

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

DAVE EGGERS

Author, publisher, education activist

THEME: Instruction / Leadership

CATEGORY: Diversity / ELL / Drop Out Prevention / Community Involvement / Diversity

TOPIC: Teachers Have it Easy - Talk and film



Born in Boston, Dave Eggers is the author of the memoir *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* (2000); the novel *You Shall Know Our Velocity* (2002); the story collection *How We Are Hungry* (2004); and the novel *What Is the What* (2006). He is editor of the annual *The Best American Nonrequired Reading* series, and co-editor of the *Voice of Witness* series of oral histories. In 1998, he founded McSweeney's, an independent book publishing house in San Francisco which puts out the *McSweeney's* quarterly literary journal; the monthly magazine *The Believer*; the daily humor website *McSweeneys.net*; and *Wholphin*, a DVD quarterly of short films.

In 2002, he opened 826 Valencia, a writing lab for young people located in the Mission District of San Francisco; there are now branches of 826 in New York, Los Angeles, Seattle, Chicago, and

Michigan. The 826 program instills a love of writing in the inner city children it serves, providing opportunities for becoming published authors through their after-school programming.

Eggers, along with Nínive Calegari, have written a book entitled *Teachers Have It Easy: The Big Sacrifices and Small Salaries of America's Teachers*. In it, they interviewed hundreds of teachers about the complexities of their work, their passions for their profession, their frustrations with public conceptions of their value, and their financial struggles to make it all possible. They talked with people who said they would have loved to go into teaching, but didn't want to be undervalued professionally or find themselves scraping by financially. In an effort to bring this issue before a wider audience they have produced the documentary film *American Teacher*, narrated by Matt Damon.

LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qCGOyvq7x1Y>

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

DR. ALEX RUSSELL

Psychologist, author

THEME: Instruction / Leadership

CATEGORY: At Risk / Early Childhood

TOPIC: Raising Resilient Children



Dr Alex Russell is a clinical psychologist who helps children develop resilience and their own personal relationship with school and achievement. At the heart of his message—and his book, *Drop The Worry Ball*—is that children learn by experiencing non-catastrophic, painful failure, and it is through the process of these failures that they mature into resilient, resourceful and emotionally balanced individuals.

Dr Alex Russell believes that parents need to see failing – whether it's a test, a course, or a tryout for a team as a normal part of growing up and not a sign of parental incompetence. In *Drop The Worry Ball: How to Parent in the Age of Entitlement* (co-authored by journalist Tim Falconer) and on stage, he offers a fresh perspective on raising children that is reassuringly familiar and strikingly sensible.

Dr. Russell provides assessments and psychotherapy to children and adults, in addition to consulting with schools, teachers and psychologists. He has addressed many parent and counselor groups over the years. He is intimately familiar with the culture of the school system and the relationship that parents, teachers and counselors share with regard to the children we are raising. He is a popular speaker to parents' groups and educators, and has been an online mediator of a TV Ontario website focused on parenting and child development. He is a research affiliate with the Hincks-Dellcrest Institute where his activities include the development of an early intervention family therapy program serving families with children at risk, articles on children's emotional development, and serving on the editorial board of *Ideas: Emotional Well-Being in Child Care*, a nationally circulated journal for early childhood educators. A father of two teenagers, he is an active parent in his community and an avid hockey player and coach.

LINK: No speaking video

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

JEFF CHARBONNEAU

2013 National Teacher of the Year

THEME: Instruction

CATEGORY: College Readiness / Science / Secondary

TOPIC: Teachers as Leaders - Addressing the Achievement Gap



A Washington state science teacher who helped transform his small school into a place where nearly every student graduates with some college credit was named as national teacher of the year. Zillah High School's Jeff Charbonneau is state teacher of the year and was announced Monday as the national winner by the Council of Chief State School Officers. Principal Mike Torres said Charbonneau, 35, has added a lot to the school located in Washington's Yakima Valley and has inspired other teachers to push themselves. "Jeff is one of our many instructors that make Zillah High School a special place," Torres said. "The level of passion that he has for teaching is contagious." Torres also gives Charbonneau credit for helping push more kids to continue learning after high school. Ninety percent of last year's graduating class went on to continue their learning, either at college, in an apprenticeship program or the military. Those numbers have a lot to do with a program Charbonneau started to help students get college credit for the classes they take at the high school but not through Advanced Placement tests. Seventy-two classes at Zillah High School can result in credits from Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University or local community colleges.

