

EARLY SUPPORT IS COMMUNITY CARE

SPEAKER BIOS

Monday, May 8 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm

"The Importance of Peer-to-Peer Support in the First Year"



Beth Graves (she/her)

Beth is the Senior Community Outreach Manager for NurtureNW. She is an experienced program manager and non-profit professional who brings an unwavering anti-racist lens and servant leadership style to non-profit and public sector agencies. She is driven to improve organizations and institutions for children, youth, and families. In her professional experience she has demonstrated success leading diverse teams of professionals through change to greater impact and building trusting, effective community and cross-sector partnerships.



Farah Khan (she/her)

Farah is the Project Coordinator at NurtureNW. She is a driven, empathetic, creative and adaptable public health professional passionate about working upstream to improve mental health, sexual/reproductive health, and early relational health outcomes through capacity-building and collaboration.

Monday, May 8 | 1:15 - 2:15 pm

"Amplifying Ancestral Practices: Decolonization as Community Health Care"



Elizabeth Montez (she/her)

Elizabeth Montez is an Indigenous Lactation Counselor, International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant, perinatal mental health advocate, a retired professional chef, and eternal food justice advocate. She is the Community Education & Lactation Clinical Lead for Open Arms Perinatal Services, the mother of two sparkling humans, a member of the urban Native American and Mexikah diaspora, a proud descendent of the Anishinaabe people of Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians and Forest County Potawatomi. She carries all these pieces of her life and all her ancestors with her through her work. Through Open Arms, she provides community-matched, relationship-based direct service to body-feeding dyads and mentors rising lactation professionals of color. She also teaches lactation skills from a decolonizing lens through a variety of intersectional organizations across Turtle Island.

Tuesday, May 9 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm
"Early Mental Health Panel"



Romyana Kudeva (she/her)

Romyana is an experienced Bulgarian American bi-lingual clinical social worker, public health professional and educator with 20+ years of nationwide and international scholarly work, mental health and direct social work practice with diverse populations. She brings strong community education skills and strengths-based public health approach to building community resilience. Romyana is part of the Beginnings Matter team at SRHD where she is providing community education and technical assistance about implementing the HOPE (Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences) framework for system-wide change to provide integrated, person-centered and strengths-based trauma-informed services to families with young children (0-5).



Dr. Nucha Isarowong (he/him)

Nucha Isarowong, PhD, LCSW, is the incoming Director of the Advanced Clinical Training Program at the Barnard Center at the University of Washington. He has experience working with and on behalf of infants, children, and families in home and school settings and more recently served as faculty of the MSW program at Erikson Institute in Chicago, IL. His work is focused on multi-level systems integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion principles in the context of father engagement practices and policies, integration of trauma-informed practice, generally, and in Part C Early Intervention, specifically, shifting understanding of disabilities and developmental differences, and affecting systems change. Nucha is a Zero to Three (ZTT) Fellow, class of 2012-2013, and currently serves on the coordinating council of the Academy of ZTT Fellows. He also serves as a national workshop facilitator and member of the Executive Council of the Diversity-Informed Tenets for Work with Infants, Children and Families.



Dr. Meyleen Velasquez (she/her)

Dr. Velasquez has been working in mental health since 2006 and providing psychotherapy since 2009. She holds a Doctorate in Social Work from Capella University and focused her research on anti-oppressive and anti-racist practices in mental health. She is also a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and graduated from FIU with a Master's in Social Work in 2009. She has worked at various organizations, including a shelter for women and children, providing in-home therapy services, and working with parents and young children impacted by trauma. Dr. Velasquez completed her infant mental health training at the Institute of Child and Family Health. She was trained in dyadic, child-parent therapy through the University of Miami's Linda Ray's Intervention Center. After working with parents and children, she became passionate about the specific needs of birthing people and young children. Thus, she obtained specialized training in perinatal mood disorders and maternal mental health through Postpartum Support International's training programs. She is also certified in Perinatal Mental Health.

Tuesday, May 9 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm
"Early Mental Health Panel" (Cont.)



Dr. Diane Liebe (she/her)

Dr. Liebe enjoys working with children, youth, and their families in finding ways to improve their overall well-being. Dr. Liebe works with children and youth on the autism spectrum, developmental disabilities, and behavioral disorders. As the Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics Clinic Medical Director, Dr. Liebe feels grateful for the opportunity and trust families place in her while caring for their children.

Wednesday, May 10 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm
"Birthing in the Diaspora: Providing Black Families with Culturally Responsive Holistic Care"



Damarria Davis (she/her)

Damarria is the Co-Lead of BLKBRY and the proud owner of Divine Doula Birthing Services. She is a Childbirth Educator and Full Circle Doula specializing in labor and postpartum care.

