



Missouri Early Childhood Policy Symposium for Legislators and Legislative Staff

Thursday, Jan. 14, 2021

Truman Building, Room 490/492 in Jefferson City

Speaker Biographies:

Carolyn Chrisman is the executive director of Kirksville Regional Economic Development Inc., Missouri Rural Enterprise and Innovation Center, and center director for the Kirksville Small Business Development Center in Kirksville, Mo. She is in her ninth year as the executive director for Kirksville Regional Economic Development, Inc., a 501c3 public private partnership.

Her main job entails working on business retention and expansion and business attraction. She works with the major industries in town and is also a leader for workforce development, which includes training, housing, child care and all facets affecting the workforce. Additionally, she serves as the executive director of the Missouri Rural Enterprise and Innovation Center and is the director for the Small Business Development Center. Previously, Chrisman taught middle school social studies in the public school system for over six years. And at the age of 26, she was elected to serve on the Kirksville City Council, which is when her interest in economic development began.

Chrisman holds a Bachelor of Arts in political science and a Master of Arts in education from Truman State University a master's in history from University of Missouri-St. Louis; and a doctorate in education from William Woods University. Chrisman and her husband reside in Kirksville with their four children all under the age of 6.

Kelly Dudley is the early childhood wellness expert for the Department of Mental Health (DMH) in Missouri. Before her work with DMH, Dudley provided direct services to children and their families for nearly 20 years in a variety of settings, including case management, forensic interviewing and mental health consultation. She is a per course instructor for the School of Social Work at Missouri State University. Dudley holds an undergraduate degree in psychology, a graduate degree in social work, and post graduate certificates in forensic child psychology and conflict and dispute resolution. She has lived all over the world, but has settled down in Springfield with her husband, two children and two dogs.

Jeriane Jaegers-Brenneke has been employed with the state of Missouri for over 20 years. She has a passion for developing and administering state-sponsored programs that afford opportunities to clients with barriers so they can support their families and break the poverty cycle. In 2011, she oversaw the largest National Emergency Grant in Missouri of nearly \$40 million, which employed approximately 2,500 previously unemployed persons in disaster cleanup in Joplin and 38 flooded counties. Currently, she oversees the Workforce Initiatives Team (WIT) and the Early Childhood Sections (ECS) within the Department of Social Services. WIT provides employment and training, and crucial wrap-around service opportunities to thousands of low-income Missourians. The ECS provides subsidy payments and quality care funding to providers so low-income parents can participate in work and training.

Sarah Lytle is the director of outreach and education at the Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences (I-LABS) at the University of Washington. Lytle's team communicates the latest science of child development to those who can act on it. In recent years, the team has reached hundreds of thousands of parents, educators, policymakers and opinion leaders both locally and nationally. Under Lytle's leadership, the Outreach and Education team launched an online library of free training modules designed to make science accessible to a broad audience. Lytle has a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and Spanish from the University of Notre Dame and a Ph.D. in developmental psychology from Temple University, where she studied the role of social cues in infants' and toddlers' language learning from screen media. Sarah is a member of the ZERO TO THREE Academy of Fellows.

Alison May is a policy associate with the early care and education project at NCSL. May joined NCSL in early 2011 and leads NCSL's Early Childhood Fellows Program and tracks home visiting legislative efforts in the states and territories. She also authors policy briefs and contributes to NCSL's blog on a range of early learning topics. Additionally, she co-authors a monthly human services newsletter. Before NCSL, May worked at the American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado and at a small nonprofit located northeast of Denver that focused on civic engagement. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Tyler Nottberg is the fifth generation of the Nottberg family to lead U.S. Engineering, where he has served as a project engineer, project manager and vice president. Prior to joining the company, Nottberg helped co-found the Legal, Economic and Regulatory Affairs practice for Gerson Lehrman Group. Before that, he worked as a policy analyst at The Eisenhower Institute and for Senator Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), both in Washington, D.C., and on the senator's 1996 presidential campaign. He serves on the board of Labconco Corporation, as well as a number of nonprofit boards, including The University of Kansas Health System's Advancement Board and The GreenLight Fund's Selection Advisory Committee. He is a trustee of Colorado Succeeds and founder of Aligned, a group of business leaders focused on improving education in Kansas and Missouri. Nottberg is a graduate of Middlebury College and Oxford University, where he was a Keasbey scholar.

Linda Rallo has worked as an education advocate for more than 20 years, the last five as the vice president of Aligned, where she oversees education policy and legislation in Missouri. She received a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Missouri-Columbia and a master's in public policy administration from the University of Missouri-St. Louis. She has been focused on early childhood education and workforce development policies and has a keen interest in advancing public policies that lead to economic growth.

Nancy Scherer graduated from the University of Houston with a bachelor's degree in social science and an emphasis in psychology and early childhood. She has worked for the Department of Health and Senior Services, Section for Child Care Regulation, for 23 years. She has held the following roles within the section: child care facility specialist, child care supervisor and assistant section administrator, and is currently the section administrator. Scherer's entire career has been spent protecting the health and safety of children in one way or another. She started working in a child care center as a classroom teacher just out of college and was a center director for several years before moving into state government. Scherer will always ensure that the work the Section for Child Care Regulation does is in the best interest of children.

Craig Stevenson serves as the director of policy and advocacy for Kids Win Missouri, where he helps advance policies for priorities ranging from early childhood education, health care, foster care, juvenile justice issues and more. Prior to joining the Kids Win Missouri team, Stevenson led the Mozambique initiative of the United Methodist Church, which helped raise funds for critical community needs in Mozambique, Africa. From 2010 to 2015, he worked on the governmental relations team at the University of Missouri. Stevenson is active in his community, serving on the board of directors for the Hallsville School District. Additionally, he and his wife, Brittney, are licensed foster parents.

Pam Thomas is currently the chief of early learning at the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. For the past year, Thomas has lead the department's strategic initiatives, including the implementation of the Preschool Development Grant. She has over 17 years of experience in early childhood, including as an in-home services provider for families at risk for abuse and neglect, case management worker, training consultant, evaluator for early childhood special education and state coordinator of the early intervention program. Thomas has a Bachelor of Science in psychology, a Master of Arts in counseling, and a doctorate in educational leadership.

Emily van Schenkhof is the executive director of the Missouri Children's Trust Fund (CTF), a quasi-governmental foundation that distributes close to \$3 million each year to prevent child abuse and neglect. Van Schenkhof oversees CTF's funding strategy and distribution and also advocates for policy and systems changes in Missouri that prevent child abuse and neglect. Before joining CTF, van Schenkhof was the deputy director and lobbyist for Missouri KidsFirst, the state chapter for Missouri's Child Advocacy Centers and Prevent Child Abuse Missouri. She has helped pass numerous Missouri laws to strengthen Missouri's child welfare system and has successfully secured millions of dollars in state general revenue for efforts to address and prevent child abuse. Van Schenkhof has bachelor's degrees in journalism and political science from the University of Missouri and a master's in public health from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. She lives in Fulton, Mo., with her husband and two daughters.