



**Leadership Summit: Financial Stability for Families with Young Children
Region X | May 12, 2011 | Seattle, WA**

Speaker Biographies

Jennifer Brooks, State and Local Policy Director, Corporation for Enterprise Development

As CFED's state and local policy director, Jennifer Brooks oversees CFED's state and local policy work, including leading a network of state-based advocates—the Assets & Opportunity Network—and providing technical assistance, resources and strategic advice to advocates and policymakers. This work is designed to help low-income people build assets and become entrepreneurs, and to create incentives for equitable economic development.

Prior to joining CFED, Ms. Brooks served as a policy advisor to Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA) on education and training, welfare, labor and women's and children's issues. Ms. Brooks also worked for many years at Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), a Washington, DC-based nonprofit that works nationally and locally to build economic independence for women and girls. In that role, she guided WOW's federal policy involvement and led a multi-state project to implement positive social state policies and demonstrate the need for change at the federal level.

Ms. Brooks has testified before Congress and spoken widely on strategies to help families reach economic self-sufficiency. She holds a master's degree from George Washington University and a bachelor's degree from Tufts University and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts.

Steve Henigson, Regional Administrator, Region 10, Administration for Children and Families

Steve Henigson is the Regional Administrator for the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Region 10, in Seattle, Washington. He provides leadership, direction and coordination of ACF programs with states, tribes and communities in support of the economic and social well being of children and their families in the four-state region which includes Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. ACF programs include: Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Child Care, Child Support Enforcement, Head Start, Foster Care and Adoption, Child Abuse and Neglect, Child Welfare, and Runaway and Homeless Youth programs.

Mr. Henigson is the lead Regional Administrator for ACF American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages programs. In that capacity, he provides national leadership for the Tribal TANF and Tribal Child Support programs, among others. Almost half of the Federally Recognized Tribes and Native Villages are located within the Seattle region.

Mr. Henigson has been in his current position since 1991. Prior to joining ACF, Mr. Henigson held leadership positions with the Health Care Financing Administration (now the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) and the Social Security Administration.

Mr. Henigson has a B.A. and J.D. from Willamette University, Salem, Oregon and is a member of the Oregon State Bar. He is married and has three grown daughters.



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Leslie Jenkins, Program Specialist, Office of Head Start

Leslie Jenkins has been a Program Specialist for the Office of Head Start in the Seattle Regional Office since 1993. She currently has Grantee assignments in the states of Oregon and Washington. In this capacity she negotiates grant applications, provides guidance and technical assistance, and monitors and monitors compliance of Head Start program compliance.

Ms. Jenkins holds a Masters degree in Interdisciplinary Studies (Education, Counseling and Sociology) and a Bachelors Degree in Public Service Careers from the University of Oregon
Ms. Jenkins is an artist and a serious cook, and knows a lot about traveling throughout France.

Thomas Jensen, Director of Family Economic Opportunity Programs, CASA of Oregon

Thomas Jensen is the Director of Family Economic Opportunity Programs at CASA of Oregon, a Community Development Corporation and a Community Development Financial Institution. Mr. Jensen oversees savings and credit enhancement programs for low-income families throughout the state of Oregon. Under his leadership, the CASA IDA network, an AFI-funded project, has grown into one of the largest IDA networks in the country, with 62 community organizations, housing authorities, high schools, and colleges as network partners and more than 2,500 participant savers.

Mr. Jensen holds an MSc in International Economic Development and a BA (Hons.) in Cultural Anthropology. In addition to his work at CASA of Oregon, Mr. Jensen provides consulting services to public and private entities on issues such as financial planning, employee benefits, asset building, new program development and program management.

Mr. Jensen is a native of Denmark. He moved to the US in 2003 where he now resides in Portland, Oregon with his wife and daughter

Lark Kesterke, Senior Manager of Financial Stability, United Way of Snohomish County

Lark Kesterke is the Senior Manager of Financial Stability at United Way of Snohomish County in Everett, Washington. She chairs the Snohomish County Financial Asset Development Coalition and the Snohomish IDA Collaborative. She serves on the Washington Asset Building Coalition Public Policy and Financial Education Engagement committees and is a member of the National Savings Bond Work Group and Industry Team. Through her leadership at United Way, the Financial Stability Initiative has grown to encompass a wide variety of asset building strategies and tools, including individual development accounts (IDAs), US I-Savings Bonds, EITC outreach, VITA/Free Tax Preparation, financial education and Bank On North Sound.

