



# EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEPARTMENT

## Educational Leaders in the Community

### Ed.D alumni practicing servant leadership

**Many students that choose to take on the** challenging road that is the Ed.D program have a wide array of educational and career goals that push them onto this path. For many students, working in higher education in a teaching role may be the ideal career path. For others, it may be a counseling or administrative position. But some alumni of the program choose to venture off in non-traditional fields outside of the college environment. This is exactly what Dr. Alma Salazar and Dr. Farah Naz Khaleghi of Cohort I and Dr. Maria Williams-Slaughter of Cohort III have chosen to do. Using their doctoral degrees from the Ed.D program, these alumni have continued to be educational leaders by making a difference in their communities.

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Dr. Alma Salazar, Cohort I

# Outstanding Student Spotlight



## Melissa Mahoney

Outstanding Thesis, Student Development in Higher Education

**GRADUATE STUDENT MELISSA MAHONEY** of the SDHE program has been recognized for her outstanding thesis in the College of Education. Much of the research she conducted surrounding her thesis is rooted in the work that she does with the Center of Evaluation and Effectiveness (CEEE) involving Hispanic-serving institutions (HSI) and specifically how grants from the U.S. Department of Education are used to aid Hispanic and other low-income populations. Her research led to her discovering how under-represented African-American populations are in receiving similar types of grants in STEM-related fields and their absence in similar types of programs. Sparking her interest in understanding why this was the case, Melissa focused her thesis around what experiences face African-Americans in STEM fields, as well as highlighting some of the resources that allowed them to complete their degrees successfully.

In her research, Melissa interviewed 12 African-American alumni, 6 men and 6 women, who graduated in STEM-related fields from 2008 or later. These participants graduated from one of the 17 schools in the California State University system with the official HSI designation. Since the time of Melissa's research, there are now 20 out of 22 schools with the HSI designation. Her research found that there was an under-representation of students of color in the field, and student retention was low regarding retention into higher fields in Master's and doctoral programs.

Melissa says that with her thesis, she received an incredible amount of support from professors and faculty that guided her through the process. She says that overall the process was difficult because of how unpredictable it was and the varying logical factors that she always had to consider, but

she is proud of the work she accomplished.

In regards to being recognized for her outstanding thesis, Melissa says she was pleasantly surprised that others saw her work as something really valuable.

"As I was finishing up my thesis, I was thinking to myself, 'Is this valuable? Is this actually going to tell a story, and is this going to be helpful to anybody? So it was nice to have that positive affirmation that the work I was doing really was valuable" says Melissa about her recognition.

Receiving her Bachelor's degree from Loyola Marymount in Sociology, Melissa says she knew that she always wanted to work in student affairs and higher education, but wasn't necessarily looking into the SDHE program. After working intensely with other students during her time at LMU with various on-campus programs involving student engagement, peer mentoring, housing, and leadership retention for African-American students, she realized that she could make this into a career. This solidified her decision to attend a public university and continue working to facilitate undergraduate experiences for other students.

Overall, beyond her thesis and research, Melissa wants to continue to improve education, especially for marginalized students who struggle to find footing in academically challenging settings. She says she wants to challenge institutions to take a more individualized approach when it comes to educating students, by encompassing more inclusive programs, both in name and nature, that make marginalized groups feel more comfortable. By actively seeking out more financial and professional resources that can benefit students of color, Melissa says it will only enhance their academic experiences.



# Welcome Cohort XI



**On May 20, the Educational Leadership Department** had the privilege of welcoming the program's newest cohort of doctoral students. The Cohort XI orientation featured engaging group activities that got the students thinking about the road ahead of them, as well as their roles and responsibilities in educational leadership, goals and objectives for the program, and exploration of their identity through the Intergroup Dialogue Model.



In addition to several of the ice-breaker activities that the 26 students participated in to get to know each other on a more personal level, several guest speakers came in to talk to the new students about several of the resources and facilities available to them on campus at CSU Long Beach. After introductions from each student on their educational history and career goals, guest speakers from the financial

aid office and Counseling & Psychological Services spoke to the students about the services and resources available to them. Additionally, Dr. Scott and Dr. O'Brien led group activities with the students on the multiple stages of intergroup dialogue, along with healthy group discussions on self-identity and interpersonal communication. We're excited to have them and look forward to the years ahead.



## Dr. Alma Salazar

Senior Vice President, Center for Education Excellence & Talent Development,  
LA Chamber of Commerce

Using her years of educational experience, Dr. Alma Salazar continues to seek change in the South Bay community as part of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce.

A three-time graduate of CSU Long Beach, Dr. Salazar obtained her B.A. in Communication Studies and Master's in Public Administration before attending the Ed.D program as a member of Cohort I.

Within the program, she says that her time allowed her to develop a very deep appreciation for diversity within education and public policy.

