

Come Tinker with Us!



Speakers



Linda Christopher is a native of Orange County but has spent much of her career in the Sacramento area, as a classroom teacher, principal, county administrator and most recently as the Executive Director for NextEd, a non-profit organization serving the Capital Region. In this capacity, Linda worked with business partners from Intel, Aerojet Rocketdyne, Associated General Contractors, UC Davis, Sutter Health, CVS, and Chevron to build partnerships and focus on fund development to implement STEM programs for elementary, middle, and high schools. Linda holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education and English from Concordia University, a Master of Arts Degree in Education Administration from California State University Sacramento, and an Doctor of Education from Drexel University, focusing on Education Leadership and Policy.



Tiffany Alva oversees the planning and development of early learning programs for THINK Together. She joined THINK Together in October 2011 as Center Director of the School Age Care Program. In 2013 she was promoted to Orange County's Early Literacy and Math Program Manager overseeing the ELMP Center Base programs. Prior to joining THINK Together, Tiffany had more than 16 years of experience running and overseeing State Preschools in the Los Angeles area. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Human Service and in Child Development.

Susan Wood, M.A., Executive Director, has served as the Executive Director of the Children's Center at Caltech since 2000. Susan's experience over the past 38 years includes serving as classroom instructor, overseeing classroom teachers, coordinating community college preschool practicum students, and providing developmentally appropriate activities for children. Susan's passion to support early childhood educators in providing research based, high quality STEM child education has led to the creation of community outreach programs which has included: workshops, a director support group, research projects, and study groups. She is an active member of National Association for the Education of Young Children and National Science Teachers Association and has presented workshops on a national level in the areas of early childhood curriculum with an emphasis on science education. She received a MA in Human Development from Pacific Oaks College, Pasadena, CA.



Gerald Solomon has served as the Samueli Foundation's Executive Director since April, 2008. Prior to the Samueli Foundation, Mr. Solomon served as CEO of Public Health Foundation Enterprises (PHFE) for seven (7) years, where he transformed the organization from an LA-centric provider of funding and services into national prominence. At the time of Mr. Solomon's departure, PHFE was operating in 31 states with 1,500 employees and annual revenues exceeding \$120 Million.

Since his tenure at Samueli, he has achieved many significant goals, including; refining the Foundation's strategic plan, and helping establish a secondary operating foundation entitled Anaheim Ducks Foundation to develop a sports philanthropic approach to address community health disparity issues through the use of hockey. Mr. Solomon has developed long range collaborative community initiatives including: local, state and regional networks addressing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education deficiencies within the K – 16 continuum, and local and national programs to broaden the healthcare dialogue to focus on a true health, wellness and well-being approach through integrative medicine practices.



Dean Gregory Washington joined The Henry Samueli School of Engineering in August 2011. Under his leadership, the school has increased its faculty ranks and numbers of students. He instituted a popular freshman experiential learning program that gives engineering students a taste of real-world product development. In 2015, he chaired UCI's Task Force on Ensuring a Positive Climate for the Campus's African American Community. A professor of mechanical engineering, he investigates smart material systems, smart electromagnetic systems and hybrid electric vehicles. Washington holds bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in mechanical engineering from North Carolina State University.



Jamie Annunzio Myers is the Interim COO and Vice President of Education and Community Engagement for PBS SoCaL, Southern California's flagship public media station. Jamie oversees daily station operations and provides strategic direction to ensuring PBS SoCal delivers on its mission to *Learn More, Do More, and Be More* using the power of public media. With more than 15 years of classroom and district experience, Jamie leads education initiatives for the station including early learning, K-12 outreach and children's programming. During her time in public media, Jamie launched PBS SoCal's Ready to Learn and American Graduate initiatives helping the station receive national recognition for their work in Education and creating impact for low-income families in Southern California.



Tom Chiaromonte, Ph.D., has over 35 years of experience in the field of child development and early childhood education. Having started out in special education, Tom has been a preschool teacher, Head Start administrator, educational consultant and is currently the Director of the Child Development Laboratory School and Professor of Child Development & Educational Studies at Fullerton College. His research articles have appeared in *The Constructivist*, *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, *Children and Families*, and *The National Association of Laboratory Schools Journal*. Tom has presented workshops on mathematics with preschool children, the science of nature in the lives of children, as well as many other topics concerning young children, throughout the country

