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## EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Department of Educational Policy Studies & Practice

September, 2016

### Letter from EDL Program Coordinator

Welcome to the Fall Semester 2016!

What an exciting time to be in the Educational Leadership Program at the University of Arizona! The EDL faculty, staff and the students are thrilled to welcome two wonderful new faculty members and colleagues to our intellectual community, Dr. Kevin Lawrence Henry, Jr. and Dr. Francesca López. Dr. Henry and Dr. Lopez enrich our program with their research, exciting new course offerings, and their warmth.

We are also proud to congratulate Dr. Lynette Brunderman on her well-deserved promotion to Full Professor of Practice.

This year we welcome many students to our masters and doctoral programs from Tucson, Arizona and the United States as well as from Saudi Arabia, S. Africa, India, and Kazakhstan. Our incoming masters and doctoral students join a "new generation of leaders" who can work collaboratively, creatively, and with integrity to positively impact schooling and affect social change (White Paper, 2015).

At the same time, we cannot turn on the news without seeing profound needs for social change with, for example, the violent deaths of Alton Sterling, Philando Castile, the victims in Orlando, many police officers, among others. We stand with scholars, educators and activist citizens across the United States and elsewhere in working for change now. In our scholarship, teaching, and service, we seek an end to violence, institutional racism, and other inequalities that are not new but visible daily in our community and in societal institutions. We seek equality of educational opportunity, effective prevention, continuous school development and transformative curriculum work.

In this newsletter you will learn more about our research, teaching, and partnerships aimed at social goals as well as improved school practice. We also proudly feature news about our most recent graduates and our alumni.

Please join us in welcoming our new students to our intellectual community at the annual Educational Leadership Program Fall Social on September 8 from 5-730 p.m. at the Play-ground (Rooftop) located at 278 E. Congress Rd.

Have a wonderful year!

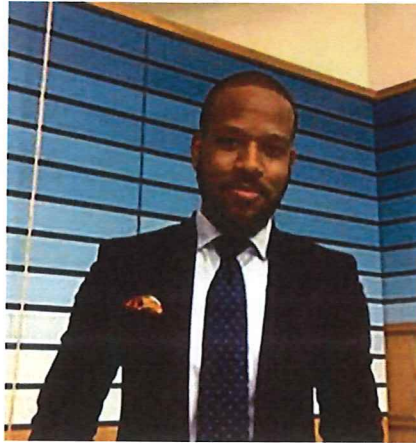
Sincerely,

Rose Ylimaki, Professor  
Educational Leadership Program Coordinator



## Welcome Dr. Kevin Lawrence Henry, Jr.

A native of New Orleans, Louisiana, and graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison (Ph.D.), Assistant Professor Kevin Lawrence Henry, Jr.'s program of research revolves around two central, interrelated questions. The first question critically examines how power and dominance shape and structure educational policies, practices, and reforms. The second question is concerned with how educational actors-marginalized by race, gender, class, and/or sexuality-understand, reconstitute and transform educational fields to be



more equitable and socially just. His research and teaching primarily revolves around the social contexts and political sociology of education with a particular emphasis on urban education reform and policy (market-based/neoliberal educational policies/school choice) and equity, social stratification, and counter-hegemonic practices/pedagogies and theories, (critical race theory, feminist theories, and queer of color critique). His scholarship has been published in *Educational Policy*, *Journal of Social Studies Research*, *Handbook of Urban Education*, and elsewhere.

### "Where do charter schools come from?"

#### Exploring the charter school authorization process in post-Katrina New Orleans

Kevin Lawrence Henry, Jr.

As a child growing up in New Orleans, Louisiana, there was a popular commercial that would often air which included the most adorable children in the city—excluding me. At the time, I had neither casting agent, nor sincere interest, in staffing in a local television add. Nevertheless, what made the commercial so memorable was that each child asked the proverbial question, “where do babies come from?” to which rejoinders from other children were given, which included the likes of “France,” “the stork,” and “an island.” The commercial was an effective advertisement for one of the local hospitals, Touro. By side stepping the “individual process” that parents engage in to “make a baby” and shifting the gaze to the institutional and organizational space that arranges for babies to come into existence, to be birthed, the commercial was a creative way to answer the age old question.

