



## Making It Real: Philanthropic Strategies for Promoting Parents as Essential Partners

A CGLR Funder to Funder Conversation

March 16, 2021 | 12:30-2 pm ET/9:30-11 am PT

*Presenter Bios*

### PRESENTERS



**Alex Cortez**  
**Managing Partner**  
**Education Portfolio**  
**New Profit**  
**@AJC617 | @newprofit**

Alex is a Managing Partner in the Education Portfolio at New Profit, a Boston-based national venture philanthropy. His work is focused on funding and scaling parent power and systems change in education, innovative whole school models, and how those models create platforms to widely share their best content and practices. In 2019, Alex launched a web-based set of tools and resources for practitioners and funders on parent power in education and how to use measurement to maximize impact: [www.parentpowerined.org](http://www.parentpowerined.org).

Alex serves on the Massachusetts State Board of Higher Education and the nonprofit boards of Innovate Public Schools in California, Valor Collegiate Schools in Tennessee, 4.0 Schools in New Orleans, and Saga Education in Boston. Alex is also a Pahara Aspen Education Fellow and a member of the Aspen Global Leadership Network.

Prior to New Profit, Alex served as Chief of Staff, Strategy and Execution at KIPP Houston, as a Regional Director of Growth and Sustainability at the KIPP Foundation, and as a Manager with the Bridgespan Group. Alex started his career in for-profit management consulting, working for clients in financial services, telecommunications, private equity, and state government.

Alex has published works on mergers and collaborations in the nonprofit space, nonprofit best practices in being data-driven and mission-focused, and multiple articles on how philanthropy can support enduring parent power and systems change in education. Alex has an MBA from Harvard Business School, an MPA from Harvard Kennedy School, and a BS in Political Science from Columbia University. Originally from New Orleans, he currently resides in Brookline, MA.



**Romy Drucker**  
**Deputy Director, K-12 Education Program**  
**Walton Family Foundation**  
**@WaltonFamilyFdn**

Romy Drucker is a deputy director for the K-12 Education Program at the Walton Family Foundation. In this role, she oversees team operations and grantmaking strategy. Prior to joining the foundation, Romy was the co-founder and CEO of The 74, an award-winning nonprofit news organization focused on education. Prior to launching The 74, Romy worked at the New York City Department of Education on Mayor Bloomberg and Chancellor Klein's transformational Children First reforms. Romy served as chief of staff for the Division of Portfolio Planning working on efforts including new school development, school improvement and accountability, and early childhood education. Prior to that, Romy served as the special assistant to Chancellor Joel I. Klein and as deputy to the Chief Executive Officer of The Fund for Public Schools, which has raised several hundred million dollars for innovative educational programs serving New York City's 1.1 million students.



**Ambika Kapur**  
**Program Officer**  
**Carnegie Corporation of New York**  
**@CarnegieCorp**

Ambika Kapur is a program officer within Carnegie Corporation's Education program where she manages the Public Understanding portfolio. Kapur oversees grantmaking aimed at engaging parents, communities, teachers, and policymakers in understanding and demanding changes in education that ensure that all students develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they need for future success. Previously, Kapur served as officer of Special Projects in the National Program, overseeing the budget, coordinating program strategies and grantmaking, and providing critical support to the vice president on strategic priorities. Kapur also managed grantmaking and communications activities for Next Generation Science Standards development and mobilization, leading the Corporation's commitment to the Common Core Communications Collaborative. Kapur was born in Calcutta. She has a BA in international relations from Wellesley College and a MA in international education development from Columbia University.



**Liane Morrison**  
**Director, United for Schools**  
**Mile High United Way**  
**@UnitedWayDenver**

Liane Morrison is an economist and nonprofit entrepreneur who joined Mile High United Way in 2016 to direct United for Schools, a program within United Neighborhoods. United for Schools operates on multiple levels to create educational and economic opportunities for students and families in partner schools, located in three metro Denver school districts. Under her direction, the UFS team initiates a long-term partnership with each school to improve student engagement and academic achievement.

Prior to joining Mile High United Way, Liane co-founded and led the grassroots nonprofit organization – Great Education Colorado, to advocate for permanent change in how Colorado invests in its schools and children. She is a graduate of Colorado College and holds a Master’s Degree in economics from George Washington University. Her focus on the public sector has included developing new international markets for environmental technology, serving as an international economist at the U.S. Department of Treasury, and working in the bank regulatory division of the Federal Reserve.