

AGENDA



Newark Kids Count Data Snapshot 2021

Thursday, June 24, 2021

9:30 am – 11 am

Zoom

9:30 am Welcome: Sara Thom, Chair, ACNJ Board of Trustees

Data Presentation: Newark KIDS COUNT 2021 Data Snapshot: College Students and COVID-19

Alana Vega, Kids Count Coordinator, ACNJ

Panel Discussion: Navigating the Pandemic--Newark's High School Graduates

Moderator: Kaleena Berryman, Director, Abbott Leadership Institute, Rutgers University-Newark

Panelists: Tatiana Arce-Rodrigues, [2019 graduate](#)
David Daughety, [2020 graduate](#)
Halimah Herbert, [2020 graduate](#)

Panel Discussion: Perspectives from Educators

Moderator: Bianka Douglas, member, ACNJ Board of Trustees

Panelists: Robert Clark, Chief Executive Officer, Newark Opportunity Youth Network
Roger León, Superintendent, Newark Public Schools
Sheronia Rogers, Asst. Dean, Center for PreCollege Programs, Rutgers University-Newark

Q&A: All Panelists

Closing Remarks: Cecilia Zalkind, President & CEO, ACNJ

Giving Every Child A Chance

35 Halsey Street, 2nd Floor, Newark, NJ 07102 • (973) 643-3876 • Fax (973) 643-9153 • advocates@acnj.org • www.acnj.org

Guest Speakers

MODERATORS



Kaleena K. Berryman is a social justice advocate, community organizer, author, mentor and program director committed to the empowerment of children, parents, women and people of color. With a commitment to leadership development, she has empowered Newark youth and parents to raise their voices and work collaboratively to create change within their schools, neighborhoods, and community.

Born and raised in Newark, New Jersey, Kaleena K. Berryman graduated with honors from Arts High School in 2000 as a Television Communications major. After being awarded a Presidential Scholarship to William Paterson University, Kaleena earned a B.A. in Communication in 2004, with a minor in African American and Caribbean Studies. In January 2011, she earned an M.A. in Public Administration from Rutgers University-Newark.

Currently, Kaleena is the Director for the Abbott Leadership Institute (ALI) at Rutgers University-Newark. ALI's mission is to teach education advocacy and family engagement skills to parents, educators, community leaders and students in Newark, New Jersey. ALI's Youth Media Symposium (YMS) develops youth leaders by inspiring high school students to use the power of their voices and the media to advocate for better schools.

In 2013, Kaleena founded Newark Circle of Sisters (NCOS), an organization of women in the city of Newark who provide service scholarships to Newark women at all stages in their advanced education pursuits. The NCOS Board hosts well attended events and meetings throughout the year in the spirit of sisterhood, support, celebration, service and scholarship.

Kaleena's most important job, however, is being a mother to Jharid Jr, born 16 weeks premature in 2012. Inspired by his early birth, five month NICU stay and cerebral palsy diagnosis, Kaleena is committed to spreading the importance of prematurity awareness. In 2016, Kaleena founded The Premie Parent's Club, Inc., which provides support services to mothers and fathers whose babies are currently in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in Newark.



Bianka Douglas is the Lead Human Resources Business Partner (HRBP) for Prudential's Group Insurance business

Most recently, Bianka was the Lead HRBP for the CFO and Global Finance community. She also spent many years as the Lead HRBP for Prudential's Actuarial, Risk Management and Chief Investment organization. In this role, she led Risk Management's Early Talent Development and Communications functions.

Bianka is a strategic, business-focused, outcomes-driven HR partner who strives to deeply understand the organization and the evolution of the business. She is a thought leader with influencing capability and a proven ability to develop new ways of working across a diverse talent pool. With high enthusiasm, she brings an innovative mindset and encourages others to optimize outcomes and performance.