"I feel like I benefitted the most from engaging with the diverse cohort of peers coming from different aspects of higher education. Whether that be instructors from within the classroom, administrators in the university, or special programs like disability services, there was a whole spectrum of folks throughout the program," says Dr. Salazar about the amount of diversity she experienced within the program. Given the different perspectives, her time in the program has allowed her to be much more aware of those viewpoints in helping create a meaningful dialogue about various issues within education.

With the number of colleagues and mentors she had the opportunity to work with while at CSULB, Dr. Salazar says it really helped her cultivate a passion for public service and grow a portfolio in higher education and workforce policy. With her dissertation, Dr. Salazar worked with underrepresented populations in schools in South

Los Angeles and studying the multiple barriers that keep them from succeeding academically, as well as the types of resources and environments that are most conducive to helping these young adults excel academically despite these barriers.

Currently, Dr. Salazar works as the Senior Vice President for Education Excellence and Talent Development for the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce. As a business organization, they help represent the needs of employers and businesses in the Los Angeles basin area, representing 1600 member companies. She helps oversee the division's various programs and initiatives, many of which are focused around enabling and supporting business education partnerships. With her position, she helps employers find a deeper role in bringing life to learning that happens outside of the classroom.

Dr. Salazar has been working for the program now for 17 years. She says her favorite part about this position is being able to have this unique vantage point when viewing the educational system and integrating each critical component across the educational pipeline, from K-12 to higher education.

"My favorite part about this is my ability to see things at a 30,000 foot level and have an appreciation for how everything is a critical piece of the puzzle," Dr. Salazar says.

Looking ahead, with her tremendous amount of respect she has for all the work that goes on in the classroom, Dr. Salazar would love to try her hand at teaching.



Dr. Maria Slaughter, Cohort III

## Dr. Maria Slaughter

Director of Public Works,  
City of Carson

Dr. Maria Slaughter has always enjoyed learning, and from an early age, her family promoted a good education as a way of leveling the playing field for everyone, no matter their background. Initially Dr. Slaughter did not plan to pursue a degree in education, and believed that she would work in a technical arena within the private sector for her entire career. She obtained a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from CSU Northridge, a Master of Science in Civil Engineering from Loyola Marymount University, and a Master's in Business Administration from Pepperdine University. When she began working as a staff member and lecturer at CSU Long Beach, the vibrancy associated with being part of an educational environment sparked her curiosity about obtaining

an Ed.D. After talking to a few faculty members in the College of Education as well as some colleagues who were students in Cohort I, she felt compelled to become a part of this wonderful program, and was accepted into Cohort III.

Dr. Slaughter says the transition from her background in engineering and business into the field of education was no easy task. "My first few semesters in the program were certainly difficult, but definitely rewarding". Transitioning into educational leadership she says, required a significant amount of collaboration and self-analysis which was in stark contrast to most of the technical skills she had become accustomed to engaging throughout her career.



The focus of Dr. Slaughter's dissertation was improving and sustaining efficiencies in administrative services across CSU campuses, and she is very pleased that her research efforts continue to open doors for her. She has taught process improvement classes to employees of the CSU, UC and CCC systems, and to this day, she continues to work with the CSU Office of the Chancellor on projects geared towards improving the overall efficiency and effectiveness of various administrative functions.

In addition to her ongoing work with the CSU, Dr. Slaughter is currently a member of the Executive Management Team for the City of Carson. As the Director of Public Works, she is largely responsible for providing the community with a safe, clean and healthy environment through the design,

construction, maintenance and management of the vital municipal infrastructure system.

"The decisions that we are making will have an impact on generations to come, and as such, there is a significant amount of interaction and collaboration with constituents as well as local, state and national agencies. Every day is different, challenging and rewarding" Dr. Slaughter says about her position.

Moving forward, Dr. Slaughter says she wants to continue making a difference in the community.

"It is very rewarding to couple my technical skills with the lessons learned during my time in the Ed.D. Program, and practice servant leadership."



Dr. Farah Naz Khaleghi, Cohort I

For Dr. Khaleghi, she says that pursuing higher education was never really a question for her, as there was always the highest of expectations from her family to challenge herself and further continue her education. Attending Hofstra University and UCLA's Anderson Graduate School of Management, she obtained her B.S. in Psychology, and an M.S. in Early Childhood Education and Education Evaluation prior to receiving her doctorate from the Ed.D program. Her career goal has always been to serve as a leader to make life better for less fortunate members of the community, especially children.

Dr. Khaleghi says that her time in the program has been incredibly unique and enriching, learning and growing with her fellow cohort mates that helped her experience

## Dr. Farah Naz Khaleghi

Executive Director,  
Long Beach Community Improvement League

an interdisciplinary approach to the study of educational leadership.

"You learn so much from your cohort as well as the program, you develop great friendships as well as professional network, and you share knowledge and become more knowledgeable in the process, a great experience" she says.

