

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services'  
African American Advisory Council,  
in partnership with Illinois State University, Northern Illinois University,  
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and University of Illinois Chicago presents:

**The 26th Annual  
African American Advisory Council Institute**  
IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE  
**7th Annual Permanency Enhancement Symposium**



**"FROM BEGINNING TO END #ItAllMatters"**



*Keynote Speaker*  
**Exavier Pope**

**Thursday, May 31, 2018**  
SOUTH SUBURBAN COLLEGE,  
15800 State Street, South Holland, Illinois 60473

Illinois Department of  
**DCFS**  
Children & Family Services

Bruce Rauner  
Governor

B. J. Walker  
Acting Director

---

May 15, 2018

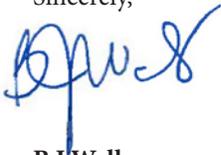
Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 26th Annual DCFS African American Advisory Council Institute hosted in partnership with Illinois State University, Northern Illinois University, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and the University of Illinois Chicago.

This year's conference theme is "*From Beginning to End: #ItAllMatters*". The theme serves to help you better understand the journey youth experience at the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Participants at this year's conference can take part in one of four large workshops. Each workshop focuses on a particular age group of youth from early childhood to adulthood. Those in attendance can also take the opportunity to listen to former African American youth in care and learn from their experiences during a mega-panel presentation that includes DCFS Administrators.

I encourage you to take this opportunity to engage with your colleagues, the presenters, service providers and partners that are dedicated to improving services to African American children and families in Illinois.

Sincerely,



**B J Walker**  
Acting Director

100 West Randolph St., 6-100 • Chicago, Illinois 60601-3249  
312-814-6800 • 312-814-8783/TTY  
[www.DCFS.illinois.gov](http://www.DCFS.illinois.gov)



## SOUTH SUBURBAN COLLEGE

15800 S. State St.  
South Holland, IL  
60473-1200  
(708) 596-2000

### Board of Trustees

Frank M. Zuccarelli,  
**Chairman**

John A. Daly,  
Vice-Chair

Anthony P. DeFilippo

Vivian Payne

Janet M. Rogers  
Secretary

Terry R. Wells

Joseph Whittington Jr.

Don Manning,  
College President

Our Mission  
Is to **Serve** our  
**Students** and  
the **Community**  
Through Lifelong  
Learning.

May 18, 2018

Dear Conference Participants:

Welcome to South Suburban College! We are honored to partner with the African American Advisory Council of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services to bring this important conference to our college.

We applaud the Council's tireless efforts to address the importance of helping children in the child welfare system achieve permanency and respond to needs of African American children in foster care. A special thank you to the conference coordinators, participants, panelists, keynote speaker, and others who played a key role in making this year's event a success!

South Suburban College is a public two-year community college that provides high quality educational programs. One of its premier programs is the Associates in Applied Science degree in Early Childhood Education (ECE) designed to prepare paraprofessionals for a career in childcare. The ECE program has embedded civic and social engagement opportunities within the course offerings. Through service learning partnerships, students have the opportunity to engage with the community and to assist others less fortunate. South Suburban College looks forward to collaborating with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services in future service learning efforts.

We are proud of the work we do at South Suburban College and welcome the opportunity to partner with organizations such as the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. We are confident that many of our institution's core values including service, community, collaboration, excellence, and respect align with the Department's ongoing dedication to providing unrivaled professional service to ensure safe, loving homes, and brighter futures for every child in Illinois.

On behalf of the college's Board of Trustees, we wish you a productive day of sharing and learning!

Sincerely,

Don Manning  
President

[ssc.edu](http://ssc.edu)



African American Advisory Council  
1911 South Indiana Ave.  
Chicago, Illinois 60616  
Tracy Marshall, Chairperson

May 31, 2018

Dear Conference Participants:

I would like to take this occasion to extend a warm welcome to each of you attending this year's African American Advisory Council's 26th Annual Institute in partnership with Illinois State University, Northern Illinois University, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, and University of Illinois Chicago. We also would like to give a special thanks to South Suburban College for hosting and providing the venue for this year's Institute. We are always inspired by the energy participants bring each and every year to this event. We are optimistic that the trend will continue this year and we expect the energy level to be intensified even more by hearing outstanding workshop presenters and our keynote speaker.

