



Speaker Biographies

(in order of appearance)

Brenda Dann-Messier, Assistant Secretary

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE)

Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier leads the Department's efforts in adult education and career and technical education, as well as efforts supporting community colleges and correctional education. She oversees the administration of 11 grant programs in these areas, totaling approximately \$1.6 billion annually.

Dr. Dann-Messier is committed to collaboration, both within the Department and across federal agencies, as evidenced by her work with the U.S. Departments of Labor, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Commerce.

From 1993 to 1996, Dr. Dann-Messier worked for the Clinton administration under Secretary Richard Riley, serving as the Secretary's Regional Representative for Region I, which includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

Prior to returning to the Department, Dr. Dann-Messier served for a decade as President of the Dorcas Place Adult and Family Learning Center, a community-based adult education agency in Providence, Rhode Island. Under her leadership, Dorcas Place expanded to serve more than 1,000 adults statewide through a range of programs, including day and evening adult basic education, adult secondary education, English for speakers of other languages, GED classes, financial literacy education, and sector-based workforce education and job training programs linked with employers and industry (including sector-based career academies). She also established and chaired the Advisory Council of Dorcas Place, which opened the Rhode Island Welcome Back Center—one of only seven programs in the nation to help foreign-trained health professionals enter the health care workforce.

Dr. Dann-Messier currently serves as Secretary Duncan's representative for the Skills for America's Future Task Force.

Sharon Lee Miller, Director

U.S. Department of Education, OVAE
Division of Academic and Technical Education (DATE)
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Dr. Sharon Miller serves as Director of DATE within the U.S. Department of Education. DATE is responsible for administering one of the Department's largest formula grant programs, which currently distributes about \$1.2 billion annually to states under the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV)*. The division also administers discretionary grants to improve the quality of career and technical education for Native Americans, Native Alaskans, and Native Hawaiians; gathers data for national accountability and for state and local program improvement; and conducts national initiatives that improve the rigor and relevance of career and technical education programs.

A native of Schenectady, New York, Dr. Miller holds a Ph.D. in Educational Theory and Practice from the University at Albany in New York State. Her OVAE work experience includes oversight of research, development, and evaluation studies on issues pertaining to career and technical education. Prior to coming to the Department, she worked for the New York State Education Department with State staff responsible for administering career and technical education grants to local education agencies, conducting statewide evaluations, and gathering performance accountability data. She has formerly taught at the both the kindergarten and college level.

Johan Uvin, Deputy Assistant Secretary

U.S. Department of Education, OVAE

Dr. Johan E. Uvin joined the U.S. Department of Education in December 2009 as the Senior Policy Advisor to Assistant Secretary Brenda Dann-Messier in the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE). In June 2011, Dr. Uvin was appointed to the position of Deputy Assistant Secretary of Policy and Strategic Initiatives within OVAE.

Prior to his appointment, he led the Rhode Island state office that oversees adult education, career and technical education, and GED testing. Dr. Uvin holds a Doctorate in Administration, Planning, and Social Policy and a Master's in International Education from Harvard University. He also holds a Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages from the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont. In recent years, he was acknowledged by the hospitality and long-term care industries in Rhode Island for his contributions to creating career pathways for low-skilled adults in these sectors.

Mark Greenberg, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families

Mark Greenberg is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Before joining HHS, he directed the Georgetown University Center on Poverty, Inequality, and Public Policy, a joint initiative of the Georgetown University Law Center and the Georgetown Public Policy Institute. In addition, he was a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress (CAP) and the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP).

Greenberg previously served as the Executive Director of CAP's Task Force on Poverty and as CLASP's Director of Policy. During his career, he has written extensively on issues relating to federal and state welfare reform efforts; workforce policy issues affecting low-income families; child care and early education policy; tax policy; poverty measurement; and a range of other low-income issues. In addition, he frequently provided technical assistance to state and local governments regarding poverty reduction strategies. Prior to coming to DC, Mr. Greenberg worked at Jacksonville Area Legal Aid in Florida and the Western Center on Law and Poverty in Los Angeles, California. Mr. Greenberg is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School.

Gerri Fiala, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training

U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration

Gerri Fiala is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training at the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Prior to joining DOL, she served as Staff Director to the HELP Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety chaired by Senator Patty Murray. Here she drafted Senator Murray's "Innovations in 21st Century Careers" bill to make education more relevant for high school students. She also developed bills introduced by Senator Murray during the economic stimulus debate. Key components of these bills were ultimately included in the Recovery Act funding provisions for the Department of Labor.

