

Plenary Biographies

Hedy N. Chang

Hedy is the founder and director of Attendance Works, a national and state level initiative aimed at advancing student success by addressing chronic absence. A skilled presenter, facilitator, researcher and writer, she co-authored the seminal report, *Present, Engaged and Accounted For: The Critical Importance of Addressing Chronic Absence in the Early Grades*, as well as numerous other articles about student attendance.

Deeply committed to promoting two-generation solutions to achieving a more just and equitable society, Hedy has spent more than two decades working in the fields of family support, family economic success, education and child development. She served as a senior program officer at the Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Fund and as co-director of California Tomorrow, a nonprofit committed to drawing strength from cultural, linguistic and racial diversity. In February 2013, Hedy was named by the White House as a Champion of Change for her commitment to furthering African American Education.

Hedy is also the mother of two school-aged sons who attend public school in San Francisco.

Peter Edelman

Peter Edelman is a Professor of Law at Georgetown Law Center and Faculty Co-Director of the Georgetown Center on Poverty, Inequality and Public Policy. On the faculty since 1982, he has also served in all three branches of government and at the state level as well, beginning with the Kennedy Administration when he served as a law clerk to Supreme Court Justice Arthur J. Goldberg and then as Special Assistant to Assistant Attorney General John Douglas in the Civil Division of the Department of Justice. He went on to be a Legislative Assistant to Senator Robert F. Kennedy and later on was Issues Director for Senator Edward Kennedy's 1980 Presidential campaign. He has also served as Vice President of the University of Massachusetts and Director of the New York State Division of Youth. During President Clinton's first term he was Counselor to HHS Secretary Donna Shalala and then Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. He is currently Chair of the District of Columbia Access to Justice Commission and of the American Constitution Society. Mr. Edelman's recent book, [So Rich, So Poor: Why It's So Hard to End Poverty in America](#), was published by The New Press in the spring of 2012.

Mark P. Fancher

Mark P. Fancher is the attorney for the Racial Justice Project of the ACLU of Michigan. Through his work, he addresses: racially disproportionate rates of incarceration; racial discrimination against public school students of color, racial profiling, public defender system reform, attacks on affirmative action and juvenile sentencing issues. Fancher was formerly the Senior Staff Attorney for the Sugar Law Center for Economic and Social Justice where he specialized in workers' rights. He served on the staff of the State Bar of Michigan from 1998 to 2000 where he coordinated projects to encourage greater pro bono participation by Michigan's lawyers. He was a visiting assistant clinical professor at the University of Michigan Law School from 1996 through 1998. Before moving to Michigan, Fancher was the Director of Litigation for Camden Regional Legal Services in New Jersey. He has also been in private practice where he specialized in employment discrimination and community economic development. Fancher is a graduate of Rutgers University School of Law - Camden. He received a Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of Tennessee. Fancher has played a leadership role in the National Conference of Black Lawyers (NCBL) for numerous years. He is a past chair of the organization's International Affairs Section, and he served as NCBL's national co-chair from 1995-1998. Fancher has lectured across the country and written extensively on the U.S. military presence in Africa.

Brian Huff

Brian Huff is a practicing attorney and private judge in Birmingham. Formerly, he was the Presiding Juvenile Judge for Jefferson County (Birmingham), the largest county in Alabama. He is a national speaker on juvenile justice reform and has given expert testimony on the subject before the United States House of Representatives and the legislatures of the states of Mississippi and Alabama. He is also the co-author of "The Dichotomy of Judicial Leadership: Working With the Community to Improve Outcomes for Status Youth", which appeared in the Spring 2010 edition (Volume 61 No. 2) of the Juvenile and Family Court Journal.

Judge Huff has spearheaded the multi-faceted, collaborative, juvenile justice reform effort which has taken place in Jefferson County, Alabama. Judge Huff led Birmingham City Schools' Collaborative, which developed Birmingham's School Offense Protocol. Judge Huff was President of the Alabama Juvenile Judges' Association for 2011 – 2012 and a member of the board of directors for the Alabama Department of Youth Services and the Children's First Foundation. He is the past-chair of the Family Law Section of the Alabama State Bar and the Birmingham Bar Associations. He is a member of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the National Association of Drug Court Professionals. He presided over several "specialized dockets" including the Truancy, Juvenile Drug Court, Gun Court and Return to Aftercare Program (RAP) dockets. Most importantly, Judge Huff is the father of two amazing daughters, Peyton and Lexi.