The planning committee has strategically developed workshops to provide you with some insight on strategies that can be used in your work with youth and families.

This year's theme "From Beginning to End #It All Matters" focuses on the entire life of a child from infancy to adulthood. The department's commitment to promoting the healthy development of youth in care is paramount to the work we do every day. Our goal is to share the great efforts that are underway to assist us with engaging children and families while establishing community based connections that will support, strengthen, and empower African American communities. We must take advantage of every available resource, service and program at our disposal to give children a chance to have the best quality of life.

Members of the AAAC always look forward to networking with you during the Institute. We would like for you to give serious thought to the topics that are highlighted in our theme and workshops by sharing your knowledge and experiences. Remember your colleagues who are not in attendance and please share the information you receive then use it to impact and enhance the lives of children and families. Thanks again for spending the day with us.

Positive regards,



**Tracy Marshall**

*AAAC Chairperson*



Illinois Department of Children and Family Services  
African American Advisory Council

**Tracy Marshall, Chairperson**  
Public Service Administrator  
Co-Chairperson Conference Planning Committee

**Keith Smith, Vice-Chairperson**  
Child Welfare Specialist

**Robin Albritton**  
Public Service Administrator  
Co-Chairperson, Conference Planning Committee

**Lori Welcher-Evans, Secretary**  
Public Service Administrator

**James Bracey**  
Child Welfare Advance Specialist

**Michelle Carter**  
Child Protection Specialist

**Fayette Coleman-Gill**  
Public Service Administrator  
Conference Planning Committee

**Cheryl Dampeer**  
Child Welfare Specialist  
Conference Planning Committee

**Shirley Davis-Barsh**  
Public Service Administrator

**Carole Freeman**  
Public Service Administrator

**Angela D. Hassell**  
Associate Deputy Director

**Renee Heard**  
Child Welfare Advance Specialist  
Conference Planning Committee

**Jacqueline Johnson**  
Public Service Administrator

**Tracey King**  
Public Service Administrator

**Rhonda Laye**  
Senior Public Service Administrator

**Veronica Mattison**  
Administrative Case Reviewer  
Conference Planning Committee

**Kilonzo Musau**  
Public Service Administrator

**Reginal Riddle - Young**  
Child Welfare Specialist

**Quincy Washington**  
Public Service Administrator

**Jere Murry**  
Ex-Officio Member  
Executive Deputy Director, LSSI

**Rochelle Crump**  
Chief of African American Services

**Brooke Taylor**  
Special Projects Manager – Office of Professional Development

## Keynote Speaker Exavier Pope



Exavier Pope is a native of Chicago and is a product of the Chicago Public School system. Exavier has always been academically gifted and tested into Whitney Young High School where he pursued his educational goals. He earned a scholarship to Iowa State University; however, he did not complete that program and found himself homeless. Exavier's grandmother, through her contacts and tenacity, was able to connect Exavier to the Director of Roosevelt University's Upward Bound program. Exavier attended Upward Bound and then transferred to the University of Illinois Chicago in 1997. Exavier ultimately graduated in 2000 with majors in Economics and Finance and became a Portfolio Fund Accounting Analyst. Exavier wanted to be a sports agent and eventually enrolled in law

school at Rutgers University. He later began his private practice where he managed transactions for athletes and entertainers.

To say that Exavier Pope's childhood consisted of many difficult obstacles would truly be an understatement. His father had little involvement in his life and was abusive to his mother. Exavier's mother was in turn abusive to him and his siblings and eventually was incarcerated. Life's unexpected challenges resulted in Exavier's maternal grandmother caring for

him for a period of time but in the end he found himself in foster care. Nevertheless, he would prove to all that he was down but not broken.