Bianka has over 25 years of experience in HR and holds a B.A. in Business Management. She is a graduate of the Women Unlimited Leadership Development Program and is a certified Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Marshall Goldsmith Stakeholder Centered Coaching practitioner. She is also a member of the Conference Board Senior HR Business Partners Council and the McKinsey Black Executive Leadership Program.

For six years, Bianka served several terms as an elected public school board member where she was the Board President and Chair of the Personnel and Communications Committees. After relocating and having to step down from her school

board position, Bianka continued her passion for early childhood education and children by joining the Board of Trustees for Advocates for the Children of New Jersey (ACNJ).

Outside of work and volunteering, Bianka enjoys baking and quality time with her family, husband, three teenagers and spoiled cat and dog.

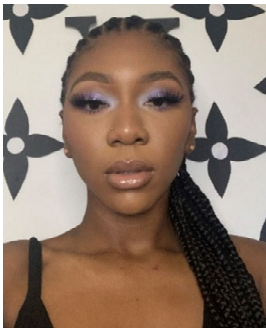
YOUTH PANELISTS



Tatiana Arce-Rodriguez
High School Class of 2019
EMT & Physical Therapy Aide



David Daughety
High School Class of 2020
Honors Learning Living Community Scholar, Rutgers-Newark
Speaker, Rutgers-Newark Student Government Senate



Halimah Herbert
High School Class of 2020
Makeup Artist, @theartistnamedha
Abbott Leadership Institute Youth Media Symposium Program Assistant

EDUCATION PANELISTS



Robert Clark has spent more than 25 years in the youth workforce development space, not only as a founder of and advocate for, but also as a product of these impactful programs. As a YouthBuild Boston graduate, Clark is the first graduate to launch a YouthBuild program in a major city - Newark, New Jersey. He has spent his career advocating for juvenile justice reform, re-entry programming and vocational training for opportunity youth. In 2016, Clark founded Newark Opportunity Youth Network (NOYN), New Jersey's leading advocate of opportunity youth with a body of replicable initiatives designed to address youth disconnection. His commitment to young people has shaped his service as a founding member of My Brother's Keeper Newark's Advisory Council and as a board member of the Newark Trust for Education and the Newark Workforce Development Board. Robert is a Boston native and holds a B.A. in Adult Training in Human Services from the University of Massachusetts.



Roger León was born in the city of Newark, grew up in the city of Newark, remains a proud product of the Newark Board of Education, dedicated 25 years of service to the children in the Newark Public Schools and still lives in Newark.

Mr. León attended Hawkins Street School from Kindergarten to 8th grade and graduated from Science High School. He earned his B.S. in Biological Sciences at Rutgers University and was determined to remain in Newark to teach and impact lives at both of his alma maters. For three years, he taught 5th grade at Hawkins Street School and was the Head Coach of the Science High School Debate Team for eight years. His classes won local competitions and his students demonstrated high academic growth. The debate team won local, state and national championships. The 8th Grade Algebra Pilot resulted in his move to Rafael Hernández Elementary School. Mr. León taught Algebra I to 8th graders for high school credit and provided intensive professional development in mathematics to Newark teachers across the district. The success of this project resulted in hundreds of 8th grade students earning high school credit in Algebra I, teachers earning dual certification in Mathematics and the district's highest elementary mathematics standardized test scores in years.

Mr. León earned his M.A. in Administration and Supervision from Montclair State University and subsequently served as a turnaround principal in Newark for ten years. Mr. León was the principal of Dr. William H. Horton School for four years and University High School of the Humanities for six years. Since Mr. León believes that every child is a genius, it was his responsibility to lead and work collaboratively with all stakeholders to improve both schools. With the Accelerated Schools Project model at Horton, he promoted data-driven instruction, built a strong culture of achievement and increased parent and community involvement. Student achievement increased, attendance improved and discipline referrals decreased. Under his leadership at University, the school implemented its own whole school reform model, which was a return to the school's original design; a school that is an engine of social change and social justice. As a result, the middle grades standardized test scores ranked #1 in New Jersey and the school became the top performing high school in the city, one of the top 75 high schools in the state and ranked one of the top high schools in the country.

