



# EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

DEPARTMENT

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***"I ...remember seeing this teacher who just had a black board and that was all that she had, but she made learning come alive and I remember saying," I have to really add to this teacher."***

***- Dr. Hawani Negussie on Early Childhood Education Ethiopia***

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# A message from our Department Chair: "I Have Hope"



**Dr. Don Haviland**  
Department Chair

I write this message at a unique and challenging time in our nation. We are months into a pandemic and health crisis that shows few signs of abating. And we have been saddened, angered, and horrified by the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Rayshard Brooks, among too many others. These events and others have shone a bright light on our systems of racial inequality.

The other day, I started a thesis defense by calling it a moment to celebrate at a time when it feels like there is not much reason to do so. Still, while I may not feel much like celebrating, I do find that I have **hope**. For one, this is *truly* the first time in my life when I have heard people discussing and naming systemic racism outside of an academic article, a college classroom, or a faculty meeting. If we can see it and name, then perhaps we can address it.

And addressing it requires those of us in *education* to play a central role.

Here too I have hope, because I know who our students, alumni, and faculty are. This spring our students completed courses and defended dissertations and theses even as they served students at their schools, colleges, and universities in this incredibly stressful time. We congratulate all of our EDAD, SDHE, and EDD graduates – your accomplishment is all the more impressive in these difficult times!

Alumni have ensured schools were open for students who needed meals, handed out gift cards for food, and organized forums to stand against hate. And you can read about more amazing work by our alumni in this newsletter.

And, recently, I talked with students who are doubling-down on earning their graduate degree in such challenging times because they know we *must* change who is at the table when educational decisions are made.

Our faculty are committed to doing *all* we can to ensure that our curriculum, programs, and services do as much as possible to prepare educational leaders to develop equitable schools and systems that serve all students. You will be hearing more about these efforts in the future.

There is much work to be done. But, for all of these reasons, I have hope.

# Alumni Spotlight

## Dr. Rosa Heckenberg

*Augmented and established Student Success Center at the first USA Arkansas State University in Querétaro, Mexico*



Dr. Rosa Heckenberg in front the placard for the new Arkansas State University Querétaro

Dr. Rosa Heckenberg's (Cohort VII) dissertation focused on "The Perception of Campus Climate and Academic Experience of Undocumented Students in a Four-Year Public University". Since then, she has taken her research and applied it to inform her work when she established its first Student Success Center at the new campus of University of Arkansas in Querétaro, Mexico in 2017. During her year in Mexico, she developed a total of seven new programs that met the varying needs of the students. These programs included services such as tutoring, mentoring, seminars, and workshops that focused on study, communication and management/leadership skill building.

One of these programs - The Breach Program - offered a 'Tutoring in Residency' where incoming freshmen students created a community tutoring structure. The community tutoring structure highlighted Querétaro students and staff tutors working together in the comfort of their main hall of their dorms in the evenings after class. This type of community building and collaboration were very effective, demonstrated by 24 of the 25 student participants passing their semester courses. The whole program proved to be very successful in helping students transition into a university setting smoothly where they successfully completed the semester.

The transition from working at the University of Arkansas to working at the campus in Querétaro didn't come without challenges. On one hand, the program and position hold a special place in her heart as she explains, "I feel as a Mexican, that was born there, I always feel that I owe it to my country to share my education and knowledge that I have gained in this country through my education and job." On the other hand, she had to manage her work-life balance. Dr. Heckenberg mentioned that she missed her family back in California and had general feelings of homesickness. However, she was able to combat with constant communication with her family and visiting when time permitted. She adds that staying busy and living on campus in the staff housing helped ease feelings of homesickness.

Looking back, Dr. Heckenberg explained how meaningful the experience was to her. "I feel like it was the best experience that I have had in my professional career and education because of the leadership skills I expanded in a year and half, and the opportunities to develop programs." When reflecting on her time in the Educational Leadership Program, Dr. Heckenberg added, "I'm not sure that if I did not have the doctoral degree in leadership from ELLD, that I would have been able to do what I did in Mexico because I feel like the doctoral degree really prepared me." Since opening in 2017, the campus recently celebrated their first graduation in June. She adds, "I [continue] communicating with the students and my connection with the university will never end." After her return from Mexico, Dr. Heckenberg began serving as the Interim Director, of the Toro Learning & Testing Center at California State University, Dominguez Hills, where she manages a staff of 90 staff and 90 tutors.



