



Diverse Books as “Windows, Mirrors & Sliding Doors”: The Roles Funders Can Play

A CGLR Funder-to-Funder Conversation

May 16, 2023 | 12:30–2 pm ET/9:30–11 am PT

Presenter Bios

MODERATOR



[Jacqueline Jones, Ph.D.](#)

Former President and CEO

Foundation for Child Development

From September 2014 to August 2022, Jacqueline Jones served as President and CEO of Foundation for Child Development where she was responsible for developing and implementing the Foundation’s strategic vision and goals.

Prior to her tenure at the Foundation for Child Development, Dr. Jones served as a Senior Advisor on Early Learning to Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and as the country’s first Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Early Learning in the U.S. Department of Education. Prior to her position in the Obama Administration, Dr. Jones served as the Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Early Childhood Education in the New Jersey State Department of Education and as a Senior Research Scientist at the Educational Testing Service in Princeton for over 15 years. Dr. Jones has been a visiting faculty member at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a full-time faculty member at the City University of New York. She received both her master’s and Ph.D. degrees from Northwestern University

PRESENTERS



[Deborah Caldwell-Stone](#)

**Director of the American Library Association’s Office for
Intellectual Freedom**

Executive Director of the Freedom to Read Foundation

Deborah Caldwell-Stone is the Director of the American Library Association’s Office for Intellectual Freedom and the Executive Director of the Freedom to Read Foundation. For the past two decades, she has worked closely with ALA members, library workers and library trustees to address a wide range of intellectual freedom issues, including book bans, internet censorship, meeting room policies, and the privacy of library users’ records. A former appellate litigator, she has served on the faculty of the ALA-sponsored Lawyers for Libraries and Law for Librarians workshops and is a contributor to the tenth edition of the *Intellectual Freedom Manual* and other professional publications.



Melanie Claxton
Senior Program Officer
Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation

Melanie Claxton is a Senior Program Officer of the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation. In this role, Melanie oversees the Foundation's grants programs in education.

Prior to joining Benedum, Ms. Claxton worked with dedicated professionals in the K-12 education system, as well as community-based Out-of-School Time providers, to ensure that youth in her region had access to high-quality afterschool and summer learning opportunities. She has supported local system and capacity-building initiatives to enhance the delivery of educational services to youth and has always been passionate about ensuring that youth have access to the resources needed to thrive. Ms. Claxton serves on the board of Pennsylvania School-Age Child Care Alliance (PENN SACCA), Contemporary Craft, and is a member of the Remake Learning Council.

Melanie Claxton has been recognized locally as a 2018 New Pittsburgh Courier Fab 40 honoree and recognized statewide as a 2018 Afterschool Champion by the Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool Youth Development Network (PSAYDN). She has a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Michigan Ann Arbor, and a M.S. in Public Policy and Management from Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz College.



Carla D. Thompson Payton, EdD, MSW
Vice President for Program Strategy
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Carla Thompson Payton is vice president for program strategy for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in Battle Creek, Michigan. In this role, she supports the foundation's efforts to promote thriving children, working families and equitable communities.

Thompson Payton provides leadership and management for the creative and strategic direction of programming from design through implementation, evaluation and dissemination. As a member of the executive team, she is also responsible for the overall direction and leadership of the foundation.

Prior to joining the foundation in 2012, Thompson Payton was deputy director of the Office of Child Care at the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C. There, she was responsible for developing national early childhood education policy, managing the \$5 billion annual budget of the Child Care Development Fund and providing oversight to 10 regional offices serving states, tribes and territories. Previously, she was assistant superintendent for early childhood education for the District of Columbia, where she initiated the first publicly funded pre-kindergarten program. In other professional experience, she has held positions with the Department of Education and Department of Public Welfare for the state of Pennsylvania; United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania in Philadelphia; and the U.S. Department of Education.

Thompson Payton has been honored for her leadership in early childhood education by the Administration for Children and Families, the Children's Defense Fund and the Temple University Institute on Disabilities. She also has served on boards and committees for nonprofit associations and

professional organizations. In addition, she is the author of three publications related to school readiness and advocacy. She also is featured in the Buffington Post as a regular blogger and has been cited in numerous news media for her expertise.

Thompson Payton received her bachelor's degree from Syracuse University in Syracuse, New York. She holds a master's degree in social work and a doctorate in educational leadership from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.



Jennifer Stavrakos

**Interim Program Director, Senior Program Officer, Great Learning
William Penn Foundation**

Jennifer Stavrakos is the Interim Director and Senior Program Officer for Great Learning at the William Penn Foundation in Philadelphia, PA. She is responsible for a portfolio of grants related to family engagement and advocacy. Grants include the development of projects and initiatives with local and national partners to ensure families have the resources they need to support their children's education. It also includes the support of statewide advocacy campaigns in support of infant and toddler care, PreK, home visiting, and K-12 education.

Prior to joining the Foundation, Jennifer was an Officer at the Pew Charitable Trusts overseeing an \$8.5M grant portfolio for organizations serving low-income children, youth and families in the Philadelphia region.

Before her time in philanthropy, Jennifer served as Director of Replication and Expansion for Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) working on the expansion and sustainability of home visiting and literacy programs both locally and nationally. During her decade-long tenure at P/PV, Jennifer helped drive program growth strategies in the northeastern United States. Most notably, Jennifer was responsible for the statewide replication of Nurse-Family Partnership in Pennsylvania, including the development of seventeen new implementation partners and securing a \$4M increase in funding across three administrations.

Jennifer earned a Masters of Government Administration from the Fels School of Government at the University of Pennsylvania and a B.A. in English from Colgate University. She lives with her husband and two teenage children in the Philadelphia area.