Mr. León has served as the Assistant Superintendent in the Newark Public Schools for ten years. Mr. León's vision was to set high educational standards for everyone in every school and provide all of the necessary time and resources to effectuate change across the district. His mission was to improve the lives of our students and their families and strengthen the community. In this capacity, he supervised the school leadership team of the high schools and a network of elementary schools, served as the Deputy Chief Academic Officer in charge of Curriculum, Instruction and Student Support Services and directed administration responsibilities district-wide. This ten-year experience drove national, state and local education reforms where he led, co-led and implemented new standards from ESEA to NCLB to now, ESSA. The reforms influenced early childhood, special education, bilingual education and elementary and secondary education in the city of Newark. Mr. León spearheaded and organized major initiatives and community conversations influencing change throughout the entire district. During these ten years, Mr. León led and worked collaboratively with local and state agencies, higher education, foundations, private-public partners, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, elected officials, principals, teachers and staff, every central office department, community advocates, parents and students.

As a resident, student, teacher, principal and assistant superintendent in Newark, Mr. León has taught thousands and mentored hundreds. He has witnessed generational progress and has inspired outstanding leaders, doctors, social activists, teachers, principals, attorneys, scientists, authors, professors, innovators, business owners, artists and countless others who he has encouraged to remain in Newark, like he has.

Mr. León is passionate about education, passionate about Newark and passionate about progress.



Sheronia Rogers is a higher education and non-profit leader, technical assistance provider and trainer with more than 25 years of experience in program administration, youth development and organization development. In 2015, she joined the staff at Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) in the Office of University Community Partnerships (OUCP). Her work with OUCP focused on providing leadership and direction for the engagement and partnership activities of the Community Engagement Unit.

In 2017, the Office of the Chancellor commissioned her to lead Rutgers University-Newark's first University-Assisted Partnership with the city's Southward Community Schools Initiative and one of the local comprehensive high schools. She was charged with mobilizing and leveraging university resources to facilitate holistic supports and strategic alliances between the initiative, RU-N faculty and staff, students, families, corporate partners and community stakeholders.

In 2018, she concurrently joined the team of the RU-N Academic Foundations Center as the Assistant Dean of Operations and Engagement, responsible for pre-college programming, and community engagement for the city of Newark and the Greater Newark area.

Today, she is the newly appointed leader for the inaugural Center for PreCollege Programs, tasked with facilitating the support of college preparation and access for the precollege pipeline in Newark and the Greater Newark area. Her portfolio of programs includes multiple federal TRIO Talent Search and Upward Bound programs, two University-Assisted Partnerships with local high schools and several university youth development and college access programs, which include collaborations across Rutgers University and the state.

Prior to joining Rutgers University-Newark, she served as Vice President of Programs and Operations at the New York Urban League (NYUL). Leading NYUL's education, employment and capacity-building programs with a mission to improve educational, social and economic conditions and opportunities for African Americans and other underserved communities.

For a decade, she was Project Director of Youth & Faith Based Initiatives, acting as a champion for the Fund for the City of New York's mission of developing and assisting to implement innovations in policy, programs, practices and technology in order to advance the functioning of education, government and non-profit organizations in New York City and beyond.

She has worked nationally as a trainer and technical assistance provider for government, education, non-profit and faith-based constituencies in diverse areas of need. Her training and technical assistance areas of expertise include Youth Development, Employment and Workforce Development, Community Development Initiatives, Community and School Collaborations, Organizational & Management Development and Faith-Based Community Development Initiatives.

Sheronia attended Rutgers University for undergraduate studies, received her M.A. in Community Economic Development from Southern New Hampshire University with her father and is a National Urban League Emerging Leader. She is pursuing her doctoral studies in Education, Culture and Society at the Rutgers Graduate School of Education and a proud wife and mother of one son and a doggie-son.