Charbonneau started teaching in 2001 at Zillah, the same school he attended. He teaches chemistry, physics, engineering and architecture. He also runs a statewide robotics competition and serves as yearbook adviser for the 400-student school. His favorite part of teaching is being present at the moment of discovery for a student. "When they get it and they have that 'aha moment.' There's really nothing that matches that," he said. Charbonneau said he breaks down topics into small enough steps that students can grasp each one and gain confidence as they advance and accomplish what they want. The nation should feel the same way about public schools, he said. "Nothing in life is truly hard," Charbonneau said.

"We are not a nation of failing schools. When I hear that I literally cringe," he said. "There is so much going right with education that we ignore." He does believe there's still work to be done, including addressing the achievement gap between students from different ethnic and economic groups.

LINK: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/photos-and-video/video/2013/04/23/president-obama-honors-2013-national-teacher-year>

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

JEFF HENDERSON

Culinary Star and Creator of The Chef Jeff Project

THEME: Instruction / Leadership

CATEGORY: Diversity / At- Risk

TOPIC: From the Streets to the Stove - The Power of Potential



Chef Jeff Henderson is an award-winning chef, motivational speaker, New York Times best-selling author, and Food Network television personality. Henderson captivates audiences across the country with his triumphant story of change and the power of potential. Henderson grew up on the tough streets of Central LA and San Diego. By the time he was 19, he was running a \$35,000 a week drug operation. At 24, Henderson was arrested and sent to prison, where he spent the next ten years behind bars. It was while incarcerated that he discovered a passion for cooking and committed himself to turning his life around.

After spending nearly a decade behind bars, Henderson transitioned back into an environment that was as intimidating and hostile as prison. Having no formal education and a criminal background, he struggled for years in the hospitality industry. But, with persistence and determination, he was able to achieve his dreams, eventually becoming the executive chef of Café Bellagio in Las Vegas.

His story was first told in the New York Times best-selling memoir, *Cooked: My Journey from the Streets to the Stove*. In January 2012, TheGrio.com distinguished Henderson by naming him to its illustrious “Grio’s100: History Makers in the Making”, Class of 2012, which honors African Americans for the positive contributions they are making in shaping the futures of others. Henderson was the Food Network personality behind *The Chef Jeff Project*, which took six at-risk young adults and committed to turning their lives around by putting them to work for his catering company, Posh Urban Cuisine, and provided them with the knowledge, skills, and ultimately, the opportunity for a new life with a culinary career.

His newest television show, *Beat the Chef’s* premiered in August 2012 on the Game Show Network. The show challenges professional chefs by everyday home cooks and their family recipes, letting underdogs prove that their small-town recipes are worth fame and fortune. Henderson uses “Reality-Based Education” to inspire audiences to take charge of their lives and become a driver on the freeway towards their dreams. He gives them effective and simple ways to implement strategies to navigate them through the detours and roadblocks along the way. Audiences find his use of storytelling and humor not only memorable, but also captivating. Henderson is the voice of personal and professional change, distinguishing him as a leading authority on human potential.

LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRGqAz3jgOs>

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

JENNIFER JAMES

Cultural Anthropologist and Futurist

THEME: Instruction / Leadership

CATEGORY: At-Risk / Neuroscience / Effective Leaders

TOPIC: Thinking in the Future Tense



Jennifer James is a cultural anthropologist, lecturer, writer, and commentator, who is well known to audiences around the world for her innovative ideas. She works on an international level, helping people to meet the challenges of today's transitions. Her speeches and seminars deal with adaptation to change and the development of thinking skills. Dr. James is a specialist in the areas of cultural change, diversity, and marketing intelligence.