Exavier has an extensive resume which includes book and media negotiations, talent appearances, and speaking engagements. He has been instrumental in branding various personalities. Exavier is an award winning attorney, on-air legal analyst, media personality, Fortune 500 speaker, content creator, writer, tastemaker, thought leader and certified yoga instructor. Exavier is the host & creator of #SuitUP Podcast through his production company 528 Media, a news magazine and variety program focusing on business, law and wider societal issues of sports mixed with music, style and culture.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES &  
AFRICAN AMERICAN ADVISORY COUNCIL

*present the*  
26th Annual Institute

**“FROM BEGINNING TO END #ItAllMatters”**

*May 31, 2018*

9 a.m..... **Registration**

9 a.m. – 6 p.m..... **Exhibit/Vendor Area Open**

9:55 a.m. – 11:30 a.m..... **Opening Plenary Session**

Introduction of Mistress of Ceremony- Robin Albritton  
Mistress of Ceremony – Dr. Fayette Coleman- Gill  
AAAC Procession  
National Anthem (*see page 15*)  
Invocation – Keith Smith  
Libation – Dr. Christian Akiwowo

**Welcoming Remarks**

Angela Baron-Jeffrey, Northern Illinois University  
Dr. Lynette D. Stokes, Vice President of Academic Services, South Suburban College  
Debra Dyer- Webster, IDCFS Chief Deputy Director  
Rochelle Crump, IDCFS Office of African American Services  
Robert Blackwell, IDCFS Office of Racial Equity  
Tracy Marshall, African American Advisory Council Chairperson

**Keynote Speaker, Exavier Pope**

**AAAC Awards, Shirley Davis Barsh & Carole Freeman**

11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. .... **Lunch**

1 p.m. – 2 p.m..... **Concurrent Breakouts**

- What can be done to Create and Sustain Stability for our most vulnerable youth?
- Young Children and their Exposure to Trauma
- Life Skills Acquisition Among Youth in Care
- Creating a Culture to Promote Postsecondary Education and Employment for Youth in College and Foster Care Alumni

2:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. .... **Mega Roundtable Forum**

Real Talk

*Mega-Workshop will explore our advocacy role and responsibilities for providing essential services to youth – from the crib to college and beyond. A candid conversation will take place with Experiential Experts, who have lived it, breathed it and have earned the right to tell their stories. From Beginning to End is not just a theme it’s a movement!*

*Moderator: Angela Baron-Jeffrey*

*Presenters: Dr. Kimberly Mann, Davina Bridges, Jimmy Danzy,  
Serena Rogers (Burns)*

3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. .... Closing Remarks – Tracy Marshall and Dr. Doris Houston

*(Vendors open until 6 p.m.)*



## Concurrent Breakouts

### **Breakout 1: What can be done to Create and Sustain Stability for our most vulnerable youth?**

In recent times, DCFS, POS and service providers have faced many challenges in how they can provide support to children and families. This workshop will discuss information on some of the approaches that may be used to identify, increase and maximize pertinent resources, primarily on the front end. We as child welfare professionals will take a closer look at the 0-5 age group, exploring current resources, needed resources and the how we can increase and sustain those critical services through community engagement and other support systems.

*Presenter: Andria Goss*

*Facilitators: Michelle Carter  
Lori Welcher-Evans*

*Room: Hall A*

### **Breakout 2: Young Children and their Exposure to Trauma**

This workshop will focus on childhood trauma. Preverbal traumas and preschool traumas are often unrecognized by professionals. Preverbal traumas can have significant impact on a child's developmental trajectory. This workshop will explore the following areas:

- Definition of trauma
- Understanding early childhood trauma
- Developing an awareness of short-term and long-term implications of exposure to violence in young children
- Learning what actions to take to assist children that are exposed to violence

*Presenter: Te'Aira Malone-Zuccaro*

*Facilitators: Rhonda Laye  
Cheryl Dampeer*

*Room: M.B. Financial*

### **Breakout 3: Life Skills Acquisition Among Youth in Care**

When youth in care are legally emancipated, or “age out” of the foster care system are they really prepared to live on their own? Have they acquired the skills and support needed to live independently? This workshop will provide an overview of the current study of the First Star Academy at Illinois State University, a college preparatory program, that increases life skills among current youth in care and emphasizes the importance of the development of skills related to daily functioning, also known as life skills, for youth transitioning into adulthood.

