retired)**



In 2017, Mary Brainerd retired as president and chief executive officer for Minnesota-based HealthPartners, the largest, consumer-governed, nonprofit health care organization in the nation. HealthPartners experienced record growth under her leadership and is often recognized as a national leader in the health care industry. Brainerd is one of the founding CEOs and the former chair of the Itasca Project, a group of 40 government, civic, and business leaders addressing the issues that impact long-term economic growth. She currently is the board chair for the Center for Economic Inclusion and serves on the boards of Minnesota Public Radio, Bush Foundation, Stryker, Inc., and Bremer Financial Corporation. Honors include being named one of the 100 Most Influential in Healthcare by *Modern Healthcare* and Executive of the Year by *Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal*, induction into the Twin Cities Business Hall of Fame, and the University of St. Thomas Award for Ethical Leadership. Brainerd

holds an M.A. in business administration from the University of St. Thomas, and a B.A. from the University of Minnesota.

**Judy Cameron, University of Pittsburgh**



Judy Cameron is a professor of psychiatry and the director of Pitt Science Outreach at the University of Pittsburgh. For ten years, she was a member of the MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Early Experience and Brain Development and she is currently a member of the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child and the Scientific Council for the Child Mind Institute. She has a well-established research program studying how life experiences shape brain development and lifelong brain plasticity, focusing on the impact of social stresses, exercise, and nutrition. Cameron is also a member of the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives, a nonprofit organization of neuroscientists committed to advancing public awareness of brain research in an accessible fashion. She is a program developer for *Working for Kids: Building Skills*, a “whole community approach” to facilitating healthy brain

development for children in the early years of life. Cameron holds a Ph.D. in physiology from the University of Arizona.

**Stephanie Carlson, University of Minnesota**



Stephanie Carlson is a Distinguished McKnight University Professor at the Institute of Child Development, University of Minnesota. She codirects the Carlson and Zelazo Lab, researching developmental social cognitive neuroscience with executive function. Carlson’s research has been featured in several media outlets, including *Time*, *The New York Times Magazine*, and *National Public Radio*. Carlson is a fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Association for Psychological Science. She is the cofounder and chief science officer at Reflection Sciences, Inc. Carlson has served as vice president of the Jean Piaget Society and as a member of the Human Capital and Economic Opportunity Global Working Group (University of Chicago) and the Frontiers of Innovation Pre-K Standards and Assessments Working Group (Harvard Center on the Developing Child and the National Governors Association). She is an advisor to Transforming Education, the Minnesota

Children’s Museum, Sesame Workshop, Playworks.org, Understood.org, and Bright Horizons Family Solutions. Carlson holds a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Oregon and a B.A. in psychology from Bucknell University.

## Andre Dukes, Northside Achievement Zone



Andre Dukes is the director of organizational learning and practice at the Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ) in Minneapolis. Family Academy provides parenting empowerment classes that give low-income parents the skills they need to put their kids on a path to college, beginning at birth. Andre has devoted his life to helping people recognize their inner strength and live to their fullest potential. He is the assistant pastor at Shiloh Temple International Ministries and has worked with city officials to reduce youth violence in North Minneapolis. He formerly served on the board of Ready 4K, currently serves on the board of Think Small, and was a member of the mayor of Minneapolis's Cradle to K Cabinet. Dukes holds a B.A. from the Minnesota Graduate School of Theology and has completed the certificate program in infant mental health and early childhood at the University of Minnesota Center for Early

Education Development.

## Barb Fabre, Indigenous Visioning



Barb Fabre has 30 years of experience working within tribal, state, national, and federal levels on tribal and early childhood issues that promote healthy development for all children. Fabre's experience in program development, creating early childhood systems and promoting collaborations with tribal communities has helped bring new opportunities for Indian Country. Fabre has received numerous honors for her work, such as the 2015 Nancy Latimer Award, 2015 Early Education Four-Star Leader-Parent Aware for School Readiness, 2014 Virginia McKnight Binger Award in Human Service, and the 2014 Becker County Recognition Award. Fabre testified before the 2014 U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on "Early Childhood Development and Education in Indian Country: Building a Foundation for Academic Success." Fabre holds a B.A. degree in psychology from Ashford University.

## Dale Farran, Vanderbilt University



Dale Clark Farran is emerita and a research professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning in Peabody College at Vanderbilt University; she is also director of the Peabody Research Institute. Farran has been involved in research and intervention for high-risk children and youth for all of her professional career. She has conducted research at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center in Chapel Hill, N.C., and the Kamehameha Schools Early Education Project in Hawaii. Farran is the editor of two books dealing with risk and poverty and the author of more than 80 journal articles and book chapters. Her recent research emphasis is on evaluating the effectiveness of alternative preschool experiences for preparing children from low-income families to transition successfully to school. Currently, she is directing an evaluation of the State of Tennessee's prekindergarten program, a longitudinal evaluation through high school of a mathematics pre-K program, an evaluation of the Pre-K Expansion Grant in Nashville and Memphis, and a partnership with the Metro Nashville Public School System to identify key quality classroom practices in pre-K. Farran holds a Ph.D. in education and child development from Bryn Mawr College and a B.A. in psychology from the University of North Carolina.