Jennifer regularly receives standing ovations and is described by clients, ranging from Georgia-Pacific, LockheedMartin, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, and the National Association of School Boards, as "inspiring, incredible, thought-provoking, innovative, humorous, energizing, empowering, just brilliant" and "the best speaker I have ever heard."

She is a published author of seven books, which include *Windows*, *Success Is The Quality Of Your Journey*, and *Thinking in the Future Tense*. She has written more than 50 academic articles and wrote a newspaper column for the *Seattle Times* for 18 years. Jennifer has filmed two PBS specials titled, *Thinking in the Future Tense* and *A Workout for the Mind*. She is currently writing a book, *Cultural Intelligence* for Harvard Business Press.

Dr. James earned her Master's Degree in history and psychology and her Doctorate in cultural anthropology. Before entering the public arena, she was a professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Washington Medical School for twelve years.

LINK: <http://www.jenniferjames.com/lectures/index.htm>

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

JOHN HODGE

President/Co-Founder of Urban Learning & Leadership Center (ULLC)

THEME: Instruction / Leadership

CATEGORY: Diversity / Dropout Prevention / At-Risk

TOPIC: Please Stop Calling Me At-Risk - The Power of Resiliency in Today's Urban Youth



The ULLC is an organization focused on student achievement and reduction of the achievement gap. Dr. Hodge has served as a reading teacher, English teacher, AVID teacher, Assistant Principal and Associate Director of AVID Center Eastern Division. He served as Director of An Achievable Dream Academy, an inner city school that piloted many of the interventions used by Urban Learning and Leadership Center. An Achievable Dream Academy is a high performing, high poverty school that has received numerous national awards. John received his Bachelor of Science degree from North Carolina A&T State University where he graduated with honors. He later received his Master of Arts degree from Chapman University. John completed his academic and professional preparation by earning a Doctor of Education degree from Virginia Tech where he conducted extensive research on factors that contribute to the academic success and/or failure of impoverished children.

What sets Dr. John W. Hodge apart in the field of education is his well-documented ability to put research and theory into everyday practice in rural, urban and suburban schools. Dr. Hodge has helped educators in elementary, middle and high schools make the necessary changes to help all children meet and exceed rigorous academic standards. He is truly one of America's most respected new voices in education. Prior to starting his career in education, Dr. Hodge distinguished himself in the service of our country with the 7th Infantry Division of the United States Army. He is known as a master teacher and staff developer. Dr. Hodge's career has been defined by assisting students and teachers overcome obstacles and achieve goals. He has served as an inspirational speaker across the United States and has been a guest lecturer at Christopher Newport University, Hampton University, North Carolina A&T State University and George Washington University. Dr. Hodge is a trained facilitator for the (SREB) Leadership Initiative Modules "Leading Assessment and Instruction" and "Creating a High Performance Learning Culture", and a trained assessor and facilitator in the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) "Developing the 21st Century Principal" program. Dr. Hodge is a frequent speaker for elementary, middle and high school student assemblies. His presentations are often "the spark" for schools in their quest to meet and exceed state/federal accreditation standards and implement strategies for continuous improvement. Dr. Hodge is an expert in helping schools create and sustain academic excellence.

LINK: http://premierespeakers.com/john_hodge/video/15943

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

JONAH EDELMAN

Founder, Stand for Children

THEME: Instruction / Leadership

CATEGORY: Diversity / At-Risk / Community Involvement

TOPIC: The Future of Public Education -
What Works: Programs that Make the Greatest Impact



Jonah Edelman wants to make our public schools better. An advocate for public education in America, Jonah is the co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Stand for Children, a growing and influential political voice for students. He is committed to mobilizing Americans around a common goal of changing the odds for our children.

As a second generation civil rights leader – his mother, Marian Wright Edelman, was the first African American woman admitted to the Mississippi bar and his father, Peter Edelman, was a close aide to Robert F. Kennedy – Jonah helped organize Stand for Children's historic founding rally in Washington, D.C.. The "Stand for Children Day" rally was attended by more than 300,000 people, and was the largest rally for children in American history. Jonah was recognized on Time.com as one of the nation's top education activists for 2011.