*Presenter: Mariaton Tate*

*Facilitators: James Bracey  
Carole Freeman*

*Room: Hall B*

### **Breakout 4: Creating a Culture to Promote Postsecondary Education and Employment for Youth in College and Foster Care Alumni**

In Illinois, hundreds of youth “age out” of care each year, many without a plan for employment or education. Many struggle with finishing high school and meeting their own basic needs (e.g., housing, food, and clothing) and postsecondary education may seem out of reach. Many youth do well academically and have great potential to succeed in college) and in addition to youth’s perseverance, resilience, and hard work, there are other factors we know that can help support their success. This workshop will focus on ways that community agencies, colleges and universities, caregivers, DCFS, and youth can work together to create a culture to promote postsecondary education and employment for youth in care and foster care alumni.

*Presenter: Dr. Lynette D. Stokes  
Jennifer M. Geiger  
Jackie Sharpe  
Kate Danielson*

*Facilitators: Jackie Johnson  
Quincy Washington*

*Room: Hall C*



## Presenters



**Angela Baron-Jeffrey** is the director of the Center for Child Welfare and Education at Northern Illinois University and the Educational Access Project for DCFS.

Angela has a personal commitment to families and community. Her passion for justice and equity fuels her work and advocacy for children and families. She consults extensively in the area of education, community development, church leadership and business management in the United States and abroad. She has used her expertise to develop and implement educational, social and religious programs for adults and adolescents in urban and suburban communities wherever she has lived.

For almost two decades, Angela has provided direction and leadership to benefit children and families in Illinois involved with the child welfare system. The main focus of her work is to improve outcomes for children who experienced abused and neglected by helping them access needed educational services, supports and opportunities. She also partners with child welfare staff and educators to build their capacity for helping children achieve their educational goals. To this end, she provides oversight, and together with her staff, participates in policymaking, forging public-private partnerships in education, research for continuous quality improvement, professional development for educators and social workers, training and support for caregivers, and direct technical assistance for resolving educational issues faced by foster youth.

Moreover, Angela collaborates with other University leaders in Illinois in providing consultation, data analysis and support to the Illinois' Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in its joint effort to reduce disparity for children of color face in child welfare and improve permanency outcomes. Furthermore she engages in volunteer activities as a leader in her local county.

Angela's desire for equity and justice drives her to collaborate with other advocates and agencies who work to address social ills, transform communities and improve lives.



**Davina Bridges** was first introduced to the DCFS system at the age of 3 and remained a youth in care for over 18 years. Her life story has been one that has given her firsthand knowledge of how the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services actually work. As a foster child she experienced multiple moves and transitions on a regular basis and as a result dropped out of high school. Although Davina had numerous challenges in completing her education, giving up was not an option. She obtained her GED and attended community college determined to secure a brighter future for her and her son. Davina impressively obtained her undergraduate degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2015 and earned a Masters of Social Work degree from DePaul University in 2018. Most recently, she has been accepted into Michigan State University's J.D program where she plans to pursue a degree in Civil Law in the fall of 2018.

Davina began her professional career with Volunteers of America as a Child Welfare Specialist. Currently she is employed by Lawrence Hall Youth Services as Placement Service Coordinator. She continues to strive for the best and believes that persistence is one of her strongest qualities. Davina has strong convictions, which she attributes to being a single parent and not wanting her son's childhood to resemble her own. She is determined not to allow her past to define their future.

Davina knows that her childhood experiences has shaped her into becoming the person that she is today and has allowed her successes to be building blocks for her future. Davina has overcome tremendous adversity and has accomplished much more with less and she continued to keep her eyes on the prize.