Dr. Heckenburg in front of a new sign for inside of the campus.



Outside of the Main Campus Building



**Dr. Hawani Negussie**

Before Dr. Hawani Negussie founded Early Childhood Education Ethiopia, she was a doctoral student in Cohort V. Her research focused on examining how indigenous and cultural practices were being integrated in early childhood education programs in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Abeba. Since then, Dr. Negussie has taken that research and discussed expanding her work and skills on a larger and more meaningful scale. "I think this past year after the publication, [and presenting] on what has been going on in my country in terms of the numbers of children out of school, I just thought 'it might be the best time to start the organization.'"

Early Childhood Education Ethiopia's mission is to improve, advance, expand, and prioritize early childhood care and education in Ethiopia by supporting existing schools, creating new programs, partnering with institutions and implementing a PK-16 approach in the education system. Dr. Negussie explains, "Project Alpha is part of our Phase 1 project, where we use two existing schools to create programs and support existing curricular approaches and introduce supplemental ones. Because Ethiopia is spread out with most of the birth-8 population living outside major cities and towns, the organization has adopted a rural and urban early childhood program model using culture as the foundation for constructing the learning environment. Two programs have agreed to be the pilot programs, Debo Ethiopia- representing the rural and Fregenet Foundation- as the urban model."

Dr. Negussie stated, "One of the factors that really solidified my mood was every person on my board that I asked to join said yes." Those board members and advisors were all faculty members whom she studied under during her time as a student at CSULB. Dr. Charles Slater, Dr. Jyostna Pattnaik and Dr. Xin Li, directly impacted Dr. Negussie's adopting a PK-16 approach in Ethiopia. "Everyone on the board who has joined is someone who has contributed into the building of my idea, my ideals, and my philosophy on early childhood education."

Dr. Neguisse was able to begin a project like this by building a network in Ethiopia. "I held a seminar meeting that was attended by people in Ethiopia, some University personnel, [and] people that are involved in the Early Education programs in Ethiopia. I am also anchored into two organizations that have been doing work with preschool children; these programs have been around for 15 years." The seminar really opened the door to providing Early Childhood Education Ethiopia and her project was the platform that it needed.

*ni Negussie*

## Childhood Education Ethiopia



A powerful moment, where the seed was planted occurred in 2012 when she was researching for her dissertation. “I remember sitting in a preschool program [in Ethiopia], in this particular preschool program and they didn't have chairs or tables, typically what we have here, but I remember sitting there and looking at the environment and the children. We can think of a lot of negative things in terms of what children need and the deficits that exist. But I also remember seeing this teacher who just had a black board and that was all that she had, but she made learning come alive and I remember saying, ‘I have to really add to this teacher.’ ...The core of early childhood education and really the memory that it is founded on is really the people like her, [teachers that have] nothing but gives so much to children.” In that moment, she knew her dissertation study had to be more than just the paper form, it had to come to fruition.

Dr. Negussie's goal of transforming early childhood education in Ethiopia, began as a student at CSULB. She volunteered in working with underserved communities, teen mothers, abused, and neglected children. “Whether it was the masters or doctoral program, they gave us the range to look at how children are educated, not only locally but globally. In the doctoral program we had the flexibility to really map out what we wanted to study.” Along with that she mentions how there wasn't really any pressure to meet the need of a professor or to meet the need of research, but rather meet the need they've seen in their own practice. Dr. Negussie mentioned the ability of professors to motivate and really rally around you and say, “Yeah, go forth, do it, do that research, it is going to impact the universe.”

Looking back and reflecting on how the Educational Leadership Doctorate program helped prepare her for this task Dr. Negussie states, “I've said this before, I think CSULB is one of the best universities, in terms of making sure we understand the true problems in education. Whether it is Long Beach Unified, Los Angeles Unified, or the education system in the United States. It gives you a real chance of theory, practice, and understanding the issues of equity. For me what it provided was the lens to see the real problems, not just in theory but in practice.” It is evident that her approach in creating her non-profit organization and philosophy on education is rooted in her experiences at CSULB.