My research on charter schools morphs that question into “where do charter schools come from?” While deeply contentious and relatively new, charters schools remain a steady intervention in education policy and school reform. With over 6,000 charter schools throughout the United States, to say nothing of the international movement, charter schools do not come from the stork or out of thin air, but rather through specific institutional and organizational processes. In an era where charter schools illustrate the vast reach of privatization and are more aligned with market-principles, as opposed to socially just, democratic visions, I examine the logics and social networks that undergird the charter school authorization process. The charter school authorization process is the regulatory process that critically determines *who* is allowed to operate a charter school and *what* pedagogical and organizational visions can be performed. As such, the authorization process serves as a central gatekeeping mechanism in the creation and proliferation of charter schools. The authorization process is one of the first steps in disrupting or reproducing educational inequality. In essence, the authorization process is where charter schools come from.

In the article below, I along with my co-author, Adrienne Dixon from the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, examine the perspectives of African Americans who attempted to open and operate charter schools in post-Katrina New Orleans. Their narratives trouble and unsettle notions of objectivity and colorblindness and illuminate how macro power relations translate into micro practices, thereby reproducing racialized inequality.

Henry, Jr., K.L. and Dixon, A.D. (2016). “Locking the door before we got the keys”: Racial realities of the charter school authorization process in post-Katrina New Orleans. *Educational Policy*, 30(1), 218-240.

#### Application to my teaching in Educational Leadership at UA

My course, “Race, Neoliberalism, and Education,” which is offered this Fall, attempts to break open the “common-sense” of our current educational restructuring, towards unpacking, deconstructing, and reconfiguring educational policy and school reform, which is also what the article begins to do. More specifically, Arizona has the fastest growth of charter schools in the United States. This is significant, as the charter school authorization process is key in this growth and reproduction. Future and current educational leaders must deeply consider how they as agents can disrupt or duplicate culturally irrelevant pedagogies and curriculum, deleterious organizational schemes, and anti-democratic, counter-emancipatory visions embedded in particular charter schools.



## Smith Prevention Efforts Yield Results

Kris Bosworth

Dr. Kris Bosworth led a partnership with the Arizona Department of Education and 28 partner high schools throughout Arizona. Dr. Bosworth and her team (including EDL graduate Dr. Maryann Judkins) provided training for school and district teams in data-based decision

making, bullying prevention, crisis prevention, intervention and response, alternatives to suspension, community engagement and school climate interventions. All schools adopted Positive Behavior interventions and Supports (PBIS) and other evidence-based

interventions. Based on incident data reported to the AZ Department of Education, 90% of the schools reported a decline in student aggression and declines in fights on campus. 75% of the schools reported declines in attendance policy violations and a similar number

experienced a decrease in the number of suspensions for violent incidents. From student self-report data, 90% of the schools saw a reduction in current alcohol and 58% of the schools saw a decrease in reports of harassment at school.

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## Learning English, Working Hard, and Challenging Risk Discourses

Jill Koyama

Refugees in the US are often seen as risk-takers—those who engage in potentially harmful behaviors that simultaneously provide opportunity. With their perceived weaknesses in English language training, overall education, and US cultural capital, refugees are also frequently situated as being “at-risk” of not adapting to their new contexts. In this article, which draws on a 26-month ethnographic study in a Northeastern city, I trouble the simultaneous positioning of refugees as risk-takers and as being at risk. National policies governing the integration of refugees reduce social and educational adaptation to economic self-sufficiency, resulting in the emergence of three threads of risk: the risk of refugees being dependent on government resources, the risk of refugees “taking” jobs from Americans, and the risk of refugees threatening national security. In the article below, I focus on the first two threads, which represent a dichotomy of risk narratives, but which also pose refugees as risks to the mythical/idealized quality of American life and economic well being. I document refugees participating in ESL and career-readiness classes offered by local resettlement agencies to reveal how educators in both ESL and career classes employ the narrative of positive risk-taking to challenge the more negative risk discourses.