Jonah Edelman was born and raised in Washington, D.C., graduated from Yale University in 1992, and attended Oxford University on a Rhodes Scholarship, where in three years (1992-1995) he earned

masters and doctor of philosophy degrees in politics. He lives in Portland, Oregon with his wife Charese and their twin sons, Levi and Elijah, who are in first grade in a public school.

J

Jonah Edelman has won the following awards:

- Ashoka Innovator for the Public, 2008
- Hunt Alternatives Fund Prime Mover, 2006

LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrpdVNTeugs>

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

MANUEL SCOTT

Original Freedom Writer

THEME: Instruction / Leadership

CATEGORY: Diversity / At-Risk / School Improvement

TOPIC: How to Reach "Unreachable" Youth Today



An Original Freedom Writer whose story is told in the Hollywood movie, *Freedom Writers*. Manuel's unique message is one that has inspired, educated, and empowered almost a million people, helping them make the most of their lives.

At the age of fourteen, Manuel dropped out of school, and his English grammar was so poor that he was classified as an English as a Second Language student (ESL). By the age of 16, he had already lived in 26 different places. At an early age, he began using drugs and alcohol. He says, "When I look back, I now see that I was heading down a path that would have destroyed me."

However, due to an amazing transformation, Manuel has defied all the odds stacked against him. "I was once dismissed as 'unreachable' and 'unteachable,' says Scott, "but something special happened, and I love sharing that message with others." The high school drop-out now holds degrees from the University of California at Berkeley and Trinity International University. He is currently working on his PhD in Chicago.

LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8AfiFmr4CFs>

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

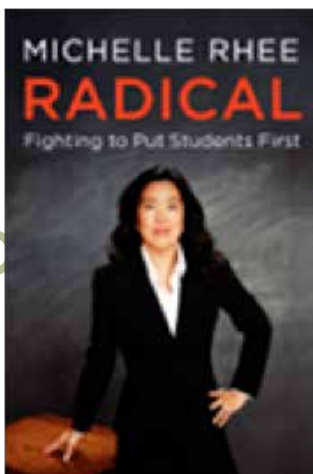
MICHELLE A. RHEE

Founder and CEO, StudentsFirst

THEME: Leadership / Policy

CATEGORY: Effective Leaders / School Improvement

TOPIC: Putting Students First



Michelle Rhee has been working for the last 18 years to give children the skills and knowledge they will need to compete in a changing world. From adding instructional time after school and visiting students' homes as a third grade teacher in Baltimore, to hosting hundreds of community meetings and creating a Youth Cabinet to bring students' voices into reforming the DC Public Schools, she has always been guided by one core principle: put students first. Each chapter of Michelle's story has convinced her: students of every background and ZIP code can achieve at high levels, and for our schools to become what children deserve, every educator is called to believe this. Even in the toughest of circumstances, all teachers are called to turn the incredible potential that fills their classrooms daily, into the achievements worthy of our children and country. In her new book, *Radical: Fighting to Put Students First*, Michelle Rhee draws on her own life story and delivers her plan for better American schools. Michelle's goal is to ensure that laws, leaders, and policies are making students - not adults - our top priority, and she outlines concrete steps that will put us on a dramatically different course. Informing her critique are her extraordinary experiences in education: her years of teaching in inner-city Baltimore; her turbulent tenure as chancellor of the Washington, D.C., public schools; and her current role as an education activist. Rhee draws on dozens of compelling examples—from schools she's worked in and studied; from students who've left behind unspeakable home lives and thrived in the classroom; from teachers whose

groundbreaking methods have produced unprecedented leaps in student achievement. The book chronicles Rhee's awakening to the potential of every child blessed with a great teacher, her rage at realizing that adults with special interests are blocking badly needed change, and her recognition that it will take a grassroots movement to break through the barriers to outstanding public schools. As a Teach for America (TFA) corps member in a Harlem Park Community School in Baltimore City, through her own trial and error in the classroom, she gained a tremendous respect for the hard work that teachers do every day. She also learned the lesson that would drive her mission for years to come: teachers are the most powerful driving force behind student achievement in our schools.