Nelida Pedraza is employed as a State Preschool teacher in the Anaheim City School District. She is a valued member of a large Early Learning staff serving 1,068 three and four year olds. She attended Santa Ana College and then received her BA from the University of Lavern. Nellie's first position in the field of ECE was when she was only 17 years old at Santa Ana College Lab School. She has taught in high quality private schools, four years in Head Start and eight years in State Preschool. She taught infants and toddlers for seven years. Her philosophy continues to be that young children learn through natural play experiences, highlighting hands on interactive learning. As she embraces the Stem Project, she respects her students as young scientists in everything they do. They are trying on life through experimentation, tinkering, and asking questions. She acknowledges the fine line between science and math and literacy. Nellie has seen the ECE field change and grow in the recognition of the importance of the early years, 0-8. The research has come full circle to validate her work and the work of her colleagues. Nellie shared that Anaheim has been a great place to work - "The District has valued me as an educator and the needs of our youngest citizens and how they learn."



Amiee Goulding is the Director of Bright Visions Early Childhood Center. She has devoted over 20 years of her professional career to Blind Children's Learning Center. Aimee worked her way up from Intern to Lead Teacher to her current Director position. She holds a bachelor's degree from National University, as well as earning a Director Permit from the commission on Teacher Credentialing.



Jean Barbre, Ed.D., has more than 25 years in the field of early care and education. For over the 25 years, she has designed early care classrooms, managed preschool programs, coached administrators, and trained early care and education providers. Jean also teaches early childhood courses at both the community college and California State University system. She trains on many topics for the State of California and has presented at National Association for the Education for Young Children, California Association for the Education for Young Children, Orange County STEM Conference, internationally at the Asian Pacific Educational Research Association (APERA) in Singapore, and she was also spotlighted on local television "A Place of Our Own." Jean has a doctorate degree from Pepperdine University, a Master of Science School of Counseling, a Master of Art Consumer Studies - Child and Families Studies, and a Bachelor of Science in Child Development.



Sandra Barry, a Commissioner for the Children and Families Commission of Orange County, retired from Anaheim City School District (ACSD) in 2009 where she served as superintendent. She began her educational career in Orange County as a junior high English and French teacher and was quickly promoted to director of educational services, assistant superintendent, and then deputy superintendent. She served ACSD as a deputy superintendent before becoming superintendent. Sandra is active in the Anaheim community, serving on the Board of Directors of the Tiger Woods Learning Center, Anaheim Chamber of Commerce, Women's Division of the Anaheim Chamber of Commerce, Anaheim Family YMCA, Leadership Anaheim, Salvation Army, and Police Chief Community Advisory Board. The International Dare Officers' Association honored her with a Distinguished Educator of the Year Award.



Nino Polizzi is the Engineering teacher at Samuelli Academy, a new charter high school located in Santa Ana, California where he is developing and conducting a four-year Engineering curriculum. He is also the Founder/CEO of “Rocket Science Tutors” (RST), an all-volunteer, all engineer organization that has put engineers and scientists in Santa Ana classrooms since 2005. Nino has 30 years’ experience in the aerospace industry working on a wide variety of projects including the International Space Station, DC-X (the world’s first reusable rocket) and the Delta II rocket. He holds a BS Electrical Engineering from Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan and has published “*Igniting STEM Interest In Middle School*” (AIAA-2009-6615).



James Gapp is a native of Orange County who has spent seventeen years in the field of education. In his current position as Director of Technology at Harbor Day School in Corona del Mar, he is responsible for the school's technology and innovation. His love of engineering and tinkering has made the integration of Maker Spaces into the school a labor of love. The students enjoy working on projects using 3D printers, Arduinos, LED lights, cardboard and duct tape to name a few. James held his first School Maker Faire last year and will be again this year on April 23rd. James received a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from the University of Massachusetts and is a current member of the International Society for Technology in Education, Computer Using Educators, and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.



Tamika Lang is a Senior Manager for Global Corporate Citizenship (GCC) at The Boeing Company, Tamika leads the philanthropic and corporate citizenship activities in California, Arizona, Utah and Colorado. Prior to this role, Tamika was the Community Investor and Education Subject Matter Expert for GCC in California where she developed and implemented PreK-12 education and workforce pipeline strategies and supported multiple Boeing sites and businesses throughout the state.

Tamika received her Master of Public Policy at the University of Southern California as a Housing and Urban Development Community Development Fellow. During this time she worked with the public and private sector in community and economic development. Tamika completed her undergraduate work at Loyola Marymount University. Tamika enjoys exploring new communities, cooking, and is an active member of her home church. Tamika resides in Long Beach, California, with her husband, Dr. Yoshado Lang, and their two young children.