Prior to her work at United Way, Ms. Kesterke was the Early Childhood Assistant at NW ESD189. She studied at the Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey in Cuernavaca, Mexico and is a



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graduate of the Collaborative Leadership Institute. She holds a B. A. in Latin American Studies from Rocky Mountain College.

Ms. Kesterke was born and raised on Whidbey Island. She currently lives in Mukilteo, Washington with her husband Kris, son Elias and 185 pound English Mastiff, Otis.

Liz Myntti, Assets Services Program Manager, Lower Columbia CAP

Liz Myntti has been an Employment Specialist for 20 years. She has been employed with Lower Columbia CAP for the last 16 years. Ms. Myntti is now the Assets Services Program Manager for the newly formed Financial Independence Center at CAP.

Ms. Myntti is also on the Board of Directors of WA State Asset Building Coalition (WABC), lead of the Cowlitz Asset Building Coalition, and is also the Program Manager for CAPital Investment IDA (Individual Development Accounts) Program. She has also engaged as a co/lead for the WABC FEET (Financial Education Enhancement Team) and has been teaching Financial Literacy to low and moderate income residents for 8 years, and has recently expanded the service providing education to seniors, youth and community members on various money management topics. Recent responsibilities have included the creation and management of the Bank On Cowlitz County unbanked Initiative which became a rural pilot project for the US Department of Treasury. Ms. Myntti has extensive experience in presenting and sharing the success of the Cowlitz County programs and how they have served the citizens of their community.

Maggie Reilly, Program Manager, CASA of Oregon

Maggie Reilly has served as Program Manager at CASA of Oregon for four years, where she focuses on program development and operations for one of the country's largest IDA networks. In 2008, Ms. Reilly started the Matched Education Savings Account College Initiative (MESA), which offers students an opportunity to access IDAs while in school and for post-secondary educational institutions to leverage their institutional resources. Prior to joining CASA of Oregon, Ms. Reilly worked at Mercy Corps NW supporting entrepreneurs through microfinance and microenterprise development. She holds a dual-degree in International Affairs and Foreign Languages and Literature.

Ana Maria Reynaud, Family Services Manager, Office of Head Start

Ana Maria Reynaud holds a Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology in Los Angeles, California. Ms. Reynaud completed four internships while she was attending there from 2001-2005. Each of her internships was working with low income populations. Her work was with children, adults and families in the therapeutic setting.

Ms. Reynaud moved to Hermiston Oregon in March 2006 at which time she joined Blue Mountain Community College, Business Office as an instructor. She taught working English for the local farm



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workers directly on site. She joined Head Start in November 2006 as a Family Advocate. As a Family Advocate, Ms. Reynaud provided social services and parent education. She became the Family Services Manager in July 2009 and now supervises the Family Advocates. She is the co-facilitator of the SSCBT (Social Services Competency based Training) course for her area through Portland State University. She is currently training in the "Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics" presented by Dr. Perry through The Child Trauma Academy.

Syble Solomon, Founder, LifeWise

Syble Solomon combines her experience in early childhood, coaching and business as the Founder of LifeWise, a company that provides training and presentations to help people discover why they do what they do so they can get where they want to go. Her first career of twenty-five years was in early childhood with a specialization of working with children with special needs, aggressive behavior and autism. Ms. Solomon was the Mental Health Coordinator for a Head Start program, often presented at regional and National Head Start and early childhood conferences and worked closely with local Head Start programs, school districts and daycare centers to provide appropriate programs for young children. Since 1995 she has been an Executive Coach affiliated with the Center for Creative Leadership working with leaders in corporate, non-profit, education and military settings. Ms. Solomon developed Money Habitudes™ to help people talk about money in a fun, easy way and has been the featured speaker on the psychology of money at international conferences as well as for organizations such as the NFL, YWCA leadership, state and county community action agencies, state Extension conferences and women's programs. She's been honored as the Educator of the Year by the Association of Financial Counseling and Planning Education and received the Smart Marriages Impact Award from the Coalition of Marriage, Family and Couples Education.

