



Victor Rios

Victor Rios is MacArthur Foundation Chair and Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He received his Ph.D. at the University of California Berkeley in 2005. Professor Rios has worked with local school districts to develop programs for students who have been left behind in their education. Using his personal experience of living on the streets, dropping out of school, and being incarcerated as a juvenile—along with his research findings—he has developed interventions for marginalized students aimed at promoting personal transformation and civic engagement. These programs have been implemented in many schools across the United States; juvenile detention facilities; and alternative high schools. Dr. Rios has been featured in the Chronicle of Higher Education, Ted Talks, the Oprah Winfrey Network, Primer Impacto, and National Public Radio. He has had the honor of meeting President Obama and advising his administration on gun violence and policing. His Ted Talk “Help for kids the education system ignores” has garnered over 1.6 Million views. He is the subject of the documentary film *The Pushouts* (thepushouts.com).

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Presented by:



Consuelo Kicksbusch

Born and raised in a small, border side barrio of Laredo, Texas, Consuelo Castillo Kickbusch conquered the challenges of poverty, discrimination and illiteracy. Raised without material wealth, Consuelo learned from her immigrant parents that their wealth was in culture, tradition, values, and faith. The values Consuelo learned as a child were reinforced throughout her career in the United States military. After graduating from Hardin Simmons University, Consuelo entered the U.S. Army as an officer and served for two decades. During that time, she broke barriers and set records when she became the highest-ranking Mexican-American woman in the Combat Support Field of the U.S. Army. When selected to assume a command post, Consuelo disrupted her advancement by deciding to retire. She chose instead to honor her mother's dying wish – for her to return to her roots and become a community leader. In 1996, Consuelo Castillo Kickbusch founded the human development company, Educational Achievement Services, Inc. (EAS, Inc.), to fulfill her mission of preparing tomorrow's leaders through grassroots leadership development.

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Shree Walker

Society often believes people are products of their environment. As a young woman growing up in a poverty-stricken single parent home, Dr. Shree Walker refused to be a victim of circumstance. Being the eldest of six children and the backbone of her family, she has been faced with many obstacles. Without any heroes to look to, she had to become her own. Dr. Walker was determined not to live as a victim or a statistic. Dr. Walker is an educator, motivational speaker, and author who provides transformative professional and personal development opportunities for life learners. She can relate to other survivors through the pain, the courage, the conquering, and the reality that there is still a life after the pain. Dr. Walker is sunshine in a hurricane and came to this planet to change the world.

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Presented by:



Robin Avelar La Salle

Dr. Robin Avelar La Salle is President and Founder of Orenda Education, a research, professional education and technical assistance organization. For more than 26 years, Dr. Avelar La Salle and the Orenda team have been thought partners for districts and schools aspiring to transform their systems and practices to raise student achievement. An equity warrior and an advocate for justice within the educational system, Dr. Avelar La Salle's mission is to change the odds for the twenty million kids in US schools for whom the current systems of instruction and improvement are not working -- predominantly Latino, African American, and a host of students from under-resourced families.

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