Before coming to Capitol Hill, Ms. Fiala served in a number of workforce development positions that impacted workers and businesses in the United States and abroad. This includes her tenure as Director of Workforce Research for the Workforce Development Strategies Group at the National Center on Education and the Economy, where she managed a project to help the Northern Ireland Department for Employment and Learning update its labor market information systems.

Ms. Fiala served for nearly eight years as Administrator, Office of Policy Development, Evaluation and Research, in the U.S. Department of Labor. This includes a year as a loaned executive to serve as Senior Counselor for Economic Development to the American Association of Community Colleges. As

Administrator, she led interagency efforts to drive job training reform. This work culminated in the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000 (creating the Senior Community Service Employment Program). Her leadership on interagency teams also secured the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act and the Welfare to Work program, and provided direction to a DOL effort to craft and implement regulations for each of these programs.

Ms. Fiala has a Master's of Labor and Industrial Relations from Michigan State University, a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Iowa, and an Associate of Arts from North Iowa Area Community College.

John Haigh, Branch Chief

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Accountability and Performance Branch
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Dr. John Haigh serves as Chief of the Accountability and Performance Branch in DATE. Prior to that, Dr. Haigh served as Acting Director of the State Administration and the Accountability and Performance Branches in the State Administration and Accountability Group, and as a Research Analyst for the Branch, in the Division of High School, Postsecondary and Career Education at the U.S. Department of Education. Dr. Haigh has more than 30 years of experience in education at the local, state, and national level—mostly serving in Maryland as a teacher, principal, and as a state administrator at the Maryland State Department of Education.

Dr. Haigh received his Doctor of Education from the George Washington University, Master of Arts and Bachelor of Arts from the University of Maryland, and a certificate in Special Education Alternate Assessment Critical Issues in Special Education from Harvard University's Graduate School of Education.

Steven Klein, Director

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Dr. Steven Klein specializes in the design of performance accountability and finance systems for career and technical education, and the evaluation of federal and state education policy and program initiatives. He currently serves as Principal Investigator for the *National Center for Innovation in Career and Technical Education*, which was awarded by the U.S. Department of Education in July 2012 as a three-year contract to a consortium of firms. He is also directing evaluation studies for the congressionally mandated *National Assessment for Career and Technical Education*, which entails producing a study of states' implementation of *Perkins IV* and a final report to Congress summarizing project findings. Concurrently, he is consulting with OVAE to conduct site visits and collect local

performance data to assess states' efforts to implement rigorous programs of study and with Jobs for the Future to support states in aligning career and technical education programs of study into their larger career pathways systems.

Dr. Klein holds a B.A. and M.S. Ed. from the University of Pennsylvania and a Ph.D. in K-12 Educational Policy from the University of California at Berkeley. He is currently a school board member in Riverdale School District 51J in Portland, Oregon. Prior to joining MPR in 1993, Dr. Klein worked in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania as a secondary math and science teacher.

Jay Savage, Education Program Specialist

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Jay Savage is a retired U.S. Army officer who worked in a variety of leadership and staff positions in both communications and intelligence over a 22-year career. He was a Battalion Commander during the Gulf War, and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel from the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Warnings and Indications Office. Following his military career, he became a teacher in a predominantly minority middle school where he held certifications as a science teacher, history teacher, and foreign language instructor. He was the first teacher in the state of Maryland to be certified by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) in Adolescent Science.

Mr. Savage left middle school instruction in July 2000 to take a position as an Education Specialist in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Indian Education Programs (OIEP). He served there for three years as a budget and programs expert doing analysis on Native American education programs and performance in 185 elementary and secondary schools and over 30 postsecondary institutions. Since 2004, Mr. Savage has worked as an Education Specialist in the U.S. Department of Education. In his current capacity he is a Regional Accountability Specialist for career and technical education programs. His primary focus is in the implementation of the *Perkins IV* program in the Mid-Atlantic states. He is currently working on a project to standardize the *Perkins IV* reporting definitions and measurement tools across the 50 states and 4 territories.

Edward R. Smith, Branch Chief

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Program Administration Branch
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Dr. Smith serves as Chief of the Program Administration Branch within OVAE. He administers approximately \$1.1 billion of formula grants authorized under Title I of the Carl D. Perkins Career and

Technical Education Act of 2006 to 54 States and territories to improve the academic achievement and secondary and postsecondary outcomes of career and technical education students.