Gina Stark, Treasurer, WA State Treasurer's Office

Gina Stark received a bachelor degree in political science from Western Washington University. During her senior year in college, Ms. Stark began her career in state government serving as session aide to Senator Jerilita Costa. During that session she worked on Anton's Law which established Washington State's child booster seat law. After graduation she worked for TVW, a non-profit public television station established to promote government accessibility and transparency. She went on to serve as a Legislative Assistant to State Representative Jim McIntire, who served the 46th legislative district in North Seattle. While there, she worked on various issues such as social services, tax structures, and housing. While working for the Legislature, Ms. Stark received her Master's in Public Policy and Administration from the Evan's School at the University of Washington where she focused on economic development, financing and civic engagement.

Ms. Stark has served as Director of External Affairs for the past year at the Washington State Treasurer's office, where it is believed that the choices we make today managing our financial resources will have a profound effect on our economy, our environment and our quality of life for generations to come. She

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has her taken passion for politics and the belief that if she was going to make a difference and help families build a stronger future; she needed to be at the table and building partnerships when policy decisions were made. She dedicates her work to financial education, asset building, affordable housing and access to mainstream banking for the underbank and unbankable.

Kathy Turner, Program Director, Neighborhood Partnerships

Creating bridges of opportunity is a lifetime goal for Kathy Turner, who has over thirty years of experience working with nonprofits and local government. She has fifteen years of community advocacy and organizing experience around issues of economic and social justice. She has worked with faith based collaboratives, community coalitions and statewide organizations advocating on policy issues such as accessible public health, toxics, fair utility rates, community reinvestment and jobs as an alternative to gangs for youth.

Ms. Turner has eight years of experience working in local government as a senior policy advisor to City Council members and Multnomah County Chairs. Through her work at the City and County, Ms. Turner became one of the founders behind the nationally recognized Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN). SUN not only provides quality after school programming for kids, but also education and services for families and other area residents. SUN is a partnership between school districts, the County, City, State and human service nonprofits.

As an organizational and leadership development consultant, Ms. Turner has worked with dozens of non-profits as an executive coach, trainer and facilitator. She has worked with scores of advocacy coalitions and organizational partnerships in her role as a consultant. In addition, Ms. Turner earned certification as a coach by the renowned and rigorous Coaches Training Institute.

When Ms. Turner joined Neighborhood Partnerships in October 2010, she was immediately drawn to the asset building results and potential of the Oregon Individual Development Account (IDA) Initiative and now serves as the Program Director.

James Whitfield, President, Leadership Eastside

On January 3, 2011 James Whitfield was hired as the President of Leadership Eastside, an organization that informs, equips, and connects East King County's leaders in order to meet the community's needs. Mr. Whitfield comes to the role with executive experience in the for-profit, non-profit, and government sectors as well as having served on numerous local, statewide, and national boards of directors – including the founding board for Leadership Eastside.

Mr. Whitfield's experience includes being appointed by the White House to oversee the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Pacific Northwest Region, making him the HHS Secretary's top representative in the region, splitting his time between Seattle and D.C. and managing staff across



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the nation. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Whitfield served on the Executive Management Team for the Washington Health Foundation in Seattle, a statewide nonprofit dedicated to improving the health of Washington communities. He has also managed his own small business and served as COO of a high-tech company.

A graduate of the University of Iowa, Mr. Whitfield has studied health care policy at Harvard, is a noted public speaker on leadership issues; is the author of the hospital patient guide, "Just What the Patient Ordered"; and is a member of the board of elders at Overlake Christian Church - one of the largest congregations in the Pacific Northwest.

Stefanie Whorton, AFI Resource Coordinator, Administration for Children and Families

Stefanie Whorton currently works as an Assets for Independence (AFI) Resource Coordinator. Among many assignments, Ms. Whorton is the liaison for the Child Care Bureau and the Office of Head Start for the Financial Stability for Families with Young Children Initiative focusing on Early Childhood. She also coordinates and promotes outreach surrounding refundable tax credits, EITC, and free tax preparation. Ms. Whorton provides technical assistance to AFI grantees in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland, Washington DC, Delaware, and Virginia.

Ms. Whorton, a native of Athens, Georgia, received her Bachelor's degree from Belmont Abbey College in North Carolina. During her year of service as a Jesuit Volunteer she worked at Philadelphia VIP as a paralegal recruiting and training pro bono attorneys and coordinated a Low Income Taxpayers Clinic (LITC) and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site for undocumented farmworkers. Ms. Whorton received her Master of Public Policy from the Thomas Jefferson Program in Public Policy from The College of William and Mary. During this time she worked with the Office of Community Service on the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) program.