

## Ending Family Homelessness: A Focus on the Entire Family

Monday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018  
The Lyceum, Hartford, CT

### Speaker Bios

**Jasmine Hayes**, *Deputy Director, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness*

Jasmine leads the Council's work to prevent and end youth and family homelessness. Over the past 15 years, Jasmine has worked with local and state leaders to strengthen child welfare practices. She led the planning, policy, and quality improvement divisions, along with the Resource Development Office, for the District of Columbia's child welfare agency, where she spearheaded the development of short-term and transitional housing resources for child welfare-involved families, increased access to permanent settings, and launched the Title IV-E waiver demonstration project. Jasmine has a Master of Social Work from the University of Toronto.

**Matthew Morton, Ph.D.**, *Research Fellow at Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago*

Dr. Matthew Morton is a Research Fellow at Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago with expertise in youth development, youth homelessness, evaluation, and evidence-based practice. Matt currently leads youth homelessness work at Chapin Hall and is principal investigator of Voices of Youth Count, the most comprehensive national research initiative to-date focused on building evidence to support action on ending youth homelessness. Matt served as a Special Advisor in the US Administration for Children and Families, during which time he was a key contributor to the development of the US Government's national strategy and framework to end youth homelessness and efforts on addressing child trauma. Prior to joining Chapin Hall, Matt worked internationally on youth, gender, and poverty policy and research as an Economist at the World Bank. Matt received his Masters and PhD in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation from the University of Oxford and a BA in Political Science from Stetson University.

**Monette Ferguson, Ed.D.**, *Director of Early Learning/ Chief Compliance Officer, ABCD Inc.*

Monette Ferguson, PhD, has worked in the non-profit sector for almost 15 years at Action for Bridgeport Community Development Inc. (ABCD-an urban community action agency). Monette began her non-profit leadership career as a Head Start family case-worker at this agency and quickly advanced to directing the Early Learning division. Dr. Ferguson has grown her leadership development over the years while writing grants, managing multi-million dollar budgets, and collaborating with community partners toward the common goal of ensuring quality early childhood experiences for all children while assisting families with breaking the cycle of poverty. She has participated in several State Department workgroups assisting in defining "school readiness" and creating standards for the Connecticut Early Childhood Teaching Credential. She is the Connecticut representative for the New England Head Start Association and has been honored locally as a strong advocate who fights for quality education for all in the early childhood space. Dr. Ferguson is also an Early Childhood Credential Reviewer for the State of Ct. and holds a BS from the University of Bridgeport, a MS in Criminal psychology from the University of New Haven and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Bridgeport.

**David Wilkinson, JD.**, *Commissioner of the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood*

David Wilkinson is the Commissioner of the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood. This cabinet-level state agency pioneers a family-centered, results-driven approach to support young children and families, particularly those who are overburdened and underserved. Integrating major early childhood programming formerly administered by five separate state agencies, OEC serves over 50,000 children each year through programs including child care, pre-K, home visiting, safety assurance, early intervention programming and parenting supports. Through this integrated approach and through innovative collaborations with other state agencies, OEC advances better-coordinated, more cost-effective, and higher impact services that yield measurable results for Connecticut's children and families. Commissioner Wilkinson serves as advisory faculty at the Yale Child Study Center. He is a graduate of the University of Virginia and Yale Law School.

**Kimberly Karanda, Ph.D., LCSW**, *Director, Statewide Services Division, Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services*

Dr. Karanda is the Director of DMHAS' Statewide Services Division which consists of a group of programs including (Housing and Homeless Services, Women and Children's Services, Project SAFE (Substance Abuse Family Evaluation),

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Acquired Brain Injury, Problem Gambling Services, Nursing Home Diversion and Transition, Mental Health Waiver, Senior Outreach and Engagement, and Special Education. She co-chairs the Women's Services Practice Improvement Collaborative (WSPIC) in partnership with the CT Women's Consortium. WSPIC focuses on improving behavioral health services for women and families on best practices in gender-responsive and trauma-informed programming. Over the past two years WSPIC has included a more defined focus on the intersection of housing stability and parenting/attachment for women and families affected by substance use disorders. Dr. Karanda is Connecticut's Women's Services Coordinator for the National Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) and is the co-chair of CT's Women and Opioids Workgroup. She has been appointed to a number of legislative committees that address women, children and families. Dr. Karanda has been a licensed clinician for over 25 years and has held clinical and administrative positions in community mental health settings in Virginia and Connecticut. Her longstanding professional and research interests include perinatal addiction, child welfare, and cultural competency.

**Kristina Stevens**, *Deputy Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Children and Families*

Kristina Stevens has been honored to work with children and families for over 25 years, having worked in the public and private sectors and various roles across organizations. She currently serves as the Deputy Commissioner of Operations for the CT Department of Children and Families overseeing the agency's work in community based mental health services, foster and adoptive care, child welfare initiatives, early childhood, health and wellness, centralized intake and education. Kristina's professional career started at The Institute of Living where she had the privilege of working with adolescents and their families in therapeutic and recreational programs. In 1995, following her work at the Institute, she began working as a Social Worker for DCF, holding various positions and developing a passion for facilitating and supporting the achievement of positive permanent outcomes for children and youth in care. In 2005, Kristina joined Casey Family Services/The Annie E. Casey Foundation, providing agency-based and national consultation and training on program development and child welfare issues and later serving as Division Director for one of the eight agency Divisions. Central to Kristina's work has been her passion for partnering with and learning from children, youth and families and continuing to build a responsive service system yielding improved outcomes.

**Steve DiLella**, *Director of the Individual and Family Support Program Unit, Connecticut Department of Housing*

Steve DiLella is the Director of the Individual and Family Support Program Unit at the Connecticut Department of Housing (DOH). Steve has been with the State working on ending homelessness for the past twelve years. During this timeframe, Steve has managed all state funded homeless service programs including homeless outreach, homeless diversion, emergency shelter, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing, as well as assisting in the creation of Connecticut's Coordinated Entry System. Connecticut has over 4000 units of permanent supportive housing and over \$3 million dollars of funding for rapid rehousing for homeless individuals and families. Within the 4000 units of permanent supportive housing are various special initiatives that target homeless individuals and families that are high cost users of institutional settings. Steve has also pushed the Connecticut homeless service system toward a housing first and low barrier model and has instituted harm reduction policies in all homeless programs. In addition to Steve's roles with DOH, he serves as the Co-Chair for the Connecticut Balance of State Continuum of Care, which has leveraged significant resources over the past ten years to create more permanent supportive housing units for the disabled homeless population.