



2023 NCSL Youth Homelessness Fellows Program

Speaker Bios

Graduate Nashville Hotel

Saturn and Fort | Nashville, Tenn. | June 25-27, 2023

Sarah Berger Gonzalez is a senior policy analyst at Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. Her work focuses on building an evidence base and scalable policy solutions to address the social disparities and inequities facing youth at risk of experiencing homelessness and housing instability. Previously, Berger Gonzalez was a program manager at the Stanford Basic Income Lab where she led activities linking basic income pilots to policy. She was instrumental in building the first ever map of basic income-related experiments and creating and launching the Lab's interactive Research Visualization tool. Berger Gonzalez spent more than a decade at the World Bank as a social protection specialist developing integrated social protection systems to optimize the delivery of services with a human-centered approach. She also established and managed international income support programs to tackle the multi-dimensional elements of poverty through creative responses to the needs of the most disadvantaged communities in Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and Central Asia. Preceding her work at the World Bank, Berger Gonzalez was a Fulbright Scholar in Osorno, Chile working with the Indigenous population, the Mapuche Huilliche. She obtained her bachelor's degree in social sciences at Boston College and her master's degree in public policy from Georgetown University. Email: sgonzalez@chapinhall.org.

Judge Shelia Calloway serves the Juvenile Court Metropolitan Nashville & Davidson County. She was elected Juvenile Court Judge in 2014. She also serves as an adjunct professor at Vanderbilt University Law School, Belmont Law School and American Baptist College. After graduating, she worked at the Metro Public Defender's Office in the adult and juvenile systems. In 2004, she was appointed to Juvenile Court Magistrate. Judge Calloway is currently a member of the Napier-Looby Bar Association, the Nashville Bar Association and the Disproportionate Minority Local Task Force. She is also an active member of the Nashville community and serves on The Pencil Foundation Board and the Homework Hotline Board. In addition, she has held numerous advisory and chair positions with several organizations. Judge Calloway is a member of the Temple Church. At Temple, she is an active member of the Music Ministry and Women's Ministry and a regular volunteer at the Second Harvest Food Bank. She holds a bachelor's degree in communications and a law degree from Vanderbilt University. Email: sheilacalloway@jnsnashville.gov.

Barbara Duffield is executive director of SchoolHouse Connection. For more than 20 years, she has bridged policy and practice in early care, education, housing and homelessness. Previously, she served as the director of policy and programs at the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. In this role, she helped establish and develop the NAEHCY Scholarship Program, a comprehensive scholarship program for youth who have experienced homelessness and wish to pursue higher education. She has also served as the



director of education for the National Coalition for the Homeless and began her career as a tutor for children experiencing homelessness in Washington D.C. Her academic work can be found in Educational Studies, Early Childhood Research Quarterly, and Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services. She received her bachelor's degree summa cum laude in political science from the University of Michigan. Email: barbara@schoolhouseconnection.org.

Anne Farrell, Ph.D., is the director of research at Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. She serves a critical role in keeping Chapin Hall at the forefront of policy research, fostering innovative, rigorous and actionable studies. Farrell's career began as a frontline worker conducting home visits in early intervention and child welfare programs situated in a healthcare organization. Formerly a tenured professor and director of a research center at the University of Connecticut, she conducts research and policy analysis on housing, child welfare, cross-systems collaborations, family-centered supports and family and community resilience. Farrell has been principal investigator on projects ranging from community evaluations to randomized studies and large scale federally funded projects. She speaks frequently on the topic of housing, has authored peer-reviewed publications, and serves on the editorial boards of multiple scholarly journals. She is the past chair of the Family Policy Section of the National Council on Family Relations and the editor-in-chief of the Journal of Child and Family Studies. Farrell received a Ph.D. in clinical and school psychology from Hofstra University, a master's degree in psychology with distinction from Hofstra University and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Fairfield University. Email: afarrell@chapinhall.org.

Karri Gornick is vice president of crisis to housing at Oasis Center in Nashville, where she is focused on developing and implementing a rapid rehousing program. In recent years, she has led all programming within the center's crisis department continuum, which serves over 400 youths per year. She has spent her career working to end homelessness and break cycles of poverty. Her experience includes providing direct services to individuals experiencing homelessness in Detroit and Nashville and coordinating street outreach efforts while working with local officials and businesses to address the needs of those living on the streets in downtown Washington, DC. While working in New York City, Gornick managed a network of 10 family shelters, serving over 1,000 families. Prior to that, she was a leader in Nashville's Metro Homeless Impact Division, helping to create a coordinated entry process. Email: kgornick@oasiscenter.org.

