



Beyond the GED: Can Adult Charters Help Close the Skills Gap?

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BIOGRAPHIES

Terry Salinger

Institute Fellow, Workforce and Lifelong Learning Program, AIR



Terry Salinger is an AIR Institute Fellow and chief scientist for literacy research at AIR. For over 15 years at AIR, she has conducted research that has focused on interventions for struggling readers of all ages, teacher professional knowledge of instructional practice in reading, and measurement of literacy skills through both standardized and informal assessments.

Her current responsibilities at AIR include serving as project director on an i3-funded evaluation of the Children's Literacy Initiative and on an Institute of Education Sciences-funded grant to produce a battery of items to measure in-service teachers' professional knowledge related to successful early reading instruction. She also leads a project funded by a large retailer that is investigating different models to improve reading instruction in urban schools.

Prior to joining AIR in 1997, Dr. Salinger's professional experiences included serving as the director of research at the International Reading Association, leading the development of tests within the NTE/PRAXIS series and conducting research on classroom-based assessment approaches at Educational Testing Service, and teaching graduate and undergraduate courses



in early childhood education and reading instruction and theory as a faculty member at the University of Texas at El Paso and the University of Cincinnati. She began her career with ten years of experience as a New York City public school teacher, during which time she also did clinical intervention with adult struggling readers.

Kavitha Cardoza

Special Correspondent, WAMU



Kavitha Cardoza reports on Washington, D.C.-area news, with a special focus on children, education and poverty. She is the host of the documentary series, *Breaking Ground*

(breakingground.wamu.org). The first documentary, "America's Dropouts," looks at the 30 million dropouts in the U.S. and the hundreds of thousands who return to the classroom every year as adults.

Cardoza has won numerous awards for her work. In 2012 she received the regional Edward R. Murrow Award for Hard News. That same year, her five-part series on childhood obesity won first place in the Series category in the National Awards for Education Reporting and recognition from the Chesapeake Associated Press Broadcasters Association.

Cardoza joined the station in 2008, and was previously the Springfield bureau chief for WUIS in Illinois. She was also an adjunct faculty member for the university's Department of Communication.

She holds graduate degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign and the Manipal Institute of Communication in India.

Kim R. Ford

Dean of Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning, University of the District of Columbia Community College



Kim R. Ford is the Dean of Workforce Development and Lifelong Learning at the University of the District of Columbia Community College (UDC-CC). She provides leadership and direction for all programs related to and associated with workforce development, career and technical education, and continuing education. Ford previously served as the Director of College Readiness and Community Outreach at UDC-CC. In that role she established the CARE Program (College Access and Readiness for Everyone), which serves more than 1,000 students in D.C. public and public charter high schools. The program helps students get college ready through early testing, conducting interventions for students who do not test college ready, and offering a dual enrollment program where students take college courses at the Community College.

Prior to joining UDC-CC, Ford served in the Obama Administration's Recovery Implementation Office, which was responsible for implementing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. While at the White House, she also coordinated the neighborhood revitalization initiative for the Department of Homeland Security headquarters consolidation at Saint Elizabeths. She led a working group that focused on three key areas: ensuring that residents have access to employment and contracting opportunities, developing homeland security academies in the neighboring middle and high schools, and developing the traditionally under-served area into a vibrant part of the city.

Ford holds a B.S. in international business from Vanderbilt University and a master's in public administration from the University of Pennsylvania.

Leicester Johnson

Executive Director, Academy of Hope



A native of Birmingham, Alabama, Leicester holds a master's and an education specialist degree in transition special education and severe emotional disturbance from George Washington University.

Before joining Academy of Hope, Leicester managed the successful adult education and workforce development programs at Community Preservation and Development Corporation and created the career assessment and college resource center in partnership with the George Washington University graduate training program in vocational evaluation.

A committed educator and advocate, Leicester has a broad range of experiences in education and workforce development. She spent five years as a special education support teacher in Fairfax County Public Schools and has worked as a case manager and job-placement specialist for people with disabilities. Leicester is the recipient of the 2003 Dick Omang Best Practices Award for vocational evaluation, and she served as a Department of Education Institute for Rehabilitation Issues Scholar from 2004 to 2005, during which time she contributed to two chapters in the IRI publication on vocational evaluation. She is also the recipient of the 2011 Meyer Exponent Award for excellence in nonprofit management.

Allison R. Kokkoros,

Executive Vice President, Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School



Allison R. Kokkoros has worked and volunteered in nonprofit organizations for the past 20 years and has a passion for education and immigrant integration.

As Executive Vice President, Kokkoros is responsible for strategic corporate, nonprofit, and higher education partnerships; oversight of school accountability and marketing; and expansion planning and new school leader development. In her previous role as the school's principal, she oversaw the comprehensive educational programs and support services provided to more than 2,500 adult students each year.

She has a master's in business administration with a focus in nonprofit management from George Washington University and a bachelor's degree in English with an education certification from Eastern Mennonite University. She has been honored with awards for her leadership including receiving the D.C. STARS Tribute Most Outstanding Adult Principal award in 2011 and the D.C. Learn Mike Fox Literacy Leader award in 2005.

Kokkoros presents at national and international conferences on topics including school leadership, charter school development, and adult education and workforce development. She holds positions on boards including the D.C. Public Charter School Association and the Carlos Rosario Educational Foundation. She just completed a six-year term as Commissioner of the Middle States Accreditation Association. Kokkoros is a proud wife and parent and a resident of Washington, D.C.