## Rob Grunewald, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis



Rob Grunewald is an economist with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. Grunewald conducts research on community development and regional economic issues. He co-authored “Early Childhood Development: Economic Development with a High Public Return” in 2003 and has written several subsequent articles on the economic and social impact of early learning. He frequently speaks to community and business leaders, policymakers, and media throughout the United States. Grunewald has served on boards and advisory committees for organizations involved with early childhood development, including Think Small: Leaders in Early Learning, First Children’s Finance, and the Minnesota Visiting Nurse Agency. He is also a past president of the Minnesota Economic Association. Grunewald holds a B.A. degree in economics and religion from St. Olaf College and an M.S. degree in applied economics from the University of Minnesota.

## Chris Herbst, Arizona State University



Chris M. Herbst is an associate professor in the School of Public Affairs and a faculty affiliate in the School of Social Work in the College of Public Service and Community Solutions at Arizona State University. He is also a research fellow at IZA (the Institute for the Study of Labor in Bonn, Germany), and a former visiting scholar in the School of Public Policy at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. Herbst’s research focuses on the evaluation of public policies within the U.S. social safety net. Specifically, he seeks to understand the ways in which redistributive tax and transfer programs affect the well-being of economically disadvantaged families. Current and previous projects have examined the impact of child care, welfare, and tax policy on low-skilled women’s employment and health trajectories as well as on children’s early cognitive and behavioral development. His research

has been published in the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, *Journal of Labor Economics*, *Journal of Public Economics*, *Journal of Urban Economics*, *Health Economics*, *Journal of Regional Science*, and *Children and Youth Services Review*, among other outlets. Herbst holds a Ph.D. in public policy from the University of Maryland, an M.P.P. in public policy from John Hopkins University, an M.S. in social work/policy from Columbia University, and a B.A. in psychology from Fairfield University.

## Ben Horowitz, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis



Ben Horowitz is a project manager with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. Horowitz researches, writes, and works on building social capital in the community development sector in the Federal Reserve’s Ninth District. Prior to joining the Federal Reserve, he worked with the Minnesota Budget Project, a nonprofit whose work informed state policymakers and other leaders on child care, health care, and tax policy. Before moving to Minnesota, Horowitz worked on affordable housing policy in New Jersey and in the labor movement in Arizona. Horowitz holds an M.P.A. in public administration from Princeton University and graduated from Arizona State University with a journalism degree.

## Neel Kashkari, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis



Neel Kashkari has been president and chief executive officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis since January 1, 2016. In this role, he serves on the Federal Open Market Committee, bringing the Ninth Federal Reserve District’s perspective to monetary policy discussions in Washington, D.C. In addition to his responsibilities as a monetary policymaker, Kashkari oversees all of the Bank’s operations and was instrumental in establishing the Minneapolis Fed’s Opportunity & Inclusive Growth Institute, whose mission is to improve the economic well-being of all Americans. Kashkari earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in mechanical engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He went on to become an aerospace engineer, developing technology for NASA missions. But he eventually turned to finance and public policy, earned his M.B.A. from the Wharton

School at the University of Pennsylvania, joined Goldman Sachs in San Francisco, and served in several senior positions at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, including overseeing the Troubled Asset Relief Program, or TARP, during the financial crisis. Before joining the Minneapolis Fed, Kashkari ran for governor of California in 2014 on a platform focused on economic opportunity.

## Katherine Magnuson, University of Wisconsin



Katherine Magnuson is a professor at the School of Social Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Magnuson’s research focuses on the well-being and development of economically disadvantaged children and their families. She examines how disparities in socioeconomic status (SES) affect children’s development, and how these effects may be altered by policies and programs, especially early childhood education programs. She also investigates how maternal education impacts child development. Specifically, Magnuson blends two streams of research that are often considered separately: (1) research on the influence of parents’ employment, income, and education, as well as welfare policies, on children’s well-being, with a special emphasis on the extent to which differences in SES across racial and ethnic groups explain disparities in children’s school performance; and (2) research on direct child

interventions, particularly early education, that may serve a compensatory role for disadvantaged children. Magnuson holds a Ph.D. in human development and social policy from Northwestern University and a B.A. in history and political science from Brown University.