Fiona Herman is a rising sophomore student at Berea College in Kentucky, as well as a Metro Nashville Public Schools graduate from Martin Luther King Jr. Magnet High School. During the summer of 2023-2024, they are interning at the HERO program in Nashville, on their way toward degrees in Child & Family Studies and Psychology. They hope to eventually become a social worker and then a manager. In high school, they successfully started and managed a peer-tutoring program. Furthermore, at college, they achieved dean's list for



both semesters of their first year, became president of their residence hall, and have been elected as co-president of their college's government student association for the following academic year. They have an adorable 5-year-old poodle named Harry who thinks the world is made to pet him.

Catherine Knowles is director of special populations services at Metro Nashville Public Schools. She has led the Homeless Education of Metro Nashville Public Schools in Nashville for 25 years. During that time, the HERO Program for Families in Transition has grown from serving 200 students a year to nearly 4,000. Knowles was recognized in 2019 as The Homeless Liaison of the Year by the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. She currently serves on three statewide councils under appointments from the governor as a service provider representing the concerns of families who are experiencing homelessness. She is a member of the Metropolitan Nashville Homelessness Planning Council and vice president of Unicycle—a nonprofit organization that provides gently used clothing to students in school district. As a Nashville native, Knowles is deeply committed to improving resources and services for those in the community who have been displaced by the city's growth. Email: catherine.knowles@mnps.org.

Melissa Merrick, Ph.D., is president and CEO of Prevent Child Abuse America, the nation's oldest and largest nonprofit organization dedicated to the primary prevention of child abuse and neglect. She has more than 20 years of clinical, research and leadership experience related to preventing child abuse and neglect. Previously, Merrick was a senior epidemiologist at the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Merrick uses her clinical and research experiences to communicate and disseminate the critical public health importance of preventing early adversity to key stakeholders with diverse priorities, backgrounds and knowledge, including legislators, business and civic leaders, and members of the academic and medical communities. Merrick received her bachelor's degree in psychology, magna cum laude, from the University of Pennsylvania, and her master's and doctoral degrees in clinical psychology from the San Diego State University/University of California, San Diego, joint doctoral program in clinical psychology, where she served as a program coordinator for the San Diego site of the Longitudinal Studies on Child Abuse and Neglect consortium. Email: mmerrick@preventchildabuse.org.

Rodd Monts is director of state policy at SchoolHouse Connection. He has more than 15 years of advocacy, organizing, public policy and coalition building experience. His work spans many social justice issues, including education, juvenile justice, immigrants' rights, reducing mass incarceration, police reform, voting rights and LGBT equality. Rodd's work in Michigan contributed to the passage of the Detroit Community Input Over Government Surveillance ordinance, Public Acts 383-397, groundbreaking pretrial reform legislation, Public Acts 360-366 of 2016 (the "Rethink Discipline Act") and eliminating zero tolerance discipline in the state's public schools. He has a bachelor's degree from Grand Valley State University and master's degrees from Wayne State University and Marygrove College. Email: rodd@schoolhouseconnection.org.



Kelly Russo is the director of the American Bar Association Commission on Homelessness & Poverty in Washington, D.C. She coordinates policy development and programming related to the legal needs of people experiencing homelessness and poverty, and she collaborates with national, state and local advocacy groups, associations and government agencies to provide technical assistance and address issues related to homelessness and poverty. She leads the ABA Homeless Youth Legal Network, a national network that provides information and fosters collaboration to help attorneys and providers address gaps in legal services for homeless youth. She is licensed to practice law in Florida and Washington, DC. She graduated from Wake Forest University School of Law with a J.D. and from Wake Forest University with a B.A. Email: Kelly.Russo@americanbar.org.

Joe N. Savage, Jr., Ph.D., is senior regional advisor for the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. Savage is a recognized leader with over 25 years of experience in the fields of homelessness, social policy, economic development and human services administration. His prior work experience encompasses positions in which he was responsible for overseeing transitional and permanent supportive housing programs, Continuum of Care funding, strategic planning and coalition building. His passion for this work has cultivated years of skills and expertise that have helped bring over \$150 million of funding to support housing and services for the homeless and community development projects. His commitment to this work is rooted in his belief in the dignity of human life. Savage holds bachelor's degrees in neuroscience and religious studies from the University of Pennsylvania. He received master's degrees in social work and urban planning from the University of Pennsylvania, a master's degree in legal studies from Washington University in St. Louis School of Law, and a Ph.D. in Urban Affairs and Public Policy from the University of Delaware. Additionally, Savage has an executive certificate in Public Policy from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Email: joe.savage@usich.gov.

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