

2024 CCOG EDUCATORS SUMMIT @The Beach



ROOTED IN RESILIENCE: CULTIVATING EDUCATOR COURAGE AND CARE



FRIDAY, JULY 26TH



9:00AM - 1:00 PM



UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION BALLROOM



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
LONG BEACH
College of Education

CCOG EDUCATORS SUMMIT AGENDA

USU BALLROOM
FOYER

8:00-8:45AM

CHECK-IN

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

USU BALLROOM

9:00-9:30AM

WELCOME

EDTALK: BRIDGETTE DONALD-BLUE

9:30-10:15AM

STUDENT PANEL MODERATED BY
SOVEY LONG-LATTERI

USU CLASSROOMS

10:30-11:15AM

BREAKOUT SESSION 1

11:30AM-12:15PM

BREAKOUT SESSION 2

USU BALLROOM

12:30PM-1:00 PM

EDTALK: MARLENE CARTER

CLOSING REMARKS

USU COURTYARD

1:00PM-1:30 PM

LUNCH



CENTER TO CLOSE
THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

CSU The California State University

EDTALK SPEAKER

BRIDGETTE DONALD-BLUE 2023 CA Teacher of the Year



Bridgette Donald-Blue is a teacher through and through! She is a native of Miami, Florida and is a graduate of Howard University. Her original plan was to become a lawyer, but a chance encounter with the Teach for America organization during her senior year set her on a new path. Investing well beyond the two-year commitment required for Teach for America, today, Bridgette has over 30 years of teaching experience. She holds a Master's degree in Educational Administration from Cal State University Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) and has been a National Board Certified Teacher since 2004. She served as an adjunct professor at UCLA in the Center X National Board for Certification and CSUDH in the teacher credentialing program. When she's not teaching, Bridgette is also an avid supporter and volunteer for The Girls Scouts of America. In 2022, Bridgette became Los Angeles County Teacher of the Year and LAUSD Teacher of the Year. In 2023, Bridgette became a 2023 California Teacher of the Year. In July of 2023 Bridgette received a call from Sony Studios asking her to come audition to fill in for the incomparable Vanna White for a week on Wheel of Fortune. Bridgette and her "Letters from Mrs. Blue" week with the puzzle board that aired October 2-6, 2023 caught national attention from Today with Hoda & Jenna, Michael Stahand, and ABC World News. Bridgette's experience with becoming a California Teacher of the Year and being on Wheel of Fortune inspired her to become a speaker and author by expanding her "Letters from Mrs. Blue" brand to educate teachers, parents, administrators and all who care about education. Visit www.LettersFromMrsBlue.com and follow Bridgette on Instagram @LettersFromMrsBlue to say hello and to keep in touch.



EDTALK SPEAKER

MARLENE CARTER

UCLA Writing Project



Marlene Carter is Co-Director of Professional Development for the UCLA Writing Project. She taught English at El Camino Real High School and Dorsey High School (her alma mater) in LAUSD. Marlene leads the UCLAWP's Improving Student Writing team and co-leads and co-designs study groups on race for teachers and schools in the Los Angeles area. In 2010, she received the Outstanding Teachers of America Award from the Carlston Family Foundation and now serves as Project Director for the Foundation's Teacher Leadership Academy. She has presented at the UCLAWP's With Different Eyes Conference and most recently at the Center to Close the Opportunity Gap Summit. Publications include "Helping African American Males Reach Their Academic Potential" in *Going Public with Our Teaching: An Anthology of Practice* (2005) and "The Best of Both Worlds" in *Beyond Heroes and Holidays: A Practical Guide to K-12 Anti-Racist, Multicultural Education and Staff Development* (1998). She believes that every student deserves to be taught by antiracist educators who love their students and know their subject.



**CENTER TO CLOSE
THE OPPORTUNITY GAP**

CSU The California State University

STUDENT PANEL

MODERATED BY
SOVEY LONG-LATTERI



Valerie Soto

- Cabrillo High School, LBUSD, Class of 2024
- Co-President of the Girls in Engineering, Mathematics & Science Club
- National Championship Drone Soccer team, The Flying Jags
- Chemical Engineering Major, CSULB

Jeremy Ramos

- B.A., Liberal Studies, CSULB, Class of 2024
- First Generation Mexican American
- Associate's Degree in Elementary Education/Teaching, Cerritos College
- HSBA PR Assistant/Banquet Director, LSU Vice President, Caminantes Co-Chair
- Student Trustee USU and SRWC (UREC) Board of Trustees Chair

Jessica King

- Creative Writing and World Literature (Double Major), CSULB, Class of 2025
- First-generation, AuDHD female student
- LIFE Project peer mentor; sole proprietor of The White Dove Poet; campus and community disability activist

