



# Funding Our Future: Generating State and Local Tax Revenue for Quality Early Care and Education

December 19, 2019

## Speaker Bios

### Olivia Allen Project Manager

In 2018 Olivia joined the Children's Funding Project as its first employee. In this role Olivia divides her time between working directly with communities on strategic financing for children and youth and translating innovations and best practices into tools, briefs, infographics, and papers for the field.

Olivia brings to the Children's Funding Project her experience working with Elizabeth at the Forum for Youth Investment, where she supported the efforts of children's cabinets to start-up, strengthen, and sustain, and worked with localities to identify and implement feasible improvements to their investments in children and youth. Prior to her time at the Forum, Olivia spent two years at the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice (NCMHJJ) at Policy Research Associates where she assisted with the provision of technical assistance to states and tribal nations. At NCMHJJ her TA work focused primarily on assisting with the strategic planning and implementation of policy reform in the areas of juvenile justice diversion, youth violence prevention, the school responder model, connection to behavioral health services, and trauma-informed care.

Her publications include: *Disrupting School-Justice Pathways for Youth with Behavioral Health Needs* and *Building a School Responder Model*.

Originally from Charlottesville, Virginia, Olivia received her B.A. in psychology from Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont, where she also became a Vermont-certified volunteer victim crisis counselor.



### Lisa Christensen Gee Director of Special Initiatives, Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy

Prior to joining ITEP in 2016, Lisa worked as an analyst with the Fiscal Policy Center at Voices for Illinois Children where she focused on state tax and budget policy issues impacting family economic security, education, human services, and health care. In that role she conducted research, authored reports, and created data and communication tools to advance budget and tax reforms that improve opportunities for low- and middle-income families and put Illinois on a path to a stronger fiscal future.

Previously, Lisa worked on a range of social policy issues, including a fair tax campaign with the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, family tax credits with the National Women's Law Center, and domestic violence legal services with LAF. Lisa has also worked in non-profit administration and as a middle school teacher.



## **Kathy Stohr**

### **Project Manager, Pritzker Children's Initiative**

Kathy Stohr is Project Manager for the Pritzker Children's Initiative, a project of the JB and MK Pritzker Family Foundation. In that role, manages the Community Strategy along with the Measurement portfolio. Kathy has worked in the early childhood policy and advocacy arena for more than 20 years at the grassroots and state levels, in the public and private sectors, as an advocate and as an implementer. Most recently, Kathy served as the Deputy Director of the Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development where she oversaw the state's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant. Prior to that, Kathy worked with Illinois Action for Children to build a community systems development practice with the dual goals of strengthening local collaboration and advancing a state level policy agenda to better support communities.



## **Katie E. Wehr**

### **Senior Program Officer, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**

Katie Wehr, senior program officer, joined the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in 2010. Wehr focuses on discovering and investing in what works to promote and protect the nation's health and to achieve the Foundation's vision where we, as a nation, strive together to build a Culture of Health enabling all in our diverse society to lead healthy lives, now and for generations to come.

Since joining RWJF, Wehr has worked to increase the visibility and impact of solutions that advance health and that incorporate emerging research, practice and policy tools to put evidence into action and create policy and system changes that enable all people lead healthy, productive lives. As she puts it: "It takes all of us to improve the quality of people's lives, prevent illness, and make our communities vibrant, healthy places—no matter where people live, learn, work and play." To that end, Wehr's interests range from identifying innovations occurring across the country to developing new collaborations and solutions to improve the nation's health—especially those that nurture and strengthen early childhood development and health across the life course.

Wehr's parents shaped her interest in health. As she notes, "My mom, who is a pastor and former nurse practitioner, and my dad, who is a family physician, showed me what it means to create and support a holistic sense of well-being and what it means to heal, that is to be of service to the emotionally, spiritually, or physically sick and to build on their individual strengths to create wholeness." Wehr also credits her parents with instilling in her an appreciation for working closely with others toward a common purpose.

Previously, Wehr was a graduate research assistant at the University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill Sheps Center for Health Services Research. Her work involved analyzing and evaluating data from perinatal residential substance abuse treatment centers in the state. She has also served as Community Projects Coordinator for the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition and as an AmeriCorps Member of the North Florida Health Corps.

Raised in Iowa, Wehr received an MPH, Maternal & Child Health, from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate in Sociology from Illinois Wesleyan University. If she is not running or swimming, you can find her cooking with friends, traveling the globe, or exploring New Jersey, New York City, and Philadelphia, especially art, theatre, and music events.