In 1997 Ms. Rhee founded The New Teacher Project (TNTP) to bring more excellent teachers to classrooms across the country. Under her leadership TNTP became a leading organization in understanding and developing innovative solutions to the challenges of new teacher hiring. As Chief Executive Officer and President, Ms. Rhee partnered with school districts, state education agencies, non-profit organizations and unions to transform the way schools and other organizations recruit, select and train highly qualified teachers in difficult-to-staff schools.

On June 12, 2007, Mayor Adrian Fenty appointed Chancellor Rhee to lead the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), a school district serving more than 47,000 students in 123 schools. Under her leadership, the worst performing school district in the country became the only major city system to see double-digit growth in both their state reading and state math scores in seventh, eighth and tenth grades over three years. Michelle Rhee currently serves on the Advisory Boards for the National Council on Teacher Quality and the National Center for Alternative Certification. Michelle has a bachelor's degree in government from Cornell University and a master's in public policy from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

LINK: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/education-of-michelle-rhee/>

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

MILTON CHEN

THEME: Instruction / Leadership

CATEGORY: School Improvement / Neuroscience / Technology

TOPIC: Education Nation: Six Leading Edges of Innovation in our Schools / Educating the whole child the role of the arts. nature and place based learning



Dr. Milton Chen is senior fellow and executive director, emeritus at The George Lucas Educational Foundation (GLEF), a non-profit operating foundation in the San Francisco Bay Area that utilizes its multimedia website Edutopia.org and documentary films to communicate a new vision for 21st Century schools. He served as executive director of GLEF for 12 years. During his tenure, GLEF and its media brand, Edutopia, greatly expanded their editorial publishing efforts, including the award-winning Edutopia magazine. Edutopia.org is known as a destination Web site for educators and others interested in educational innovation and has won numerous honors, including the 2009 Webby People's Voice Award for best education website.

Dr. Chen's career has spanned four decades at the intersection of preK-12 education, media, and technology. Prior to joining GLEF in 1998, he served for 10 years as the founding director of the KQED Center for Education (PBS) in San Francisco. In the 1970s, he was director of research at Sesame Workshop in New York, helping develop Sesame Street, The Electric Company, and 3-2-1 Contact. Dr. Chen has been an assistant professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and, during 2007-08, was one of 35 Fulbright New Century Scholars conducting research on access and diversity issues in higher education and K-12.

Dr. Chen chairs the advisory council for the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at St. Vincent College in Pennsylvania and is a trustee of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, a nonprofit dedicated to environmental conservation, education, and stewardship. He has chaired NHK's Japan Prize jury for educational TV and co-chaired the US Department of Education's Technology Expert Panel. He currently serves on the board of directors of the Panasonic Foundation in New Jersey, ConnectEd: The California Center for College and Career, and the San Francisco School Alliance. His work has been honored by the Elmo Award from Sesame Workshop, the Fred Rogers Award from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the Congressional Black Caucus, and by two science centers in the Bay Area, The Exploratorium and the Lawrence Hall of Science. His new book, *Education Nation: Six Leading Edges of Innovation in Our Schools*, based on his work at Edutopia, was published by Jossey-Bass in July.

LINK: http://fora.tv/2013/05/15/Milton_Chen_Reframing_the_American_Educational_System

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

NATALIE MERCHANT

Singer, songwriter, author, mother

THEME: Instruction

CATEGORY: Diversity/ The Arts/ Elementary Education/ Family Engagement

TOPIC: Integration of Arts & Academics



This winter, more than 3,000 New York City public schoolchildren had a surprisingly high-profile professor: Natalie Merchant, the socially conscious singer-songwriter who rose to prominence as the lead singer of the band 10,000 Maniacs.