Dr. Khaleghi currently works as the Executive Director of the Long Beach Community League, a social service organization and oldest anti-poverty agency founded in the City of Long Beach in 1964. As Executive Director, she is largely responsible for the overall operations of the organization, maintaining general oversight of compliance with rules, regulations, quality standards, and program requirements and accountability system, fiscal practices, seeking funding, and preserving the program sustainability.

Dr. Khaleghi had been serving as the Executive Director of the organization long before she began the Ed.D program. She says she wanted to pursue the program to better serve the community, wanting to "better meet the needs of the society as an educational leader and as an agent of social change." Dr. Khaleghi acknowledges that her time in the program aligns with what she knew she wanted to accomplish post-graduation in that it has allowed her to obtain greater knowledge and expertise in how to be a more effective leader.

In working with low-income populations, she says how incredibly rewarding it is in being able to educate young minds and low-income families by developing subsidized child development programs.

"Being able to do these things gives me great satisfaction and when things get hard and overwhelming, thinking about the true value of what I am able to do through my position, provides me with much needed energy and motivation to go forward and overcome my obstacles."

Moving forward, Dr. Khaleghi wants to continue her passion for research by continuing to address common issues facing the current state of public education.





Congratulations

# CLASS OF 2017





# PRESENTING THE GRADUATES OF 2017

## MASTER OF SCIENCE

Ariella Bradley  
Lannibeth Calvillo  
Amanda D. Campbell  
Evani Chavez  
Gabriela De La Cruz  
Valerie Angelia Gomez  
Yesenia Gonzalez  
Jennifer Hall  
Kasie Hipp  
Liliana Huerta  
Tiffany Inabu  
Gustavo Lucatero  
Melissa Mahoney  
Janet Perez Molina  
Ashley Money  
Mareena Morrow  
Hayarpi A. Nersisyan  
Christina Oja  
Jovana Ramos  
Tiffany N. Rivera  
Chariya Sok  
Whitney Bellamy Young  
Jennifer Zier

## MASTER OF ARTS

Oralia Arroyo  
George Baltierrez-Manohorathat  
Lynette Ivonne Baltierrez  
Deana Marie Campbell  
Rocio Anahi Tovar Charles  
James Hoon Choe  
Adrian Alexander Fernandez  
Landon Richard Fichtner  
Laura Lizeth Hirshberg  
Christopher Thomas Horton  
Angela M. Liogys  
Shelley Lynn-Kelso Lopez  
Alberto Oros Jr.  
Amra Pepic  
Valerie Antonette Pomella  
Leticia Rojas  
Vanessa Roque  
Kelly Ann Smith  
Jenny Sosa  
Gurcan Terzi  
Elizabeth Vargas Torres  
Miguel Ruben Vancini Jr.  
Oliver Wang

## DOCTORATE

Dr. Babak Aminitehrani  
Dr. Tony Beeson  
Dr. Jamie Nicole Bouyer Purnell  
Dr. Judy Diep  
Dr. Christina Hazure-Dillard  
Dr. Sara Ivet Gamez  
Dr. Eric Richard Garcia  
Dr. Ali X. Gonzalez  
Dr. Melissa Ozlem Grab  
Dr. Leann Terese Hardwick  
Dr. Deborah Leah Hofreiter  
Dr. Leslie Jimenez  
Dr. Tawnie Shanese King  
Dr. Mike A. Luna  
Dr. Jenifer Mai  
Dr. Molly Mande-Dodgen  
Dr. Phoebe Hechanova-Manso  
Dr. Laura H. Manyweather  
Dr. Hector H. Marquez  
Dr. Vanessa Marie Monterosa  
Dr. Lynda McCoy  
Dr. David Michael Morales  
Dr. Miles J. Nevin  
Dr. Elizabeth L. Nunez  
Dr. Lidiana Portales Blair  
Dr. Kimberly A. Schultz  
Dr. Lisa Mednick Takami  
Dr. Brian Thomas  
Dr. Gregory Wise

in  
STUDENT DEVELOPMENT  
IN  
HIGHER EDUCATION

in  
EDUCATIONAL  
ADMINISTRATION

in  
EDUCATIONAL  
LEADERSHIP



looking ahead in **2017**

# CYNTHIA JOHNSON INSTITUTE

**SEPTEMBER 29, 2017**

USU Ballrooms  
9:00am - 2:30pm



## College Men & Masculinities

featuring Dr. Frank Harris III  
Professor, San Diego State University

FOR REGISTRATION INFORMATION VISIT  
[www.ced.csulb.edu/johnson-institute](http://www.ced.csulb.edu/johnson-institute)

## 2017 LEADERSHIP CONSORTIUM

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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS  
WORKSHOPS  
NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES



OCTOBER 20 - 21, 2017  
ANATOL CENTER