

# Speaker Bios

## Weston Schild

Received his Master of Divinity from Vanderbilt University with a Bachelors of Arts in Religious Studies from Centenary College of Louisiana. He is the Executive Director of Capital Area Alliance for the Homeless and Balance of State System Administrator for the Homeless Management System. His expertise in data collection, management, and reporting makes him a frequently sought voice in understanding homelessness in South Louisiana. As HMIS System Administrator, he supervises a staff of four professionals and works to advance the provision of quality services for homeless and at-risk persons. He also assists to improve data collection, educate the public, and promote responsive policies to prevent and end homelessness.

In addition, he coordinates service providers and supervises the One Stop Homeless Services Center in Baton Rouge. The One Stop houses 15 programs provided by 10 non-profit agencies that address a range of barriers to securing permanent housing. The One Stop also provides help and services for 75-100 homeless persons daily and serves 4,500 clients annually. Under Weston's leadership the One Stop received the Louisiana Housing Corporation's 2019 Community Connections Champion award for the state of Louisiana.

## George Gillam

Started his life in the inner city of New Orleans. At the young age of 16, he was convicted of murder, and spent the next 25 years in prison at Angola. During that time, George was introduced to The Lord and realized he must take Jesus' orders seriously. In Matthew 28:18-20 it states that 'we are to give our lives to Him as His disciples'. While still in prison, George obtained a degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. George now lives in Baton Rouge and maintains an active role in multiple ministries including a leadership position in Steadfast Foundation. Steadfast is a local nonprofit company dedicated to ending poverty in Baton Rouge. Through Steadfast, George is able to introduce men with backgrounds, similar to his own, to Jesus and help them develop the skills and habits they need to provide for themselves and others. George regularly attends First Presbyterian Church and has preached on multiple occasions. He also leads a men's bible study that meets for lunch at Drusilla Restaurant weekly.

## **Patrick Holmes**

A New Orleans native and student of economic theory, public policy, and an advocate for people living with disabilities. As an undergraduate student at Bard College, his time was spent studying the intersection of incarceration and poverty as well as mentoring students at Kingston High School. He graduated with his M.A. in Economic Theory and Public Policy from the Levy School of Economics in 2019 & has worked as a case manager for the Financial Access Inclusion and Resources (FAIR) Program assisting formerly incarcerated people with disabilities through the re-entry process in the Greater New Orleans area. In 2022, Patrick became Disability Rights LA Client Assistance Program (CAP) Manager as well as the program manager of the FAIR program. He has supported numerous individuals with disabilities in the FAIR program to access social security benefits as a SOAR trained advocate. He has also advocated for clients' service needs who engage in Vocational Rehabilitation programming to find, sustain, regain, or advance-in employment. Patrick's continued mission is to serve people living with disabilities in Louisiana so that they can increase the standard of living in their communities by gaining access to an essential life of activity & employment.

## **Ciera Cornelious**

A native of Baker Louisiana. In 2016, she graduated from Southern University and A&M College, where she earned a Bachelor's of Science in Sociology. Upon completion, Ciera pursued careers working with young people within the surrounding urban communities. She has been working with Louisiana Spirit since November 2020. Ciera enjoys journaling, meditating, cooking, reading, traveling, and volunteering in the community.

## **Regina Dominique**

A Louisiana native and a resident of Baton Rouge. She received her Bachelor of Science in Social Work in 2014 and a Master's in Clinical Mental Health in 2021 from Southern University and A&M University. While accomplishing her SW degree, Regina interned at Jetson's Correctional Center for Youth as well as the O'Brien House – a residential treatment center for alcoholism and drug addiction. While getting her Masters, she interned at Our Lady of The Lake Hospital in the acute psychiatric unit. She is currently in the process of applying for LPC. Regina enjoys British T.V., reading, and working in her flower bed.

## **Juliana Matz**

A Case Manager in the Financial Access, Information, and Resources (FAIR) Program at Disability Rights Louisiana since September of 2021. Prior to joining the FAIR Team, she was working at a small grassroots prison re-entry organization in New Orleans, where she triaged formerly incarcerated clients to various community resources and assisted with public benefits enrollments. This opened her eyes to the reality of how incarcerated individuals with disabilities are at different rates compared to the population as a whole. The ways that our criminal justice system exacerbates disabilities and creates new disabled populations are disproportionate. Despite mass incarceration clearly being an issue of disability justice, it became clear that there are often not adequate support services to address the unique and compounding barriers that individuals with disabilities face once released from incarceration. She is passionate about advocating for individuals to have access to the resources they need to survive and live healthy and financially stable lives, in order to ultimately prevent contact with the criminal justice system in the first place and create safer and healthier communities.

