



JOBS FOR THE FUTURE



GRADUATING EVERY STUDENT POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READY

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LUNCH POLICY SESSION SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



Lexi Barrett

Senior Director, National Education Policy, Jobs for the Future

Lexi Barrett serves as the Senior Director of National Education Policy at Jobs for the Future. She leads the development and implementation of JFF's federal and state education policy agenda, with particular focus on the high school to college transition and policies that increase the postsecondary education and career trajectories of low-income and underprepared students and out of school youth.

Prior to joining JFF, Lexi served as Policy Director for America Forward, the public policy arm of New Profit. At America Forward, Lexi focused on developing and implementing federal policy initiatives that accelerate social innovation, leading policy communications strategies, and supporting the education policy work of the America Forward Coalition.

Before joining America Forward at New Profit, Lexi spent nine years in federal service. She served for six years on Capitol Hill as legislative assistant to Senator Richard Durbin, working on a variety of education, national service, and early childhood policy issues. Lexi also worked as a policy advisor at the U.S. Department of Education in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education before serving as Senior Policy Advisor at the White House on the Domestic Policy Council, helping to shape and advance President Obama's early education and K-12 education agenda.

Originally from Knoxville, Tennessee, Lexi received a B.A. in political science from the University of Chicago. She currently resides in Washington, D.C.



Heather Chikoore

Policy Director, Colorado Education Initiative

Heather Chikoore is the Policy Director at the Colorado Education Initiative where she ensures CEI's programmatic work is informed by federal and state policy and helps policymakers understand implementation successes and challenges. She also leads CEI's diversity, equity, and inclusion work, to ensure both CEI's internal culture and external strategy prioritize and reflect these values. She previously worked as a Policy Specialist with the National Conference of State Legislatures,

where she analyzed education policy trends among the 50 states and provided research and testimony to state legislatures. She has a Masters of Public Policy from the University of Denver.



Misti Ruthven
Executive Director of Postsecondary Readiness, Colorado Department of Education

As executive director of the Student Pathways Division for the Colorado Department of Education, Misti Ruthven currently leads the initiatives connecting K-12 programs with the next steps beyond high school, such as career and higher education for the State of Colorado. Prior to joining CDE in 2012, she held the position of College Access Director for the Colorado Department of Higher Education. Misti is considered a national subject matter expert on college and career readiness, paying for college and successfully transitioning underserved students to college. Her work has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the White House and highlighted in the Denver Post, Chicago Tribune and Inside Higher Education. She is also often asked to provide national recommendations in these areas by request of the U.S. Department of Education.