**Fayette Coleman-Gill, PSA, MS.ED, Psy.D** As an employee of the Department of Children and Family Services for almost three decades, Fayette has dedicated her life to the Child Welfare system. Her greatest passion is bringing healing to families who have been through traumatic and systematic inclusion. She has provided assistance with her expertise with children and families, where there are specialized needs, developmental delays and targeted youth in care. Fayette's goal is to continue to help families find healthy perceptions of them and strengthen their relationships so they can know themselves as purposeful, complete, whole and safe.

Fayette provides advocacy for those who are in residential and group homes to help them step down into the least restrictive environment. Fayette provides leadership, consultation and collaboration with stake

holders and supports to help engage families her life long career with the Department of Children and Family Services.

Fayette's educational background includes a Bachelors of Psychology-Northern University/Chicago State University; Masters of Education Counseling/School Guidance-Chicago State University; Doctorate in Clinical Psychology-Adler School of Professional Psychology; Adlerian Psychotherapy Graduate Certificate from Adler Campus in Toronto Canada



**Kate Danielson** Kate's belief that education is the "great equalizer" has been the cornerstone of her life's work - first as a public school teacher, later running mentoring programs, and finally culminating in the founding of Foster Progress. Foster Progress is a nonprofit in Chicago which empowers youth from foster care to become successful adults, especially through access and success in higher education. They provide mentoring and scholarships, professional development, advocacy, and on campus programming to support youth from foster care. Kate also loves her role as mom to three boys, one of whom was adopted through foster care.

*MS Education and Social Policy, Northwestern University*

*BA Education and English, North Park University*



**Jimmy Danzy** During my four years of undergraduate school at the University of Illinois, I had many memorable experiences. The day that I crossed the stage stands out the most, but I remember vividly what aided me along the way. My family that always reminded me that anything was possible. The wealth of knowledge shared by the professors and faculty, ensured I would be prepared to handle any obstacles ahead. Additionally, DCFS (through the Youth in college program) which gave me the opportunity to be a part of many experiences. My DCFS advisors tenacity for meeting deadlines and continuous support helped fuel my ambitions.

After graduating with my Bachelors in Accountancy, I began working for various healthcare organizations. I take pride in knowing I support an organization that makes a difference in the lives of many. Continuing on my personal obligation to enrich the community, I joined the scholarship committee at my church. I facilitate workshops that teach college readiness and interviewing skills for college bound students. I am currently pursuing an MBA from Loyola University Chicago.

I hope that the DCFS and the Youth in college program can continue to provide financial and professional assistance to students. Likewise, preserve its unique ability to foster an environment in which students can network and build relationships with case workers and advisors. I am confident that staff at DCFS and their programs have and will continue to produce dedicated, successful, and intellectual youth for years to come.



**Dr. Jennifer M. Geiger, PhD, MSW** is an Assistant Professor at the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her research focuses on promoting access and success for youth in care and foster care alumni in higher education settings. She also conducts research to support and promote resilience among caregivers (kin and non-relative) for children and youth in care. Dr. Geiger has co-authored 25 peer-reviewed journal articles, and 3 book chapters on foster care and child maltreatment. She co-authored "Intergenerational Transmission of Child Maltreatment" and "Assessing Empathy" in 2017.

She is the Principal Investigator for the Cook County Permanency Enhancement Project (PEP), a statewide partnership with IDCFS which provides technical assistance to action teams in Cook County to address issues related to racial disproportionality and disparity in the child welfare system and communities. Dr. Geiger is the Co-Director for the FoCUS-Ed Network, a national research collaborative to promote access and success for youth in care and alumni in higher education. She was a Co-Investigator for Bridging Success at Arizona State University, a recruitment and retention program for foster care alumni at ASU, and Co-PI for Bridging Success Early-Start, a pre-college program for foster care alumni designed to orient new students to college life and expectations at a higher education institution.

Dr. Geiger received her PhD from Arizona State University in Phoenix, Arizona prior to coming to Chicago and has over 10 years of experience working with children and families.