## **Carolyn LeBrane Tilton**

As a FAIR Case Manager with Disability Rights of Louisiana, she integrates her 40+ years of experience and acquired knowledge in the academic disciplines of sociology, social psychiatry, public health and public policy in targeted actions that challenge and empower vulnerable and underrepresented populations to achieve their best life. Fueled by her son's conviction and subsequent life sentence in the state of Alabama 13 years ago, she chose to become a part of the "unretired movement," as a reentry case manager in order to assist formerly incarcerated individuals and their families navigate the barriers to having a successful reentry. She is passionate and excited about the daily opportunity to pour into the lives of disabled individuals returning from prison by providing support and encouragement. Ms. Tilton has a Masters Degree from Tulane School of Public Health and a Master's Degree in Divinity from Union Theological Seminary. She has an interest in health equity, diversity and inclusion, and the social determinants of health, particularly in the area of economic equity. A consummate bibliophile, former bookstore owner, and an aficionado of lifelong learning, she loves reading, research and acquiring new knowledge.

## **Angela Martello**

As LPC-S, LAC-CCS is the clinical director and owner of Journey to Insight, an addiction recovery and psychotherapy intensive outpatient program located in Baton Rouge and St. James. She is the co-founder of Foundation Essentials, a non-profit organization and president of the Louisiana Addiction Professionals Association, the newest affiliate of NAADAC. Apart from work, she loves the outdoors and traveling with her family; husband, Josue and kids- Isabella 16, Luca 5, and Mateo 3.

## **Luke Booker**

After spending the first twenty years of his adult life in the construction industry, Luke made the decision to return to school and become a part of the solution. Upon graduating with a 3.875 GPA in his major as well as receiving the President's List Award, he joined Journey to Insight in pursuit of helping those suffering from addiction. Experiencing the loss of several loved ones at the hands of mental illness and substance abuse has served as the catalyst for his passion towards becoming a counselor.

## **Dr. Rose Angelocci**

A Community Work Incentives Coordinator (CWIC) with the Louisiana Benefits Planning Services (LSU WIPA) housed within the Human Development Center at the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in New Orleans. She is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) and holds multiple certifications and licenses in counseling. Prior to joining the staff at LSU, Dr. Angelocci worked at the Training, Resource and Assistive-technology Center (TRAC) at the University of New Orleans. Dr. Angelocci has over 35 years of experience in providing assistive technology services with individuals with a variety of disabilities. Her experience includes assessing and training persons in the use of assistive technology and Braille; directing residential programs for students who are blind transitioning from high school to college and/or employment; conducting vocational evaluations and career counseling; and providing pre-employment transition services for high school students with disabilities.

## **Donald Ray Leger**

First became associated with the Social Security Ticket to Work Program with the Louisiana Benefits Planning Assistance and Outreach (BPAO) Project with the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs from 2001 - 2006 as a Benefits Planner. He joined the staff of LSUHSC Human Development Center in 2006 as their WIPA Program Manager/CWIC. Donald is a 1983 graduate of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Communications.

## **Dr. Elizabeth “Liz” Fussell**

The Director of Baton Rouge Services and WIPA Project Director at Lighthouse Louisiana. She holds an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Masters and Bachelor's degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling. She is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor with experience in private rehabilitation, training, and technical assistance in supported employment, curriculum development, grant development and principal investigation and administration. She has successfully implemented employment related service programs as well as held esteemed positions throughout her career. Most notably, she implemented Supported Employment training and technical assistance, Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy programs in schools throughout Tennessee. She also implemented a Post-Secondary Education Program for students with Developmental Disabilities at The University of Tennessee, Adjunct Instructor, & last but not least, served as Principal Investigator for grants and contracts that provided services throughout Tennessee and the southeast states.

## **Rhett Covington**

The Assistant Secretary for the Louisiana Department of Public Safety & Corrections (DPS&C). Mr. Covington oversees the Office of Offender Reentry, Education and Chaplaincy. He has served in this position under Secretary James LeBlanc since 2014 and formerly served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Reentry from 2009 to 2014. He began his career as a Probation & Parole agent and then supervisor for 15 years in the Baton Rouge area. He is the DPS&C's designated representative on the Louisiana Reentry Advisory Council and the Workforce Investment Council, and is involved in efforts to create and expand local and regional reentry coalitions throughout the state.

## **Sue Killam**

M.Ed., CESP, CP-WIC - Sue has 30 years experience in employment and disability policy. She obtained her Masters from VCU and later worked at the RRTC on SE before she began her career in Louisiana in 1990 on the Supported Employment Systems Change grant. She was Director of Access to Meaningful Employment (AcME, Inc.) for ten years and is one of the authors of APSE's Ethical Guidelines. Sue has served on numerous governor-appointed councils and boards and was one of the founding members of the Louisiana SE Network (Louisiana's APSE), was a Governor-appointed member of the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council, a member of national APSE and has served as Chair of the APSE certification (CESP) council, and a Governor-appointed State as Model Employer (SAME) task force member. Currently, Ms. Killam is an Assistant Professor and Director of Transition, Employment & Careers Initiatives at HDC.