Koyama, J. (2015). Learning English, working hard, and challenging risk discourses. *Policy Futures in Education*, 13(15), 608-620. Full article available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281314911\\_Learning\\_English\\_working\\_hard\\_and\\_challenging\\_risk\\_discourses](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281314911_Learning_English_working_hard_and_challenging_risk_discourses)

### Application to my teaching in Education Leadership at UA

13,893 refugees have been resettled in Tucson, Arizona in the past 35 years, and nearly 1200 refugee youth attend schools in Tucson Unified School District. Like the adult refugees highlighted in the article, many of whom are parents, their children are also positioned in harmful risk discourses. Leaders in education can play important roles in challenging these discourses and enacting new, culturally relevant, and anti-discriminatory practices to draw on the resources of refugees and their families.

Dr. Taylor and Suzane Desjardin presenting their critically important study of color-isms at AERA!





## Examining Tensions and Dilemmas of Today's Curriculum Work-Leadership

Rose Ylimaki

If Arizona educators had to identify topics that occupied most of their time in recent years, Common Core Curriculum implementation, competitive evaluation policies, and working with changing demographics would likely be high on the list. Common Core standards were designed to be "robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers, which should place American student in a position in which they can compete in a global economy" (Implementing the Common Core Standards, 2013). This quote reflects growing pressures for schools and districts to prepare students with uniform rigorous curriculum standards for a global knowledge economy.

At the same time, Common Core standards have been contentious for many reasons, including the fact that they represent a move toward a centralized (national) curriculum in the United States with a history of education as a state right and the fact that they promote a universal curriculum for an increasingly diverse population of students. Arizona's decision to create a state version of Common Core in AZCCRS is a good example of the first sentiment. With Common Core, the United States may be trying to keep a national culture together in the midst of increasing cultural diversity. Closely related, we can also observe nationalist dissension about language with some public cries for English Only Laws and, of course, our local (now infamous) challenge to Mexican American Studies. Educational leaders, then, face a practical dilemma or tension: how do we implement policies like Common Core aimed at universal ideals and yet honor an increasingly culturally diverse set of particular ideals or values without creating tribalism? Educational leaders around the world are facing similar challenges and questions. These are not easy questions, and they deal with both leadership and curriculum in new interrelated ways.

My class Curriculum and Educational Leadership features readings and case examples regarding tensions and dilemmas between increasingly national curriculum standards and increasingly multicultural student populations. I use literature from educational leadership studies and curriculum theory/Didaktik together in order to provide today's leaders with understandings and analytical tools from both fields.

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## AZiLDR Supports School Development in Arizona and Mexico

Lynette Brunderman & Rose Ylimaki

The Arizona initiative for Leadership Development and Research (AZiLDR) continues to support school development work throughout the community. During the 2015-16 school year, we worked directly with 18 schools from the Sunnyside, Douglas, Santa Cruz Valley and Sahuarita school districts, as well as the San Xavier Mission School. AZiLDR seeks to build leadership team capacity to support continuous school development by building a culture of trust and collaboration, strong professional learning, culturally responsive practices, curriculum work, assessment literacy, parent/community involvement, and student engagement. These seven elements emerged in our own research on school development as well as a larger international project of which we are members (International Successful School Principals Project or ISSPP).

This year, AZiLDR school development was supported by a grant, but some schools purchased ASiLDR services from their own funds. All schools made progress in developing capacity for those seven elements. Participating schools worked with their leadership teams to increase capacity for school improvement, particularly with Arizona College and Career Readiness Standards (AZCCRS).

Future work in 2016-17 will focus on the area of literacy. Many teachers need more support in the area of literacy. Many teacher leaders and principals have learned about literacy curriculum from programs and reforms of the No Child Left Behind era. These programs are insufficient for teaching all children how to read, write, speak and listen critically and reflectively as promoted in literacy research and AZCCRS. Today's teachers must also be able to teach literacy for an increasingly culturally diverse students. Literacy will be a primary focus of continued school development in 2016-17.

