

WEBINAR: Fostering Thriving Cities: City and Community Partnerships for Early Childhood Success Thursday, March 21, 2019
Thursday, March 21, 2019 | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EDT

PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

About the Webinar

An aligned and equitable system of early care and education is critical for ensuring that all children grow up healthy and thriving. Historically, a patchwork quilt of programs that serve young children and their families have developed independently from each other and the resulting fragmentation frequently impedes and limits their effectiveness. Aligning early care and education systems for young children can take a variety of forms and functions. What is essential is that city leaders and their community partners come together collaboratively to determine what early childhood alignment may look like in their community and how to achieve it.

In this webinar, the National League of Cities will share best practices and key elements from communities across the country on how community partners, elected officials and families came to partner for early childhood success.

Nancy Lim

Program Manager, Early Childhood Success, National League of Cities

Nancy Zuech Lim, MPH, CPH is a Program Manager for Early Childhood Success in the Institute for Youth, Education and Families at the National League of Cities. Nancy works with city leaders; manages and leads implementation efforts on grants and provides support to the program director.



Ms. Lim is a community health focused professional with Certification in Public Health and diverse training and experience in public health, nursing and accounting. Prior to joining NLC, she was the Executive Director of Community Health and Benefit for Saint Thomas Health, responsible for assisting the health system in its strategic planning, implementing, tracking and reporting of community benefit activities throughout Middle Tennessee. She worked with other non-profit and public-sector agencies to collaboratively assess and address the priority health needs of the community and facilitated local meetings related to community health. Ms. Lim served as a member of the Healthy Nashville Leadership Council 2013-2015 and as the Council chair during 2015.

She completed her Master of Public Health from the University of South Florida, Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Columbia University, and a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Ithaca College.

Tonja Rucker

Program Director, Early Childhood Success, National League of Cities

Tonja currently serves as the Program Director for Early Childhood Success in the Institute for Youth Education and Families at the National League of Cities. She is responsible for developing and overseeing implementation of the Institute's work plans and long-term strategies for early education. She conceptualizes and leads efforts to identify and document best practices and promising initiatives, oversees the implementation of TA, and contributes to the overall management of the Institute, including strategic planning, coordination of cross-program initiatives, and identification and cultivation of prospective funders.



Tonja works directly with mayors, city councilmembers, and other municipal officials in creating local systems of support for parents, children, and youth in their communities. By helping cities develop the necessary local infrastructure and providing concrete ideas and tools for policy and programmatic action, a significant number of cities and towns have positioned themselves as models for investing in children's healthy growth and development. Additionally, she works with senior city staff on forming effective local planning teams, assessing community needs, developing outcomes-based early care and education plans, and designing implementation strategies. Prior to joining the NLC team, Tonja served as Transition Coordinator for Baltimore City Head Start and as an Adjunct Professor at the University of Maryland College Park. She serves on a variety of boards and committees, supporting and advising national and local work for young children. She has a doctorate in Human Development from the University of Maryland College Park and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Spelman College.

Ronda Alexander (Moderator)

Director of Operations, Vital Village Network at Boston Medical Center

Ronda Alexander is a native Detroitter dedicated to working with communities to reach their desired goals by aligning and leveraging their resources. Ronda joins us from the United Way for Southeastern Michigan where she served as the Director of Corporate and Community Alignment on the organization's College and Career Pathways team. In her role at United Way Ronda worked to help external corporate partners find meaningful ways to engage with both students and educators; as well as worked across teams within the organization to align and leverage resources. Prior to joining United Way Ronda worked on the premier education initiative of Ford Motor Company Fund – Ford Next Generation (Ford NGL) for nine years. While at Ford Fund Ronda served a variety of roles including Professional Development/Technical Assistance Specialist and Program Manager for STEM initiatives. In all of her roles with Ford Fund Ronda worked with and supported multiple communities across the country as they worked to transform their communities through education. *Learn more about Vital Village at: <https://vitalvillage.org>*