The “Natalie Merchant Unit,” which is part of the 92nd Street Y’s continuing Musical Introduction Series, was taught in schools such as P.S. 57, P.S. 5 and P.S. 228. The unit was based, in part, on “*Leave Your Sleep*,” Ms. Merchant’s 2010 two-disc concept album inspired by poems by E.E. Cummings and Nathalia Crane, among others. The album includes songs like “Bleezer’s Ice-Cream,” “If No One Ever Marries Me” and “The Peppery Man.”

As part of the curriculum, elementary-aged New Yorkers have been learning rhythm, melody, syntax and rhyme—as well as singing, of course. Come spring, a number of New York City public schools will supplement their usual arts education programs with curricula created by the Brazilian percussionist Cyro Baptista, who will focus on helping students find everyday objects with which to make music.

Ms. Merchant is one of the more well-known guest teachers who took part in the program; other guest teachers have included the Latin jazz musician Arturo O’Farrill. Schools have also formed their own poetry clubs, in which students wrote original numbers to be turned into new songs by Ms. Merchant herself. At a December concert, Ms. Merchant sang many of these poems.

“Access to culture, with a capital C, in New York tends to carry a high admission price,” Ms. Merchant explained. “For many of these children it could be the first time they’ve ever been to a concert and been able to connect with professional musicians. It is difficult to quantify the impacts that can have on a child’s development.”

LINK: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/entertainment/jan-june10/merchant_04-26.html

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

PEDRO NOGUERA

THEME: Leadership / Policy

CATEGORY: Diversity / At-Risk / School Improvement

TOPIC: The Future of Education



A dynamic speaker, Pedro Noguera is one of America's most important voices for healthy public education, focusing on the ways in which schools are influenced by social and economic conditions in urban settings. He's an expert on school reform, diversity, and the achievement gap—and he translates social theory into concise, direct language with emotional impact and intellectual rigor.

Noguera is currently the Peter L. Agnew Professor of Education at New York University. Noguera is also the Executive Director of the Metropolitan Center for Urban Education and the co-Director of the Institute for the Study of Globalization and Education in Metropolitan Settings. He is also a part-time high school teacher, the author of several groundbreaking texts, a regular guest on CNN and NPR, and a dynamic speaker who translates social theory into concise, hip language with emotional impact and intellectual rigor.

Noguera holds faculty appointments in the departments of Teaching and Learning and Humanities and Social Sciences at the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Development, as well as in the Department of Sociology at New York University. He has been a professor at the graduate schools of both Harvard and the University of California, Berkeley, and is the author or editor of several books, including the seminal *City Schools and the American Dream: Reclaiming The Promise of Public Education* and *Unfinished Business: Closing the Racial Achievement Gap in Our Schools*. His latest books, from 2011, are *Creating the Opportunity to Learn: Moving from Research to Practice to Close the Achievement Gap* and *Invisible No More: Understanding the Disenfranchisement of Latino Men and Boys*.

Noguera has also engaged in collaborative research with large urban school districts. Recently, he helped launch A Broader, Bolder Approach to Education, a group of public policy experts in various fields (housing, education, civil rights), and from across the political spectrum, working to break a decades-long cycle of reform efforts that promised much and have achieved far too little. The group works in areas that research shows must be addressed if we are to keep our promises to all of America's children.

LINK: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWJvDm50Ws>

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

RITA PIERSON

THEME: Instruction / Leadership

CATEGORY: Diversity / At-Risk / Drop Out Prevention

TOPIC: Every Child Needs A Champion



Rita F. Pierson, Ed.D. of Houston, Texas, has been a professional educator since 1972. As an educator, she has served in numerous roles, including elementary regular and special education teacher, junior high school teacher, counselor, assistant principal, director, testing coordinator, and consultant. In addition, she is a Licensed Professional Counselor.

Rita also developed and implemented a school/community involvement program for a large urban elementary school, as well as organized and trained an in-school crisis team for students in need of immediate intervention. An experienced consultant, Rita has presented numerous workshops for aha! Process, Inc. since 1997 (This is the group associated with Ruby Payne and the "Framework for Understanding Poverty"). She also has a recent TED presentation about the critical importance of the relationship between students and their teacher.

