

ASPA Spring Conference 2024 - Speaker Biographies



Rana Andary is a fourth-year medical student at the University of California Irvine School of Medicine. She is one of two student members on the LCME and led UC Irvine's ISA last year. Rana is passionate about high quality and equitable medical education and has been actively involved in UC Irvine's curriculum planning and review committees throughout medical school. She has also been actively engaged with the American Medical Association, the California Medical Association, and UC Irvine's medical student government. Rana finds wellness in baking, food tourism, and spending time with family and friends. She hopes to pursue a career as an Ob/Gyn and continue her involvement in medical education.



Nell Ard is the Chief Accreditation Officer with the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). Dr. Ard has been in nursing education for 35 years teaching at a variety of levels. She is a Certified Nurse Educator and a Fellow in the Academy of Nurse Educators. She began with the ACEN as a peer evaluator in 2004; joined the organization as a director in 2012; and was appointed the Chief Accreditation Officer in November 2023. The ACEN is an accrediting agency of all six levels of nursing in the United States. ACEN also serves as Title IV gatekeeper and institutional accrediting agency for 61 programs. The ACEN has had continuous recognition with the USDE since 1952 and with CHEA since 2001. Currently, the ACEN accredits 1358 nursing programs including programs in the United States and its territories as well as international programs; the agency has an additional 295 programs pursuing the process.



Melanie Booth, Ed.D. serves as Executive Director of the Higher Learning Commission's Credential Lab. Over her career she has held executive leadership positions with the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA), The Quality Assurance Commons for Higher and Postsecondary Education, and WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). She has also served as a dean, academic and student services department director, and faculty member at a variety of postsecondary institutions. Melanie holds an Ed.D. in Higher Educational Leadership and Change from Fielding Graduate University, a master's degree from San Diego State University, and a bachelor's degree from Humboldt State University. To learn more about or connect with Melanie, please visit her LinkedIn profile (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/melaniebooth/>)



Ann Boudinot is the Director of Accreditation at the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), based in Washington, DC, the accrediting organization for professional architecture programs. Ann holds an MBA from the American University in Cairo and a BS in Business Administration from the Ohio State University. As Assistant Vice President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness and SACSOC Institutional Liaison at Marymount University prior to joining NAAB, Ann led the university's compliance efforts through a time of rapid change. Ann held a similar position at the American University in Cairo, leading MSCHE institutional accreditation efforts and supporting national quality assurance and programmatic accreditation. She has presented nationally and internationally on topics related to accreditation, assessment, integrated planning, crisis management, and fundraising.

ASPA Spring Conference 2024 - Speaker Biographies



Linda Csiza, PT, DPT, DSc, is a Senior Accreditation Specialist for American Board of Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship Education. ABPTRFE accredits Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship programs. ABPTRFE currently has 460 accredited residency and fellowship programs across the United States. Linda is a Board-Certified Clinical Specialist in Neurologic Physical Therapy. She began working at APTA in 2019. Prior to working for APTA, Linda taught at Texas Woman's University in Dallas, Texas. Before coming to Texas, Linda taught at the University of Colorado Health Science Center in Denver, Colorado. Linda's responsibilities now include consulting with developing programs and programs undergoing renewal of accreditation. She also recruits, trains, and guides the site visit team members and the Candidacy Review Council.



Laurie Dodge, Vice President of Quality Assurance and Accreditation for the Competency-Based Education Network has been a long-time leader in CBE. Previously, Dr. Dodge was a professor, vice provost, accreditation liaison officer, and most recently provost at the University of Massachusetts Global where she led the development of six direct assessment competency-based education programs. Laurie is currently a member of the NC-SARA Board of Directors, WASC Senior College Commission Substantive Change Committee, and the HLC Credential Lab QA Design team. Dr. Dodge was the inaugural Chair of the Board for C-BEN and in 2016, was named one of "The Most Innovative People in Higher Education" by Washington Monthly. She is a co-author the book "A Leader's Guide to Competency-Based Education: From Inception to Implementation".



Jill Fogolin joined the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) in October 2015 as an Accreditation Specialist. Currently as the Director of Accreditation, Jill oversees the implementation of accreditation processes in accordance with COAMFTE policy and procedures, coordinates committee work and facilitates the development and management of reviewer training. Jill is dedicated to engaging with the COAMFTE community which includes the Commission, Review Committee, Site Visitors and Program Faculty. Previously, Jill worked for twenty years in non-profit organizations holding various administrative and supervisory positions in academic settings with a focus in student advocacy. Jill earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from University of California at Irvine and a Master of Education in Marriage, Family, and Child Counseling from University of Southern California.



Megan Fujita is the Executive Director of Accreditation at the Council on Social Work Education where she oversees accreditation operations of more than 900 social work programs and post-master's fellowship programs in the U.S. Dr. Fujita has served in a variety of administrative roles at universities, focused on assessment, evaluation, and curriculum development. Megan earned a Ph.D. in education policy and Master of Social Work in interpersonal practice and mental health. She is a lecturer at George Washington University where she teaches statistics and holds a faculty affiliate appointment at George Mason University's College of Education and Human Development, where her research focuses on college decision-making and mental health among students with disabilities.