According to Damarria, "An integral factor of my role is to provide mental, physical, and emotional support to each client. The most rewarding part of becoming a doula is finding the value of my own lived experiences and applying the knowledge to the support provided to my clients. Being a member of the underserved and marginalized community allowed me to realize I wanted to be the person I never had during labor and that's the person I am committed to becoming."

As a resource for education and empowerment, Damarria is committed to parent-centered care that is culturally responsive and affirms the reality of disparaged medical care for birthers of color.



Jessy Trevizo (she/her/ella)

Jessy is a Queer, Afro-Latina Doula and womb healer. She is West African (Nigerian, Malian) and Mexican (Chihuahua native). She is originally from El Paso, Texas but has been in Seattle since 2015.

Jessy's target community to serve is, "the African/African American and Hispanic community. This work has allowed me to support birth givers in all shapes and forms. But I am eager to help all people of color and families of the LGBTQ+ community."

She is an apprentice to traditional midwifery and has been studying traditional midwifery globally since 2021 under the Afro and Hispanic Indigenous peoples. She is a Holistic Full Spectrum Doula, Midwife-Birth Assistant, Herbalist, Lactation Support Specialist, Placenta Specialist, Yoni Steam Facilitator, African Belly-binding Specialist and Womb Healer.

Wednesday, May 10 | 1:15 - 2:15 pm

“Supporting Black Families in Early Childhood Education”



Stephaine Courtney (she/her)

Stephaine Courtney is an art activist, educator and creative influencer in social justice who is passionate about uplifting voices in creative ways to highlight problems and solutions that are impacting local and nationwide communities. She is the proud owner of The Learning Project Network and The Shades of Motherhood Network which is a new nonprofit creating solutions for women of color and women who have children of color through creative peer groups.

A graduate of Whitworth University, she earned her English degree and completed her Master’s in Education at Ashford University. She has also received training in African-American Postpartum, Studies in African American families and Perinatal Mental Health from Postpartum International.

Thursday, May 11 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm

“A Conversation with WithinReach”



Brandon Hallock (he/him)

Brandon started along this path while assisting seniors with disabilities on a working holiday in Wellington, New Zealand in 2009. He strongly believes that his clients should be treated with the same care and respect that he gave his clients in the luxury travel industry, and he also trains his team to do the same. Brandon loves working with families and feels it is a great honor to be able to help them when they are at a crossroads in their lives and/or need a little help connecting to resources that could help them.



Chris Gray (she/her)

Chris has been at WithinReach for 9 years and has served in numerous roles during her tenure. She is currently the Manager of Pregnancy & Early Childhood Programs. In her work at WithinReach, Chris leads part of the Community Access Team (CAT). The CAT works directly with community members all across Washington State to connect them with programs and resources available to them in their area. Her extensive experience working with children and families makes her an invaluable resource for WithinReach.

Thursday, May 11 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm
"A Conversation with WithinReach" (Cont.)



Camille Schultz (she/her)

Camille is the Supervising Coordinator of the Mental & Behavioral Health Team at WithinReach. She has a degree in Health Psychology with a focus in Public Health from Bastyr University and has been working within the social service field for 5+ years. Camille and her team assist perinatal clients experiencing substance use disorders via the statewide implementation of Plan of Safe Care and the King County Substance Use Disorder Pilot. Providing Help Me Grow wraparound services that are custom tailored to clients' and their household's needs as well as delivering resources in partnership with organizations throughout the state is at the core of the Mental & Behavioral Health Team.



Carina Gonzalez (she/her)

Carina works as the Family Resource Navigator with Help Me Grow Central Washington. She has helped families connect to State and local resources in this role and prior roles for about 6 years. She is a Sunnyside Grizzly Alum of 2015 and has been invested in creating a healthier community since she was in high school. She started with the Sunnyside High School Prevention Club in 2013 and kept close ties and volunteered with Sunnyside United Unidos for the past 10 years. She is now excited to be the Chair of the coalition! She also serves on the Sunnyside School District Advisory Council, is a liaison to the Alternative Spring Break for Oregon State University and is a member of the Investing in Children's Coalition.

Friday, May 10 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm
"Activate Your Village"



Kerra Bower (she/her)

Kerra is the Founder of Raze Early Learning and Development Center. Kerra founded Raze in 2021 and, according to Kerra, Raze, "is the modality our community will use to address inequalities and disparities around education and health. The solution to closing the achievement gap and dismantling the preschool to prison pipeline in Spokane is early learning programming that highlights our shared experiences and is created through the lens of the Black American." Raze Early Learning and Development Center prioritizes family engagement and partnership by first acknowledging the parent as the cornerstone teacher.

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