Link: http://www.ted.com/talks/rita_pierson_every_kid_needs_a_champion.html?qsha=1&utm_expid=166907-24&utm_referrer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ted.com%2Fspeakers%2Frita_f_pierson.html

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

ROBERT ROOT-BERNSTEIN

Creativity Expert

THEME: Instruction / Leadership

CATEGORY: Creativity in Education

TOPIC: Importance of Arts and Sciences in Education



Robert Root-Bernstein is an international creativity expert and co-author, with Michele Root-Bernstein, of *"Sparks of Genius: The 13 Thinking Tools of the World's Most Creative People"* (1999). He is a professor of physiology at Michigan State University, and winner of a MacArthur "Genius Award" Fellowship in 1981.

Root-Bernstein has written and presented regularly on both the connections between the arts and sciences in education and the need for the arts in education. His 2011 keynote at the National Art Education Association conference provides good insight about his message on both of these subjects, as does his and Michele Root-Bernstein's article, *"The Art and Craft of Science"* in the February 2013

edition of ASCD's Educational Leadership.

The Root-Bernsteins are regular contributors to the "Imagine That" blog (<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/imagine>) of Psychology Today. Their February 2011 blog, "Artsmarts: Why Cutting Arts Education Is Not a Good Idea" and May 2010 "Arts At the Center of Creative Education" blog specifically make the case for stronger arts programs in K-12 schools. Root-Bernstein's public defense of the role of the arts in schools began as early as 1997, as evidenced by an op-ed in the Los Angeles Times, "Hobbled Arts Limit Our Future"

LINK: <https://www.msu.edu/~rootbern/rootbern/Welcome.html>.

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

SIR KEN ROBINSON

THEME: Instruction / Leadership

CATEGORY: Diversity / Neuroscience

TOPIC: Education and Creativity



Creativity expert Sir Ken Robinson challenges the way we're educating our children. He champions a radical rethink of our school systems, to cultivate creativity and acknowledge multiple types of intelligence. Why don't we get the best out of people? Sir Ken Robinson argues that it's because we've been educated to become good workers, rather than creative thinkers. Students with restless minds and bodies -- far from being cultivated for their energy and curiosity -- are ignored or even stigmatized, with terrible consequences. "We are educating people out of their creativity," Robinson says. It's a message with deep resonance. Robinson's TEDTalk has been distributed widely around the Web since its release in June 2006. The most popular words framing blog posts on his talk? "Everyone should watch this."

A visionary cultural leader, Sir Ken led the British government's 1998 advisory committee on creative and cultural education, a massive inquiry into the significance of creativity in the educational system and the economy, and was knighted in 2003 for his achievements. His latest book, *The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything*, a deep look at human creativity and education, was published in January 2009.

LINK: http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity.html

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

WES MOORE

Author, veteran, social entrepreneur

THEME: Leadership

CATEGORY: Diversity / At-Risk / Effective Leaders Putting Students First

TOPIC: The Transformative Power of Education



Moore's first book, *The Other Wes Moore*, became an instant New York Times and Wall Street Journal bestseller and garnered him a position as host of *Beyond Belief* on the Oprah Winfrey Network.

Born in 1978, Wes and his sisters were raised by their widowed mother. Despite early academic and behavioral struggles, he graduated Phi Theta Kappa in 1998 as a commissioned officer from Valley Forge Military College, and Phi Beta Kappa from Johns Hopkins University in 2001, where he also played football and earned a bachelor's degree in International Relations. He then became a Rhodes Scholar, studying International Relations at Oxford University.

After his studies, Wes, a paratrooper and Captain in the United States Army, served a combat tour of duty in Afghanistan with the 1st Brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division. Wes then served as a White House fellow to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. He serves on the board of the Iraq Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), The Johns Hopkins University, and founded an organization called STAND! that works with Baltimore youth involved in the criminal justice system.

Wes is committed to helping the parents, teachers, mentors, and advocates who serve our nations youth. A portion of all book proceeds for "*The Other Wes Moore*" are being donated to City Year and the US Dream Academy. Wes Moore is a youth advocate.

