



WEI SYMPOSIUM SPEAKERS

June 10-11, 2024

Embassy Suites Conference Center, East Peoria

Advancing Workforce Equity in Illinois

We are pleased to announce our general session speakers for the WEI Symposium 2024!



Dr. Keith Curry

President/CEO, Compton College and Co-Founder of Equity Avengers

Keynote Speaker: June 11, 9:45 – 10:45 am

Fireside Chat, 1:30 – 2:15 pm

Unapologetic Leadership: Transforming Community Colleges to Meet Workforce Equity Initiatives

Dr. Curry is responsible for overseeing all departments and functions of Compton College and the District and serves as secretary for the CCCD Board of Trustees. He brings an abundance of energy and innovative ideas to Compton College, along with a wealth of experience as a postsecondary education administrator. Dr. Curry co-founded and chairs Black Student Success Week. He currently serves as chair of both the National Panel on Black Student Enrollment and the Black Student Enrollment Expert Advisory Committee. He is also a member of the University of Southern California Racial Equity in Guided Pathways Commission Taskforce.



Rep. Jehan Gordon-Booth

Illinois State Representative District 92, Speaker Pro Tempore and Chief Budgeteer

Lunchtime Address: June 11, 12:30 – 1:15 pm

Advancing Workforce Equity in Illinois

State Representative Gordon Booth was elected in 2008 in an incredibly historic victory — becoming the first African American from central Illinois to be elected to the state legislature. In 2019, she was named the Deputy Majority Leader and in 2021 she was named Speaker Pro Tempore of the Illinois House of Representatives and in 2023 she was named Chief Budgeteer for the House.



Matt Sigelman

President, Burning Glass Institute

Opening Speaker: June 10, 2:30 – 4:00 pm

Identifying Illinois' Highest Value Credential Opportunities

Matt Sigelman and his team created the field of real-time labor market data, a breakthrough innovation that has transformed the way that policy makers, researchers, employers, education institutions, and workers understand, plan for, and connect with the world of work. By mining billions of job openings and career histories, Matt led the company that has become Lightcast to become a leading authority on the global market for talent, harnessing advanced AI and natural language processing to render data that provide unprecedented granularity on the changing landscape of opportunity for workers.



Purva DeVol, Ph.D.

Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Triton College

Closing General Session: June 11, 2:30 – 3:15 pm

Celebrating Our WEI Student Scholars

Dr. Purva DeVol is the Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement at Triton College, where she spearheads pivotal initiatives in strategic planning, accreditation, grants, professional development, and equity and inclusion, with a focus on the transformative the Workforce Equity Initiative. Dedicated to fostering equity and inclusion in higher education, Dr. DeVol will assume the role of President of the Illinois Community College Diversity Commission on July 1, advocating for access and comprehensive support for all students. Dr. DeVol's multifaceted experience spans institutional planning, communications, academic affairs, and student services. She has guided students to academic success through teaching and mentoring. She has also published and presented in the fields of education and science.



Dr. Lorenzo Baber

Professor of Higher Education in the Department of Education, Organization, Policy and Leadership (EPOL); Director of OCCRL

Consortium Session: June 10, 1:00 pm

Workforce Equity and Access Commission Work

Dr. Baber is the current Director of the Office of Community College Research and Leadership (OCCRL) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Baber's scholarly interest broadly examine equity and social justice in post-secondary education. His research foci include leadership within community college contexts; experiences of minoritized students in post-secondary STEM education; and use of critical theory to inform higher education policies and practices.



Dr. Brian Durham

Executive Director, Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)

Welcome Address: June 11, 9:30 – 9:45 am

Dr. Brian Durham, Executive Director for the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), began his career at the agency in 2001 in workforce development. He has provided leadership for and served as an administrator in adult education and family literacy, career and technical education, research and policy studies, and academic affairs. He has managed the state's top-rated transfer system, the Illinois Articulation Initiative, managed the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (now the Strengthening Career and Technical Education Act), and led the program approval and program review process. Dr. Durham oversaw the implementation of transitional math pathways in the state and worked closely with college stakeholders to design a multiple measures placement policy for the community college system. He serves on the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB), the IWIB Executive Committee, the P-20 Council, and as the Board liaison to the Illinois Council of Community College Presidents, among many other areas of service.



Jennifer K. Foster

Deputy Executive Director, Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)

Lunchtime Address: June 11, 12:30 – 1:15 pm

Advancing Workforce Equity in Illinois

Jennifer K. Foster is the Deputy Executive Director at the ICCB. She served as the State Director for Adult Education and Literacy and High School Equivalency. Jennifer leads the administration efforts for the Workforce Equity Initiative (WEI). Mrs. Foster has been with the ICCB for more than 20 years and worked in adult education for over 30 years. She is a current board member of and the past chair of the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (NAEPDC) and the National Council of State Directors of Adult Education (NCSDAE). She is also a member of the State Workforce Board and the Chicago Workforce Board.

We also wish to thank our breakout session presenters for providing a variety of topics at the Symposium.

Visit the ICSPS website for Symposium agenda, registration, and hotel information:

<https://icsps.illinoisstate.edu/events/wei-symposium>

Symposium presented by: Illinois Community College Board and Illinois Central College, in partnership with Rep. Jehan Gordon-Booth and Lumina Foundation. Please direct questions to: dawn.koeltzow@icc.edu