



Networks of
Opportunity for
Child Wellbeing
POWERED BY VITAL VILLAGE

WEBINAR: Community Engagement and Leadership: Centering Parents and Families

Thursday, May 2, 2019 | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EDT

PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

About the Webinar

Parents and families play pivotal roles in advancing equitable early childhood, education, and health systems change efforts that promote child wellbeing and prevent early life adversity. Sustainable solutions emerge when driven and led by the wisdom, voices, and experiences of those who are directly impacted by health inequities. Authentic, inclusive community engagement is an ongoing, long-term process that ensures meaningful leadership and co-design roles for community stakeholders and members at every stage of the process — from visioning, assessment, and planning, to decision making, leadership, and advocacy, to implementation and monitoring.

In this webinar, speakers from Reaching Our Sisters Everywhere and The Praxis Project will share their models and framework for community engagement and leadership. Speakers will lift up promising practices, reflections, and lessons learned as they engage in these strategies in partnership with communities across the country.

Andrea Serrano

Program Director, Reaching Our Sisters Everywhere (ROSE)

Andrea Serano, CLC, IBCLC, work in breastfeeding advocacy stems from her passion for addressing maternal and infant health issues, especially among communities of color. Breastfeeding is a preventative strategy for combating infant mortality and the health disparities that disproportionately affect African American families. Ms. Serano is originally from North Hollywood CA. She attended Mount St. Mary's College with a major in Healthcare Policy and minor in Business Administration. During her course of studies, she participated in the Transforming Communities and Public Policy-Washington Semester Program at American University and interned at the U.S. Department of Health and Humans Services in the Office on Women's Health.



In 2012, Andrea assisted in the coordination of Reaching Our Sisters Everywhere (ROSE) first breastfeeding summit titled, "Reclaiming an African American Tradition". Following the summit, she relocated to Atlanta, Georgia and currently serves as ROSE Program Director. In her role, Andrea serves on the coordinating team for ROSE events, trainings, and program related activities.

In addition, Ms. Serano is a Co-Founder and Treasurer for National Association of Professional and Peer Lactation Supporters of Color (NAPPLSC), board member for the Georgia Breastfeeding Coalition, and board member representative for the United States Breastfeeding Committee (USBC). Andrea also



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serves as a member of the Center for Social Inclusion (CSI) National 2016 First Food Racial Equity cohort, where she co-facilitates trainings for communities and organizations.

Xavier Morales

Executive Director, The Praxis Project

Xavier Morales, Ph.D., MRP, is the executive director of Praxis Project, a national organization dedicated to supporting communities building power for health. Xavier is a longtime advocate for community-driven initiatives to achieve health equity and environmental justice. Taking an expansive view of what constitutes good health and community wellness, he works in partnership to enable opportunities across the social determinants of health.



Xavier currently serves on the board of the Urban Peace Initiative, and was until recently, the Chair of City of Berkeley sugar sweetened beverage tax expert panel. Xavier often provides testimony in legislative arenas and is a frequent speaker at health conferences and health justice gatherings. Xavier, a former Peace Corps volunteer (Hungary), is originally from Sanger, California and studied environmental sciences at the University of California, Berkeley and city and regional planning at Cornell University.

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>*