LINK: <http://www.charlierose.com/view/interview/11042>

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

ERIN GRUWELL

Educator, Founder The Freedom Writers Foundation

THEME: Instruction / Leadership

CATEGORY: Diversity / At-Risk / Dropout Prevention

TOPIC: Teaching With Your Heart



Erin Gruwell is a teacher, an education activist, and the founder of the Freedom Writers Foundation. She created the Freedom Writer Methods, a progressive teaching philosophy and curricula designed to achieve excellence from all students.

By fostering an educational philosophy that values and promotes diversity, Gruwell transformed her students' lives. She encouraged them to re-think rigid beliefs about themselves and others, reconsider daily decisions, and ultimately re-chart their futures. With Gruwell's support, they chose to forego teenage pregnancy, drugs, and violence to become aspiring college students, published writers, and catalysts for change. They dubbed themselves the "Freedom Writers" –in homage to civil rights activists The Freedom Riders—and published a book.

Inspired by Anne Frank, Erin and her students captured their collective journey in *The Freedom Writers Diary*. Through poignant student entries and Erin's narrative text, the book records their "eye-opening, spirit-raising odyssey against intolerance and misunderstanding." In early 2007, *Teach With Your Heart*, Erin's powerful memoir and call to arms was published. While Erin has been credited with giving her students a "second chance," it was perhaps she who changed the most during her tenure at Wilson High School. She decided to channel her classroom experiences toward a broader cause, and today her impact as a teacher extends well beyond Room 203. Erin founded the Freedom Writers Foundation where she currently instructs teachers around the country on implementing her innovative lesson plans into their own classrooms.

LINK: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8E5-wg3_UQ

Currents of Change



2014 KEYNOTE POSSIBILITIES

INOCENTE

Author, veteran, social entrepreneur

THEME: Instruction

CATEGORY: Diversity / At-Risk / Collaboration

TOPIC: Education & Creativity



In San Diego, a young teenage girl's eyes stare into a compact mirror. She paints a dramatic black swirl around her eye. She never knows what her day will bring, but she knows at least it will always begin with paint.

INOCENTE is an intensely personal and vibrant coming of age documentary about a young artist's fierce determination to never surrender to the bleakness of her surroundings.

At 15, Inocente refuses to let her dream of becoming an artist be caged by her life as an undocumented immigrant forced to live homeless for the last nine years. Color is her personal revolution and its extraordinary sweep on her canvases creates a world that looks nothing like her own

dark past -- a past punctuated by a father deported for domestic abuse, an alcoholic and defeated mother of four who once took her daughter by the hand to jump off a bridge together, an endless shuffle year after year through the city's overcrowded homeless shelters and the constant threat of deportation.

Despite this history, Inocente's eyes envision a world transformed...where buildings drip in yellow and orange, where pink and turquoise planets twinkle with rescued dreams, and one-eyed childlike creatures play amongst loved babies and purple clouds. Inocente's family history is slowly revealed through her paintings.

Told entirely in her own words, we come to Inocente's story as she realizes her life is at a turning point, and for the first time, she decides to take control of her own destiny. Irreverent, flawed and funny, she's now channeling her irrepressible personality into a future she controls. Her talent has finally been noticed, and if she can create a body of work in time, she has an opportunity to put on her first art show. Meanwhile, her family life is at a tense impasse -- if she legally emancipates herself from her mother to strike out on her own, she'll risk placing her brothers in foster care, but to stay is unbearable.

INOCENTE is both a timeless story about the transformative power of art and a timely snapshot of the new face of homelessness in America, children. Neither sentimental nor sensational, INOCENTE will immerse you in the very real, day-to-day existence of a young girl who is battling a war that we rarely see. The challenges are staggering, but the hope in Inocente's story proves that the hand she has been dealt does not define her, her dreams do.

LINK: <http://www.mtv.com/videos/misc/822043/inocente-trailer.jhtml#series=2214&seriesId=36900&channelId=1&id=1691045>