ASPA Spring Conference 2024 - Speaker Biographies



Robert Hash, MD, MBA has served as the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) Assistant Secretary in the Chicago Office for the last 11 years. He has served on approximately 40 accreditation survey teams during and before that time, usually serving as the team secretary with responsibility for organizing the survey visit and preparing the final survey team reports. His training includes completion of residency training programs in Emergency Medicine and Family Medicine. His professional practice experiences include private practice, practice in academic health settings, and practice and administration in free clinics for the underserved. He has served on the faculty and administration at two LCME-accredited medical schools and two ACGME-accredited residency training programs.



Mary E. Kiersma, PharmD, PhD is the Assistant Director of Professional Degree Program Accreditation at the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE). Her roles include engaging professional degree program stakeholders, leading site visits, designing and conducting research, and speaking about ACPE activities at training sessions and professional meetings. Prior to joining ACPE, Dr. Kiersma was the Director of Assessment and Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Practice at Manchester University College of Pharmacy in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Dr. Kiersma received her PharmD from Purdue University. After working as a community pharmacist, she returned to Purdue to pursue MS and PhD degrees, with a focus on evaluation and assessment in pharmacy education.



Rebecca Lippert, Ed.D serves as Manager of the Global Accreditation Center for Project Management Education Programs (GAC) at the Project Management Institute (PMI). In this role, she leads the development and growth of the GAC and ensures the effectiveness of accreditation processes. With over 18 years of experience in higher education administration, Rebecca has expertise working with universities in the areas of institutional improvement and accreditation. Prior to joining PMI in 2021, she served as the Assistant Provost for Assessment and Accreditation at a private university and has held roles other related leadership roles. She has served extensively as an accreditation peer evaluator for both regional and programmatic accrediting bodies. Rebecca holds an M.Ed. in Higher Education and a Ed.D. in Leadership in Higher Education.



Priya Lorenzen is an Associate Director at the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and has been with CCNE since 2014. Prior to her time at CCNE, she completed a Master of Arts in International Affairs at American University in Washington, DC and a bachelor's degree in political science at the University of Florida.

ASPA Spring Conference 2024 - Speaker Biographies



John Przypyszny is a Partner at Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath and leads the firm's education team. He is a preeminent legal authority on higher education law and a trusted advisor to clients on matters pertaining to accreditation, regulatory compliance, policy, and transactions related to higher education. With almost three decades of experience, John counsels institutions, education companies and accrediting agencies. He frequently speaks on education law issues and co-authored a compendium on distance education for the National Association of College and University Attorneys.



Tomás Stankiewicz is a Junior Designer at WRNS Studio in San Francisco, having recently graduated from California Polytechnic State University - San Luis Obispo's B.Arch. program with a minor in sustainable environments. He has been actively involved in service to his institution and to the profession, as a chapter president of the American Institute of Architects Students, contributor to the organization's journal, CRIT; as a member of the AIAS JEDI Task Force; and as an instructor at a local community college and his institution's summer career workshop. Tomás also serves as a student representative on site visits for the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) and is currently preparing for his third site visit.



Melissa Tilton, OTA, MS, COTA, ROH has been an occupational therapy assistant (OTA) for over 25 years with experience as a multi-site director in skilled rehab facilities, supporting rehab in areas of practice, regulatory, advocacy, education, risk, and quality outcomes. Melissa now works as Quality Manager in Accreditation at AOTA, focused on quality outcomes and risk management for OT/OTAOTA programs who are Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) accredited and those working towards accreditation. Melissa has extensive experience in volunteering with various national and local committees focused on policy, regulatory, legislation and leadership. She presents nationally and locally with a strong interest in leadership, management, and quality outcomes.



Kristen Varol has worked at CEPH since 2010 providing consultation to and staffing accreditation reviews for schools and programs across the US and internationally. She is the primary staff contact for units interested in pursuing initial accreditation and those located outside of the US. Kristen supports internal consistency in accreditation reviews across a staff of nine site visit coordinators. She has presented at professional meetings about accreditation best practices and on CEPH accreditation criteria, particularly in relation to MPH curricula. Kristen received her Master of Public Health degree in health behavior and health promotion from Ohio State University. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism from California State University, Long Beach.

ASPA Spring Conference 2024 - Speaker Biographies



Heidi Vellenga is the Executive Director of the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA). She oversees the quality of the CEA accreditation process and agency operations as a specialized USDE-recognized accrediting agency for postsecondary intensive English as a Second Language programs, leads implementation of CEA's Strategic Plan and represents the agency and CEA standards to accredited sites and the public. She ensures that the Commission performs as a well-governed, high-functioning, and reliable accreditation decision-making body. Heidi has over two decades of experience in ESL teaching and language program administration at US- based and international sites. She holds an MA in Applied Linguistics & TESOL, a PhD in Applied Linguistics and is a former English USA Executive Board member and serves on the Editorial Board of TESOL Journal.