Chimnazaekpere Nwala (Naza)

- Rising Junior; Ernest McBride Sr. High School, Health & Medical Pathway
- LBUSD, Class of 2026
- Class President (Two consecutive years)
- Chemistry Club President
- Vice-President of the Black Literary Society Chapter at McBride

Soraya Whaley

- Rising Senior, California Academy of Math & Sciences, Class of 2025
- Event commissioner for CAMS Black Student Alliance
- Student ambassador for the Black Literary Society, LBUSD
- Co-Captain for CAMS girls tennis team
- Intern at BuroHappold, an engineering firm focused on sustainability through architecture and community health

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Jose Rivas

USU Ballroom

Engage, Enable, Empower: UDL for All Students (Secondary Audience)

This session explores how Universal Design for Learning (UDL) can profoundly reshape classroom dynamics, fostering a genuinely inclusive environment where students are driven by intrinsic motivation rather than grades. Emphasizing collaboration and personal growth, participants will gain insights into the foundational principles and scientific rationale that underpin UDL's effectiveness. They will receive a detailed walkthrough of a typical day in my UDL classroom, covering everything from physical setup to instructional activities and multimedia integration. Through interactive activities, attendees will directly experience UDL principles in action. Moreover, the session will equip educators with practical UDL strategies that empower immediate implementation in their own classrooms. These strategies encompass designing activities that encourage student autonomy, facilitating inclusive discussions where all voices are heard, and fostering accessibility through student-driven learning objectives.

Jose Rivas served as one of the lead teachers for UDL implementation and instructional coaching at Lennox Academy under a LACOE program on UDL. He left the engineering field to teach high school physics and engineering. His contributions include multiple presentations at Infiniscope and the Above and Beyond Teacher Leadership Academy, emphasizing the pivotal role of UDL in educational settings. In partnership with Teach Plus as an Emergent Bilingual Change Agent, Jose and his educator cohort developed a science literacy framework rooted in UDL principles. This framework aims to enhance student literacy in science and engineering through comprehensive instructional strategies supported by UDL theory and practice. He received the 2017 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science (PAEMST), the Shell Science Teaching Award in 2015, and the Northrop Excellence in Engineering Education Award in 2016.



BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Dr. Hulya Odabas and Jordan Vargas

USU 303

***Asset-Based Approaches in Culturally Responsive Education:
Unlocking Student Potential*** (PK-12 Audience)

This session explores the transformative power of asset-based frameworks in culturally responsive and sustaining education. This session highlights strategies for recognizing and leveraging the inherent strengths, cultural backgrounds, and unique abilities of students to foster an inclusive, empowering classroom environment. Collaborative discussions address overcoming challenges in shifting from a deficit to an asset-based perspective in diverse educational settings with practical implications of asset-based methods in creating culturally responsive and sustaining curricula. Facilitators will use interactive case studies to analyze classroom scenarios and identify opportunities to apply asset-based approaches.

Dr. Hulya Odabas brings a rich background in educational leadership to the conference. With a Doctor of Education from Concordia University, Irvine, where she explored the retention of college students in STEM majors, and a Master's in School Counseling, also from Concordia. Her professional journey includes roles as a high school teacher and school counselor in Title 1 schools, deepening her commitment to leveraging student and family strengths in diverse educational settings. Dr. Odabas's recent presentations, such as at the CCOG Summit and the Hawaii International Conference on Education, underscore her dedication to fostering resilience and persistence through informed educational practices.

Inspired by a family of educators, Jordan Vargas began his journey in education by completing a degree in Mathematics for Teachers in 2013 from Simpson University. Jordan served as an adjunct math professor at Simpson University while working through the Teaching Credential Program and earned a California Single-Subject Clear Credential for Mathematics in 2017. After teaching middle school and high school math in Santa Ana, Jordan joined Study Smart Tutors where he's served in an educational leadership capacity for over 5 years. Jordan retains a Master's of Science in Data Science and is passionate about learner accessibility, mathematics, computer science, and analytics.



BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Katy Tinsley

Alamitos Bay

Fostering Resilience: A Restorative Justice Community Building Circle

(PK-12 Audience)

This session provides participants the experience of a Restorative Justice Community Building Circle focused on building our own resilience and the resilience of youth. We will co-create a space for educators to share experiences and wisdom with one another. The presenter will share techniques to build resilience from the American Psychological Association (ie. mindfulness, connections) and participants will have the opportunity to experience some of these techniques as part of the presentation and Circle activities.

Katy Tinsley is a licensed Educational Psychologist for over 10 years, Restorative Justice Practitioner for 8 years, and Restorative Justice Coach in Long Beach Unified School District.