Dr. Smith holds a Doctor of Rehabilitation Degree from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale; a M.S. in Urban Affairs & Policy Analysis from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville; and, a B.S. in Political Science, from Illinois State University where he was an Academic All-American football player. He also attended law schools at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, School of Law, and the University of Iowa, College of Law. Prior to coming to the OVAE, Edward served as an Educational Program Specialist with the Rehabilitation Services Administration, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services of the U. S. Department of Education. His professional experiences also include assistant professorships at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee and the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore.

Len Lintner, Senior Education Program Specialist

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Len Lintner is a Program Officer in the State Administration and Accountability Group within OVAE. He has been with the U.S. Department of Education since 1978, working in the areas of financial management, audits, local planning, and monitoring. Prior to coming to the Department, he served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Afghanistan, and taught history of religion at Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin.

Mr. Lintner earned a B.A. in International Studies at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio; a M.Div. from Drew University in Madison, New Jersey; an M.A. in South Asian Studies and an ABD in Indian Religion at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, Wisconsin; and a J.D. at the New England School of Law in Boston, Massachusetts.

Andrew Johnson, Education Program Specialist

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Andrew Johnson is a Program Specialist at the U.S. Department of Education. His major responsibility is to assist in the implementation and administration of states' *Perkins IV* grants. Specific assignments include identification of policy issues related to the *Perkins IV* grant, membership of the *Perkins IV* grant monitoring team as a fiscal lead, and the review of budget and financial reports. Mr. Johnson earned a B.A. in Government and Politics from the University of Maryland and an M.P.M. (Master's in Policy Management) from Georgetown University.

Rosanne Andre, Education Program Specialist

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Rosanne Andre recently joined OVAE's Division of Academic and Technical Education (DATE) as an Audit Resolution Specialist. She is responsible for reviewing single audits of vocational and adult education programs administered by state education offices. She will also develop proposed recommendations for settling cases of expenditures not allowed under *Perkins IV* and applicable federal regulations. Prior to joining DATE, Andre was with the Department's Federal Student Aid Office as both a Senior Financial Analyst and an Audit Resolution Specialist. She holds a B.S. in Accounting from James Madison University.

José Figueroa, Education Program Specialist

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Dr. José R. Figueroa is an Education Program Specialist and Regional Accountability Specialist responsible for negotiating with states on establishing performance objectives, monitoring state compliance with *Perkins IV*, writing the annual *Perkins IV* report to Congress, and conducting the Division's risk analysis report, as well as providing technical assistance to states regarding the validity and reliability of their student performance data.

Prior to working at the Department, Dr. Figueroa was the Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Faculty Development and Sponsored Research Projects at the Ana G. Méndez University System in Puerto Rico. He began his career in the field of education 28 years ago as a high school science and mathematics high school teacher. He has served as an assistant professor and administrator at Northern Illinois University, Montclair State University, and the Ana G. Méndez University System. Dr. Figueroa has also served as the Director of the Puerto Rico Institute of Technology and the postsecondary career and technical education director for the Puerto Rico Department of Education.

A native of Arecibo, Puerto Rico, Dr. Figueroa holds a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Supervision and a M.Ed. in Curriculum and Teaching from the Pennsylvania State University, and a B.S. in Biological Sciences from the Inter American University of Puerto Rico.

Robin Utz, Branch Chief

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College and Career Transitions Branch
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Robin Utz serves as the Chief for the College and Career Transitions Branch within DATE. That branch administers national discretionary programs and initiatives that support program development and innovation in career and technical education. These programs and initiatives are geared toward increasing student achievement, closing the achievement gap, and preparing all students for transitions to college and careers.

Prior to joining OVAE, Ms. Utz served as Assistant Director of the Career, Standards and Assessment Services Team at the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE). Her responsibilities included providing leadership for K–12 schools to develop and implement a system of quality career and technical education. She worked to develop and implement policy initiatives that reflected a progressive agenda to ensure all students achieve challenging academic and technical standards to be prepared for college and careers. She worked collaboratively with other career and technical education state directors and leaders on important initiatives, such as technical skill assessments and rigorous programs of study.

Ms. Utz's professional career includes positions as a family and consumer sciences teacher, FCCLA advisor, and KSDE Education Program Consultant for career and technical education programs. Nominated by colleagues, peers, and students, she is a past recipient of professional association awards. She has served on numerous committees and held elected offices in professional associations at state and national levels. Ms. Utz has a Bachelor's in Home Economics Education and a Master's in Secondary Education from Kansas State University.