## **Laura Stazio**

M.Sc., CESP, works at LSU Health Sciences Center – Human Development Center. Laura's role in HDC's Employment Initiatives, since 2012 has been to increase the capacity of Supported Employment Agencies in Louisiana through training and mentoring. Laura is a Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) and is president of Louisiana Association for Persons Supporting Employment First (APSE). She is currently serving as a Governor's appointee on the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC) to ensure the involvement of individuals with disabilities in the development and delivery of vocational rehabilitation services to Louisianans with disabilities. She is one of the lead trainers for HDC's Employment First Core Training that meets the requirements for Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) accreditation.

## **Angela Montgomery**

A native of Baton Rouge and proud graduate of Glen Oaks High School. Angela obtained a Masters Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from Southern University and is a Rehabilitation Manager with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS). She started with the agency as a Rehabilitation Counselor and later worked as a Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialist. She has been employed by LRS for 15 years. Prior to working for LRS, Angela began her career in Vocational Rehabilitation as an Employment Specialist with Baton Rouge Vocational Services, formerly a division of the Arc of Baton Rouge.

## **Sigmund Morel**

Has been with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services for almost 10 years. He was a counselor in the Baton Rouge Regional Office for almost 4 years and has been a Program Coordinator in State Office for the past 6 years, specializing in Pre-Employment Transition Services. Prior to LRS, Sigmund spent 13 years providing guidance and information to high school and college students on student financial aid through the TOPS scholarship office. He has a passion for providing high school and college students the tools necessary to reach their full potential and succeed in today's highly competitive work environment.

## **Sharae Vicknair**

Earned her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology at Southeastern Louisiana University, Master of Science in Psychology at University of Louisiana at Lafayette, and her Master of Education in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Louisiana State University. She is currently a Provisionally Licensed Professional Counselor (PLPC) and is working toward becoming a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). Sharae has experience working in community based mental health, as well as college admissions and counseling and accessibility services, currently working as a Counselor for TRiO Student Support Services at Louisiana State University. She is an advocate for LGBTQ+ folks and enjoys engaging in thoughtful conversations about how to improve experiences for LGBTQ+ folks in all areas of service.

## **Lauren Stendahl**

The Director of Impact + Partnerships at Junior Achievement of Greater New Orleans. In her work overseeing the Junior Achievement + YouthForce NOLA Employer Hub, she provides career exploration opportunities to 27 public high schools within Orleans Parish. Lauren thinks of herself as a liaison between schools and local industry and works to expose students to high-wage, high-demand career paths within Greater New Orleans. Lauren previously taught high school special education and believes that career exploration should be an option for every student.

## **Dami Molumo**

The Program Director at Opportunities Academy, a school for students ages 18-22 with moderate to severe exceptionalities. During her time at Opportunities Academy, Dami helped with developing the school's internship to employment pipeline by establishing the curriculum framework that aims to mirror the realistic work experiences for people with exceptionalities. After 3 years of working directly with adults with exceptionalities, she believes in bringing the educational equity gap by providing students with external resources and opportunities that provides them with rigorous post-secondary outcomes and access to employment.

## **Carole Montgomery**

Graduating from LSU with a BS in Social Work in 1983, she began work with the Dale Carnegie Training Systems as an instructor. Between the years of 1983 & 1985, Carole was the Executive Director of the LA Career Development Center for the Deaf and DeafBlind where she designed and implemented comprehensive programs for individuals as well as established the first ever SSP (Support Service Provider) program in LA. She also began the first deafblind camp in LA. Between 1985 & 2010, she worked at the DIOBR/Catholic Deaf Center to help the population of the Deaf Church flourish and through much encouragement and education, the church did indeed expand its population by the time her commitment ended. From 2010 until now, she is the Owner and Executive Director of Whole Person Baton Rouge. Carole has seven children, two of whom present their own challenges – 1 being on the Autism Spectrum and the other being Deaf – These were driving factors in program development and service delivery to consumers.

## **Dr. Madan Kundu**

Received his Ph.D in 1983 from Michigan State University and is a certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC), National Certified Counselor (NCC), and is also a Licensed Rehabilitation Counselor (LRC). Amongst his many years of employment from graduation until now, Madan has been in the Department of Rehabilitation and Disability Studies at Southern University for the past 38 years. He has won academic, research, service, and honor awards, as well as traveled to 40 countries to teach professional Leadership. He has contributed his time & money to Southern University in order to fund grants in such things as training, research, capacity building, and national technical assistance.