Julie Denmion

USU 304

School Culture & Climate: A Collaborative Conversation (PK-12 Audience)

This interactive presentation will provide participants time to collaborate, problem solve and share ideas with one another about school culture and climate and its profound impact on student learning. When given the opportunity to conduct mock school site walkthroughs, participants will be able to identify the physical, environmental and social factors impacting school culture and climate. Drawing upon my experiences as a veteran teacher, university supervisor, program administrator, and assistant principal, I will share insights and facilitate discussions regarding thriving school climate and culture and how administrators can effectively support their school staff with courage and care.

Julie Denmion is and educator with 30 years of experience. She currently serves as a middle school administrator with Irvine Unified School District. She started her career in Long Beach, where she taught for 20 years at the secondary level. She is a strong believer in equity-driven, trauma-informed and restorative practices. Julie is a lecturer at CSULB in the College of Education's Urban Dual Credential and Education Specialist programs.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Alexis Contreras

USU 305

Fostering Critical Minds in Young Learners: Sharing Our Narratives through Cultural Reads (Elementary Audience)

Let's tell the narratives of our community! This breakout session introduces the importance of inclusive read alouds in the classroom for K-6 learners. Through culturally representative children's books, this session demonstrates how to teach impactful lessons about identity and intersectionality at an elementary level. Likewise, the session demonstrates how to introduce concepts of critical media literacy so students may be more aware of what they are exposed to in movies, shows, books, and social media. Lastly, the session introduces a possible project-based learning activity that can be extended in numerous elementary classrooms.

Alexis Contreras is an instructional coach in LAUSD and doctoral student at CSULB. She worked in K-12 classrooms for the last 8 years and engaged with Project-Based learning for the last 5 years. She taught Ethnic Studies embedded curriculum to both 3rd and 4th graders and spear-headed an ethnic studies line at her school site for high school students. This involved her curating/teaching curricula for Ethnic Studies, Afro American Studies, Latin American Studies, International Relations, and Sociology.



BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Dr. Antoinette Linton

USU 306

Empowering STEM Literacy for Secondary Students: Bridging Gaps for Digital Natives and Real-World Problem Solving (Secondary Audience)

This discussion explores the identification of potential gaps in STEM literacy opportunities in secondary science teaching and learning. It highlights the tendency for teachers to design units of study for K-12 students that overlook their digital native skills and fail to address real-world problems relevant to families and communities. The research focuses on developing learning experiences that enable teachers to create units fostering K-12 students' habits of mind, supporting STEM literacy, college/career readiness, entrepreneurship, and the application of science to solve local problems.

Dr. Linton is an Associate Professor of Science Education at CSU Fullerton. As the Secondary Science Subject Area Coordinator at CSU Fullerton, she specializes in secondary science learning, epistemology of science, and conceptual frameworks for teaching and learning biology, chemistry, earth science, and physics. With a profound understanding of STEM education, she empowers educators to cultivate students' scientific knowledge and critical thinking skills across diverse disciplines.



BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Sovey Long-Latteri

Sunset Lounge

Helping Students with Extensive Support Needs Overcome Trauma Through Sensational Awareness (PK-12 Audience)

This session explores the intersection of trauma-informed education and sensory awareness strategies in supporting students with Extensive Support Needs (ESN). Trauma among students with ESN is often overlooked due to other needs and communication limitations. This session will teach sensory awareness techniques, including mindfulness practices, systematic sensory identification activities, and structured sensory environments to address trauma-related challenges. By enhancing students' sensory awareness, educators can cultivate environments that promote emotional regulation, selfawareness, and resilience.

Sovey Long-Latteri teaches students in ESN, ages 18-22 at Fullerton Joint Union High School district. She was named California Teacher of the Year in 2022 for her dedication to this vulnerable population. Sovey has earned her trauma-informed master certification and has been working to modify valuable strategies to be accessible and meaningful for all students.





CCOG Mission

The CSU Center to Close the Opportunity Gap is a state supported multi-campus initiative with regional networks that will collaboratively learn, work, and leverage opportunities across sectors, to support systemic change and advance PK-12 students' academic success.

Established at California State University Long Beach, and in partnership with San Diego State University, California State University Fullerton and San Jose State University, the Center will focus on identifying and refining proven strategies to eliminate equity gaps at all levels of education and will share resources, tools and evidence-based best practices with colleges of education across the CSU and education partners across California.

What We Do

Our goals are to

1. Strengthen professional preparation of educators-teachers, education specialists, and administrators;
2. Conduct original research in PK-12 school to identify valid, reliable, and sustainable teaching practices that impact the opportunities and achievement of PK-12 students;
3. Develop and disseminate tools and resources to implement these practices in PK-12 and educator preparation programs.