**Andria Goss, M.S. '02**, is a graduate of Erikson's M.S. in Child Development program and Loyola University Chicago's School of Social Work. Andria has worked with children and families in the child welfare system for more than 20 years. Currently, she provides leadership for Erikson's Early Childhood Project with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. In this role, Andria influences both practice and policy in support of young children who have experienced abuse and neglect. Child development, the impact of trauma, and supporting family systems are her areas of interest and expertise. Currently, Andria is a Zero to Three Fellow and hopes to use this opportunity to leverage vast changes in child welfare practice surrounding the needs of young children in the system.



**Dr. Doris M. Houston** is the incoming Director of the School of Social Work at Illinois State University. She also serves as the Director of the Center for Child Welfare and Adoption Studies within the School of Social Work. Her areas of expertise include: foster care/adoption services, equity and inclusion in human services and education; and higher education access for underserved populations. She is the co-founder of "Together Creating Community" (TCC), a peer leadership network for foster care alumni who attend Illinois State University, and she serves a Co-Project Manager of First Star Academy- a college preparatory program at Illinois State University.

Prior to joining the faculty at ISU, Dr. Houston served as an Outcome Evaluation Specialist at the University of Illinois' Institute of Government and Public Affairs. She began her professional career as a Child Welfare Specialist and Adoption Specialist with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services where she also held the position of Field Office Supervisor at the Urbana, Illinois field office.



**Te'Aira Malone-Zuccaro** is a Licensed Clinical Counselor, who specializes in assessment and treatment of complex childhood trauma. Te'Aira is also a Certified Domestic Violence Professional, experienced with helping families address serious and dangerous conflicts. She was nominated in the "2015 Chicago Reader" as one of the top 20 Chicagoans who is committed to helping people within the community. She currently works as a clinical program manager for Metropolitan Family Services.



**Dr. Kimberly Mann, Ph.D., L.C.S.W.**, currently serves as the Deputy Director for the DCFS Office of Child Well-Being. Since joining the Department in 2008, she has guided the development of trauma-informed practices, served as Project Director for the Illinois Birth- Three Title IV-E Waiver and currently leads the implementation of the Early Childhood Court Team initiative. Her practice, program development and research interests include clinical practice with children and their families, and the impact of trauma in the lives of youth. Dr. Mann has more than 20 years of graduate and undergraduate teaching experience in Social Work; and 30 years' experience working with youth and families, primarily in child welfare, public school and community-based settings. Within her current role, she promotes the physical, cognitive, social and emotional well-being of youth served by the child welfare system and administers programs that support the developmental needs of children aged 0-6.



**Serena Rogers (Burns)** I am a former youth in care. I graduated from Curie High School in the spring of 1999 and went to Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. In the fall of 2000, I was awarded the DCFS scholarship and went on to graduate with a Bachelor's degree in Social Work in 2003. I started my career in foster care in 2003 and left the field for a while and went to Early Childhood. In 2012, I obtained a Master's in Criminal Justice with an emphasis in Law Enforcement. Most of my research has centered on the dually involved youth who are in care and involved in the criminal justice system. I am huge supporter of restorative justice. Due to my passion for dually-involved youth in care, I came back to foster care as a case management supervisor in 2013. I am currently a Child Protection Investigator for DCFS. I attribute part of my success to my former case manager Renee Heard whom I've kept in touch

with since emancipating. My hope is to be to impact other youth in care with my story and give to them what Mrs. Heard gave to me, HOPE.



**Jackie Sharp** A proud native of Starkville, MS, Jackie Sharp moved to Chicago in 1982 after completing her Bachelors of Social Work and Masters of Education from Mississippi State University. In 2003, Ms. Sharp received her Masters of Social Work (MSW) from Governors State University with a focus in Children and Families. She started her career in social services at Bobby E. Wright Mental Health Center as a Mental Health Specialist III in 1982. Ms. Sharp has held the titles Residential Supervisor, Clinical Therapist, VP of Administrative Services, Quality Assurance Director, Child Welfare Administrator, Deputy Executive Director, and Adjunct Professor.