### Application to my teaching in educational leadership at the UA

Results from AZiLDR have been used to inform classes in the Masters Program, including a class in data assessment literacy and curriculum. AZiLDR has also developed a partnership with Centro Regional de Formacion Docente e Investigacion Educativa in Hermosillo, Sonora Mexico. Students from both universities discuss readings, share information about their contexts looking at similarities and differences, and visit each other's institutions. The exchange has been beneficial for both sets of educators, since many students move back and forth between U.S. and Mexico schools.





## ***Educational Leadership Program graduates six Doctoral students and Twenty-one Master of Education students!!!***

### **Doctoral of Philosophy**

Lisa Fetman

Irene Robles-Lopez

Suzanne Desjardin

Darcy Tessman

Erin Matyjasik

### **Doctoral of Education**

Monica Barajas



### **Masters of Education**

Viridiana Fimbres

Alejandro Gonzalez

Teddy DeSouza

Jennifer Newman

Lori Felix

Michael DiAngelo

Xin Guan

Josef Torres

Nancy Acosta

Tracey Klell

Alex Callahan

Daniel Boice

Rosa Alvarez

Steven Spiece

Patricia Hurley

Claudia Jimenez Montano

Austin Carroll

Lourdes Cirerol

Jeffrey Arthur

Daniel Morales

Kari Sjursen

### ***Congratulations Dr. Tessman!***

Congratulations to 2016 graduate, Dr. Darcy Tessman, who was hired as Assistant Professor in Family and Consumer Science with East Central University in Oklahoma! Her dissertation explored the experience of transborder youth at the Mexican-U.S. border.



### ***Alumni Dr. Barajas Named Superintendent!***

Dr. Monica Barajas (Ed.D., 2015) was recently named Superintendent of Vernon School District. Vernon Elementary School District is located in Vernon, Arizona in Apache County just 20 minutes northeast of Show Low. Vernon's rural school district serves students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade. Dr. Barajas graduated from the Educational Leadership Program in December of 2015. Her dissertation study re-wrote on masajista feminist approaches to examine Latina leaders who aspired to the superintendency. Congratulations, Dr. Barajas!

### ***Save the Dates for Fall Conferences and Meetings!***

**\*\*Social** Please join us for our Social on September 8, 5-730 pm at the Playground, 278 E. Congress St.

**\*\* University for Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) Convention** November 17-20, 2016, Detroit, MI.

**\*\*Brown Bag** Lesley Bartlett on September 9, 4:00-5:30 pm, COE 312. Dr. Patricia Burch (USC) will give a brown bag on current September 20, 530-730, COE 312; Gene Glass on November 16 (location TBD).

**Get Ready to CHILL!** CHILL sessions provide opportunities for faculty and students to share new research and get feedback from each other. Faculty members Regina Deil-Amen, Jill Koyama, and Nolan Cabrera initiated the event in 2014. The CHILL sessions have been very well received, and we look forward to hearing about new research projects this year! Next Chill session is TBD.



## American Educational Research Journal Editor

Francesca Lopez

The flagship journal of the American Educational Research Association, *American Educational Research Journal (AERJ)*, is co-edited by Dr. Francesca López. Dr. López is one of six co-editors that have taken the helm of the inaugural unified journal.

AERJ had traditionally published research in one of two sections since 1990: Social and Institutional Analysis or Teaching, Learning, and Human Development. The decision to unify the two sections came after years of deliberation, ultimately reflecting the aim to “attract the very best research from all fields in our discipline” (Berends, Ladwig, López, Putambekar, Turner, & Wilson, 2016). The editors, all of whom consider themselves to be interdisciplinary scholars, carefully selected the editorial board so as to represent a wide range of methodologies, theoretical backgrounds, and area of expertise “as represented by AERA’s divisions and SIGs” (Berends, et al.) with the aim of attracting a broad representation of scholarship that will have wide influence that is not limited to the journal.

Bernds, M., Ladwig, J., López, F., Putambekar, S., Turner, J., & Wilson, S. (2016). Editorial. *American Educational Research Journal*, 63, 3-5.