***If you would like to more learn about ECEE or donate, please visit  
<https://www.earlyeducationethiopia.org/>.***

# Doctors of Data



## DR. ERIKA KATO

Lecturer  
Educational Leadership  
Project Director  
Center for Evaluation and Educational Effectiveness

Dr. Erika Kato is a Project Director for the Center for Evaluation and Educational Effectiveness, and a lecturer in the Educational Leadership Department where she teaches research methods classes. Dr. Kato explains, "I really like being in the classroom, but I also really like research. I am the project director for our campus HSI-STEM Grant. A lot of my research interests are in equity in stem and representation in STEM. So, kind of just like the intersectionality of everything to women in STEM, underrepresented minorities in STEM, and just having more representation and more diverse STEM degrees and workforce."

Dr. Kato's story began with her love for math. Growing up, she knew she wanted to do something related to math and somewhere around high school she realized she really wanted to be a math teacher. "I really like teaching and tutoring." She taught pre-school and middle school Mathematics and really enjoyed it and loved being in the classroom. While in her Master's program, she realized how much she loved statistics and research. "It was not something I thought all my life I was going to do, but it was in that program that I realized I really liked it. So that's why I pursued a Ph.D. in Research Methods."

As a Ph.D student she served as a graduate student researcher for the UC Evaluation Center. While there, she worked for a few different evaluations' projects: some in math education, some in online instruction, and a few other projects. "I really enjoyed the evaluation work, I like the research and the statistics behind it, as well as using data to help inform programs. So, after I finished my Ph.D. program, I worked in Institutional research at the CSU Chancellor's office and while I was there, I collaborated with the HSI-STEM System Wide Project with Dr. Avery Olson and Dr. Don Haviland. Then a position opened up because the campus got a big HSI-STEM project, and they really needed a project director so I had some conversations with Dr. Haviland and Dr. Olson and was offered the position."

Dr.Kato grew up in Hawaii and attended Hawaii Pacific University. There she received her Bachelor's in Math, as well as a Master's of Education in Secondary Education and a credential. She obtained her Ph.D. at UC Santa Barbara.

## DR. ALLAN TAING

Lecturer  
Educational Leadership  
Project Director  
Center for Evaluation and Educational Effectiveness



Dr. Allan Taing is a lecturer in the Educational Leadership Department and Project Leader for the Center for Evaluation and Educational Effective. In CEEE, he serves as the Associate Director where he provides leadership for overall operations of the center and supervises a talented group of project directors, graduate assistants, and administrative staff to ensure that CEEE can provide rigorous and constructive program evaluations for their clients. He also serves as the program evaluator for the HSI Caminos Project, providing him the opportunity to wear many different hats.

He was born a year after his parents immigrated to the United States from Cambodia. They settled in Long Beach, which happens to have the largest concentration of people of Cambodian descent in the country. His mother worked as a seamstress, and his father worked as a waiter. Over time, they were able to save enough money to run their own restaurant. Growing up, he didn't have much of an idea of what he wanted to do, except that he didn't want any part of the business. "The idea of working 12 hours a day, six or seven days a week, didn't appeal to me. They didn't want that for me, either. While in college, I got involved as a peer academic advisor and wrote for the student newspaper. That is how I became interested in Student Affairs and Higher Education Administration. My entire professional career has been in higher education. I guess you can say that I went to college and never left."

He pursued a Doctorate in Quantitative Research Methods at the University of California, Riverside because he has always loved numbers and wanted that formal academic training. He states that, "To join the faculty at CSULB, and return to the city of Long Beach, has been extremely gratifying." Dr. Taing has worked in all three sectors of California public higher education (CSUs, UCs, and Community College) in a variety of staff, faculty, and management roles before coming to CSULB. He's served as a public information officer, academic advisor, institutional research analyst, and data manager. In these administrative roles, he began to miss being in the classroom, so he also taught as an adjunct statistics instructor.

When he worked at the CSU Chancellor's Office, he was affiliated with the Chancellor's Doctoral Incentive Program. Since CDIP was nearing its 30th anniversary, they decided to hire CEEE to conduct an evaluation. That's how he was introduced to Dr. Avery Olson and all the interesting work in CEEE. When a faculty position opened up in the Educational Leadership Department, Dr. Taing was immediately interested. The position allowed him to both teach and work on research and evaluation projects in CEEE. Now as a lecturer, Dr. Taing teaches courses in research design, quantitative methods, and institutional effectiveness. "I enjoy teaching, and I especially like working with students who are apprehensive about statistics and making the subject accessible to them." Dr. Taing also adds, "To think, my parents immigrated to the United States as refugees with literally nothing but the clothes on their backs, and then, in just one generation, their child can become a university educator in that same exact town, is just so inconceivable and extraordinary."