Currently, Ms. Sharp is the Chief Executive Officer of Lakeside Community Committee, a non- profit social service agency that works with abused and neglected children and their families, pregnant and parenting teen moms and their babies, relative caregivers and unaccompanied alien children. Ms. Sharp is a part-time Adjunct Professor at South Suburban College in South Holland, Illinois where she teaches a variety of human services administration classes.

Ms. Sharp has dedicated her career to ensuring that children and families receive “best practices” services. In 2014, Ms. Sharp received her certification to work with Veterans and their Families from the Dominican University School of Social Work.

She is a member of the Black Administrators in Child Welfare, National Association of Black Social Workers, National Association of Social Worker as well as a long time Peer Reviewer for the Council of Accreditation for Children and Family Services (COA). Ms. Sharp is a member of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Screening for Child Abuse and Neglect Committee (SCAN).



**Lynette D. Stokes, Ed, D.** Having worked in public service for over 18years, Dr. Lynette Stokes has served as an advocate of youth in the child welfare system, taught elementary education and worked for equal rights organizations. Prior to being named Vice President of Academic Services at South Suburban College June 2013, she spent 11 years at the City Colleges of Chicago improving the quality of education by promoting pedagogical and andragogical techniques and strategies that support academic excellence for all students. On April 12, 2018, Dr. Stokes was approved by the board of trustees of South Suburban College as the President- elect with an effective date of October 1, 2018.

During her seven year tenure with Ada S. McKinley Foster Care, Dr. Stokes prepared over 200 families to receive a foster home license, authored the training curriculum for more than 500 families and developed multi-faceted workshops to assist nearly 200 children with the transition in independent living. Dr. stokes is well acquainted with the foster care system. She lived in seven different foster homes as a child. Dr. Stokes understands the value of giving back to the community and as such remains an advocate for

children and families through her contributions to scholarship programs and support of toy, clothing and food drives. She is a true example of persistence and resiliency



**Mariaton Tate** is a native of Chicago, Illinois. She recently obtained a Master of Social Work degree from Illinois State University (ISU). Over the last year, she served as the MSW intern for First Star Academy at ISU, a college preparatory program for youth in care throughout Central Illinois. Throughout this time, she had the opportunity to serve as a mentor for the youth involved and expand her knowledge of the child welfare system. She looks forward to continuing advocacy for youth in care throughout her career. Her career interests also include social justice advocacy, education, and research. When she is not working, she enjoys spending time with family and friends and being involved in local community projects.



## Special Thanks

AAAC Institute Planning Committee would like to acknowledge the following individuals for their generous financial and in-kind contributions toward the success of this year's institute:

### **South Suburban College**

#### **Workshop Presenters**

**Dr. Doris Houston**

Illinois State University

**Angela Baron-Jeffrey**

Northern Illinois University

**Dr. Venessa Brown**

Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville

**Dr. Jennifer Geiger**

University of Illinois at Chicago

**Chris Hamb**

New Media Specialist, Crisp Media, LLC

**President Stephen Mittons**

AFSCME and Local 2081

**Dana Drummer**

Chief Steward, AFSCME and Local 2081

**Monico Whittington-Eskridge**

DCFS, Office of Professional Development

**Black Administrators in Child Welfare**

Illinois Chapter

**Brooke Taylor**

Special Projects Manager, DCFS Office of Professional Development

#### **Exhibitors and Vendors**



# The Negro National Anthem

Lift every voice and sing  
Till earth and heaven ring.  
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;  
Let our rejoicing rise  
High as the listening skies,  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,  
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us,  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun  
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,  
Bitter the chastening rod,  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;  
Yet with a steady beat,  
Have not our weary feet  
Come to the place for which our fathers signed?  
We have come over a way that with tears have been watered,  
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,  
Out from the gloomy past,  
Till now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,  
God of our silent tears,  
Thou who has brought us this far on the way;  
Thou who as by Thy might  
Led us into the light,  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, Our God, where we met Thee;  
Lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,  
May we forever stand.  
True to our God,  
True to our native land.

---

*James Weldon Johnson June 17, 1871 – June 26, 1938*



[www2.illinois.gov/DCFS](http://www2.illinois.gov/DCFS)