## Scott McConnell, University of Minnesota



Scott McConnell is the University of Minnesota’s director of community engagement at the Center for Early Education & Development. In 2008–2009, he served as the Fesler-Lampert chair in Urban and Regional Affairs and also devotes time to the University’s Northside Initiative in Minneapolis. McConnell’s teaching interests focus on the application of behavioral assessment and intervention planning techniques in school psychology, especially in early education and preventive intervention for academic and social problems. His research focuses on children’s development of the necessary skills for social interaction and school adjustment, development of tools for measuring that development, studies with children exposed prenatally to drugs or alcohol, and design of intervention procedures. He has been part of a team that developed assessment tools and related resources known as *Individual Growth & Development Indicators* and *Get it, Got it, Go!* McConnell holds a Ph.D. and M.S. in educational psychology from the

University of Oregon and a B.S. in psychology from Portland State University.

## Hue Nguyen, Minnesota Department of Education



Hue Nguyen is assistant commissioner in the Minnesota Department of Education and oversees the divisions of State and Federal Government Relations and Early Learning. Prior to her appointment, Nguyen served as a special advisor to Governor Mark Dayton, a role in which she advised the governor on education, higher education, taxes, and state and local government issues. Prior to joining the Dayton administration, Nguyen worked as an intergovernmental relations representative at the League of Minnesota Cities. She also spent five years working for the Minnesota Senate as a committee administrator for the Senate Tax Committee, and as a senior leadership advisor for the Senate Majority Leader. Nguyen graduated from the University of Minnesota with degrees in political science and journalism.

## Art Rolnick, University of Minnesota



Arthur J. Rolnick is a senior fellow at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. Rolnick is working to advance multidisciplinary research on child development and social policy. He previously served at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis as a senior vice president and director of research and as an associate economist with the Federal Open Market Committee—the monetary policymaking body for the Federal Reserve System. Rolnick’s essays on public policy issues have gained national attention; his research interests include banking and financial economics, monetary policy, monetary history, the economics of federalism, and the economics of education. His work on early childhood development has garnered numerous awards, including those from the George Lucas Educational Foundation and the Minnesota Department of Health, both in 2007; he was also named 2005 Minnesotan of the Year by *Minnesota Monthly* magazine. Rolnick holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Minnesota and a master’s degree in economics and a bachelor’s degree in mathematics from Wayne State University.

## Aaron Sojourner, University of Minnesota



Aaron Sojourner is a labor economist and associate professor at the University of Minnesota’s Carlson School of Management. His research focuses on three areas: (1) effects of labor-market institutions on economic productivity and in politics, (2) policies to promote efficient and equitable development of human capital with a focus on early childhood and K-12 education systems, and (3) behavioral economic approaches to consumer financial decisions. *Economic Journal*, *Journal of Human Resources*, *Journal of Public Economics*, *Industrial and Labor Relations Review (ILRR)*, and *Industrial Relations* have published his work and he serves on the *ILRR* international editorial board. He took leave for the 2016–2017 academic year and spent it in Washington, D.C., serving as senior economist for labor at the U.S. President’s Council of Economic Advisers for Presidents Obama and Trump. He also served as a member of the Human Capital Research Collaborative’s steering committee; a director of Spring Bank, a community bank in the Bronx and Harlem, N.Y.; and a fellow in the U.S. Senate’s Labor Policy Office. He is a research fellow at IZA (the Institute for the Study of Labor in Bonn, Germany), the leading European labor-economics research institute. Sojourner holds a Ph.D. in economics from Northwestern University, an M.A. in public policy analysis from the University of Chicago, and a B.A. in history from Yale University.

### **Mina Thao, Way to Grow**



Mina Thao, a mother of four, was a stay-at-home mom for a number of years before deciding to change her life and the life of her family. In 2017, Thao went back to school to study to be a community health worker and a certified nursing assistant, knowing that her journey would set an example for her children and begin a new chapter in their lives. A former client of Way to Grow, an early childhood education nonprofit in Minneapolis, Thao and her family were visited by a Family Educator who helped encourage her to be involved in her children's education. She not only became involved in her children's schools, she became an active Parent Champion and advocate for education, speaking at Advocacy for Children Day at the State Capitol in March, testifying in front of the Minnesota legislature later that spring, and was awarded the Nancy Latimer Parent Champion Award in June. This past July, Thao was hired by Way to Grow and is now a Family Educator, dedicated to helping families and their children in our community.

### **Sheila Williams Ridge, University of Minnesota**



Sheila Williams Ridge is director of the Shirley G. Moore Lab School at the Institute of Child Development, University of Minnesota. Williams Ridge began her career in early childhood education as a business manager for a nature-based preschool program. She is passionate about encouraging and promoting nature-based and outdoor play and education for children and adults. Her research interests include the benefits of nature-based play, child-directed curriculum, and the effects of nature play in child and adolescent behavior. Williams Ridge is a certified trainer for the Minnesota Center for Professional Development, a facilitator for the National Association for the Education of Young Children Nature Interest Forum, a member of the Twin Cities Adventure Playground organization, program chair for the Nature-Based Preschool National Conference, a member of the Nature-Based Learning Research Network, an adjunct instructor at Hamline University teaching their nature education in early childhood course, and a member of the Natural Start Alliance board.