# Dissertation at Work



## Dr. Laura H. Manyweather

Reentry Success Pathway Coordinator at West LA College

&

Consultant at TetraCoreConsulting, LLC.

Dr. Laura H. Manyweather earned her terminal degree from California State University Long Beach Spring 2018. As a practitioner and scholar, Dr. Manyweather was able to transform her dissertation entitled: “Escaping the Prison Industrial Complex: The Shared Experiences of Formerly Incarcerated Black Male Students on a California Community College Campus” into practice. Recently, the California Community College Chancellor’s Office was granted \$5 million to distribute to community colleges who are operating or desire to develop a Reentry program on their campus. Reentry programs are designed to ease the transition from prison to society by offering formerly incarcerated individuals support navigating higher education, employment, and gaining a livable wage. Dr. Manyweather stepped forth and wrote a grant request for West Los Angeles College and was 1 of 54 colleges awarded out of 115 community colleges. She and Dr. Allison Tom-Muirra, Dean of Adult Education, at West L.A. College managed the re-entry grant.

At West Los Angeles College, Dr. Manyweather is responsible for outreach and recruitment for formerly incarcerated individuals who are interested in obtaining higher education. This includes working with halfway houses, transitional houses, and reentry communities-based organizations (CBO). From there she conducts orientations and helps enrolls the students into community colleges using California Community Colleges Apply (CCCApply). Laura explained, “I treat reentry and formerly incarcerated individuals with the same level of care and consideration I would with an international student. With international student’s people tend to be more patient, considerate, and kind. I use this same approach when working with Adult Learners.”

The West Los Angeles Reentry Success Pathway Program offers classes to help them transition from prison to higher education seamlessly. The students are offered noncredit classes in basic skills: Intro to Post Secondary, Academic Guidance, Computer Literacy for College, and Industry Overview & Career Opportunities. They offer noncredit courses intentionally so students come in and feel comfortable to learn without the penalty of being enrolled in a credit course. Dr. Manyweather mentions, “Based on my study, participants shared what it was like when they were released from prison. They were told to get a job or to take classes. However, they were not offered true guidance to help them apply to school and get acclimated to the college system. So, I took what I learned from my study, incorporated my model, and used the recommendations to develop this program at West L.A.”

While many formerly incarcerated students complete college courses while inside the prison system, they may not be accustomed to a college campus. The program gives them a tour as a chance to feel what it is like to be in a college setting while familiarizing themselves with the campus and resources. The tour is interactive and engaging by making the students participate in a whole group scavenger hunt where they must take a picture in front of the area and upload it. This experiential learning (EXL) activity involves learning by doing, experiencing, and reflecting. Dr. Manyweather explains: “In this activity, it shows them how to operate their phone, use computers, upload, and attach digital files, and how to work collaboratively in teams. This activity allows them to work with people collectively. This activity is powerful as it helps reentry students begin to socialize and practice better communicative skills. Dr. Manyweather claims, “In prison they are defensive, isolated, or in constant survival mode. So, by being in a group they are learning to trust again and tap into their emotional intelligence.” The last activity involves a reflective piece where students create a PowerPoint presentation on a career trajectory they are interested in and what it will take to enter the field.

After completing the program, students participate in a culmination ceremony to ritualize the achievements inside of the culture of the college and Reentry program. Dr. Manyweather and her colleagues encourage students by wearing their college regalia, so that they can see and envision themselves at graduation. As mentioned by Dr. Manyweather, “Even though completion of the four courses may seem like a small feat in the minds of those in higher education, to our students it is a huge accomplishment.” The program serves as a way for these students to complete general education courses to obtain their GED, go into the workforce, or stay at the community college and complete the requirements to obtain the Associate of Arts (AA) or transfer to the University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU) system.

In addition to her work with formerly incarcerated students, Dr. Manyweather has also partnered with Dr. Nicole Johnson, her sister, and co-founded TetraCore Consulting, LLC. TetraCore Consulting is a 100% certified woman owned small business based in Los Angeles that provides a suite of professional support services.



Graduates Javier Rodriguez from the Chancellor office and Issac Gonzales from Homeboy Industries



Cohort II Graduation

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