

# Supporting Postsecondary Credentials Without Debt

6.12.2024

## *Speaker Bios:*



### **Ray Boshara**

Legislative Fellow, U.S. Senator Bob Casey

Ray Boshara is a Legislative Fellow with the Office of U.S. Senator Bob Casey and a Senior Advisor at the Social Policy Institute at Washington University in St. Louis.

Until October 2022, Ray served over 11 years at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, where he was the founding director of a research center focused on wealth inequality. Before moving to St. Louis in 2009, Ray was Vice President of New America, a DC-based think-tank, and prior to that worked in the U.S. Congress, Prosperity Now, the United Nations in Rome, and Ernst & Whinney (now EY). Ray also serves on many local and national

boards.

In the fall of 2021, Ray published *The Future of Building Wealth* in partnership with the Aspen Institute and previously published *The Next Progressive Era* with Phillip Longman. He has written for the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and *Atlantic Monthly* and has appeared on *CBS Sunday Morning*, *NPR*, *Bloomberg*, and *CNN*, among others. He has advised presidential candidates and every Administration since George W. Bush's and has testified before the U.S. House and Senate several times.

Raised in Akron, Ohio, Ray is a first-gen graduate of The Ohio State University. He also holds master's degrees from Yale Divinity School and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard.



## **Kesa Jessup**

Principal Impact Strategist- Place, Health Forward Foundation

Kesa Jessup is an experienced higher education advocate and faculty with over fifteen years of experience supporting higher education students at four-universities and community college. She is a champion for educational access, equity, and socioeconomic equality and impact for inclusive and transformational learning experiences that lead to sustaining careers. Kesa earned her

undergraduate and graduate degrees from North Carolina Central University, an education specialist degree from Appalachian State University, and is currently a doctoral student at North Carolina State University. She has served in several positions at higher education in financial aid, retention and completion, educational technology and analytics, and a comprehensive enrollment leader leading advising, financial aid, career services, admissions, and records offices. Currently, Kesa serves as Program Director of Access to Postsecondary Education at the Winston-Salem Foundation, North Carolina's oldest community foundation. Kesa also continues to connect with students at North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University, teaching African American History.



## **Tanya Garcia**

**Vice President, The Institute for College Access & Success**

As Vice President, Tanya I. Garcia, Ph.D. is responsible for advancing TICAS's state policy agenda, overseeing TICAS's research and communications, and strengthening TICAS's relationships with key partners and policymakers as an external ambassador for the organization.

Before TICAS, Tanya served as Deputy Secretary and Commissioner for Postsecondary and Higher

Education at the Pennsylvania Department of Education, where she led efforts to create student-centered policies, practices, and funding and worked with partners across the Commonwealth to build learners' sense of belonging on college campuses. As Pennsylvania's state higher education executive in a landscape of over 350 postsecondary institutions, she advocated extensively for today's students, supported institutional leaders on how to better serve them, and shaped higher education and workforce policies as the agency's representative on multiple boards.

Prior to Pennsylvania, Tanya was the first staff member with postsecondary policy expertise to join the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. As Associate Director of Postsecondary Policy Research and Associate Research Professor, she significantly enhanced the Center's ability to infuse an equity perspective in research conceptualization, design, and production and led research projects on a variety of topics including the building of learning and earning ecosystems, examining the value of postsecondary certificates and associate's degrees, and supporting state leaders in their effort to close equity gaps in Colorado.

Tanya's 25 years in the postsecondary policy space includes stints at The George Washington University, American University, New Mexico Higher Education Department, State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, and Lumina Foundation. She's especially proud of having led the development of the statewide dual credit program while in New Mexico.

A consummate student-centered advocate and first-generation student, Tanya earned a B.A. in Philosophy and a B.S. in Biology from Florida International University, an M.A. in Higher Education Administration from The George Washington University, and a Ph.D. in Public Administration from American University.



## **Kevin Almasy**

Manager, Dell Scholars Career Services & Alumni

Kevin collaborates with the Dell Scholars Program team to empower college students as they progress toward their degree and into their careers and/or graduate school.

Prior to joining the foundation, Kevin worked in multiple positions at The University of Texas at Austin, most recently as associate director for communications for the division of

diversity and community engagement. Before moving to Austin, he served as a policy advisor for the Federal Communications Commission, developing public-private initiatives with a focus on closing the digital divide via broadband adoption. Kevin has a bachelor's degree in communications from Denison University and a master's in journalism from the Newhouse School at Syracuse University.