Kayla Mason

Kayla Mason was born in Los Angeles, CA and began community organizing in high school. She was a youth peer organizer at the Los Angeles Community Coalition and in 2005 helped pass a resolution that brought college opportunities to thousands of South LA students. In 2010, Kayla was a fellow for AmeriCorps Public Allies of Los Angeles and served at Community Development Technologies where she facilitated youth leadership trainings and co-created the youth group Speak Up. In 2011, Kayla received her Master of Social Work degree from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor as a Community-Based Initiative scholar. She completed her field placement at the Harriet Tubman Center working with YOUTH VOICE and was promoted to Director of YOUTH VOICE, helping students become community leaders.

Rodd Monts

Rodd Monts is the field director for the ACLU of Michigan. He is responsible for cultivating support for ACLU issues and overseeing community organizing and coalition building in the eight communities where the organization has a branch presence in Michigan. His duties also include working with elected and government officials to address policy reforms needed to protect and preserve civil rights and civil liberties. Major areas of focus for his work include education and youth justice, through which he addresses keeping children out of the school-to-prison pipeline, ending the mandatory sentencing of juveniles to life without parole, preserving students' rights, and ensuring an equitable education for all of Michigan's children.

Prior to joining the ACLU staff, Rodd was the manager of community initiatives at United Way for Southeastern Michigan in Detroit. In his last role at UWSEM, Rodd oversaw early childhood education initiatives focused on early literacy development and parent education. He began his career in journalism, and he has worked as a writer and editor for newspapers, trade magazines, and a leading online/broadcast news operation. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in advertising/public relations from Grand Valley State University, a Master of Arts degree in public relations/organizational communications from Wayne State University, and a Master of Arts degree in social justice from Marygrove College.

Carl Reynolds

Carl Reynolds is an attorney and the Senior Legal and Policy Advisor to the Council of State Governments Justice Center. He has extensive justice-related experience in all branches of Texas state government. From 2005 to 2012 he was Director of the Office of Court Administration in the judicial branch, and from 1993 to 2005 he was General Counsel for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Prior to 1993, he was the Executive Director of the Texas Punishment Standards Commission (a blue-ribbon legislative agency charged with reforming the state's sentencing laws and corrections resources), and general Counsel to the Texas Senate Committee on Criminal Justice.

His professional activities include active involvement (either current or past) with the following organizations: ABA Access to Justice Commission Expansion Project, Advisory Group; Conference of State Court Administrators (Chair, Policy & Liaison Committee); ABA Sentencing Committee (Vice-Chair); ABA Task Force on the Legal Status of Prisoners (Member); Vera Institute of Justice (Advisory Committee Member); Center for Criminology and Criminal Justice Research, University of Texas at Austin (Associate); American Correctional Association (Legal Committee); Edna McConnell Clark Foundation (Justice Program Advisory Committee Member); National Association of Sentencing Commissions (Member); National Council of State Legislatures (Criminal Justice Committee); Austin Public Library Friends Foundation (Board Member); and Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Austin (Big Brother and Board Member).

Mr. Reynolds holds a J.D. with honors from the University of Texas School of Law, a master's degree from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, and a B.A. with honors from the University of Cincinnati.

Michael Reynolds

Michael Reynolds was born and raised in Detroit where he currently attends Cody Academy of Public Leadership. Michael was passionate about saving his community and joined YOUTH VOICE to make a difference. In his spare time, he practices yoga and boxing.

Trevon Stapleton

Trevon Stapleton is 16 years old, and lives in Detroit. He is a sophomore that attends Cody Detroit Institute of Technology and will graduate in the spring of 2015. Trevon joined YOUTH VOICE because he wants to help his community become a better and safer place for generations to come. In Trevon's spare time he likes to exercise, make *music*, *spend quality time with his siblings*, and *wake up every day prepared to better himself*.

Britney Tipler

Britney Tipler is from Detroit, Michigan and is now a senior at Detroit Community High School where she first learned about YOUTH VOICE. YOUTH VOICE is something she enjoys being a part of because youth have a voice that allows them to change so many things in their communities. In her spare time she sings, dances, acts, and enjoys working with other YOUTH VOICE members.

Royce Williams

Royce Williams was born and raised in Detroit, MI. He is currently a senior at Cody Detroit Institute of Technology, which is where he joined Youth Voice in the fall of 2011. Royce felt that thanks to YOUTH VOICE he has actually begun to change his community for the better. In his spare time he likes to play piano, dance, edit videos, and listen to music.