**Supporting Families: Community Forum on Findings from the 2015 Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Grants**

**SPEAKER BIOS**

**Session I: Healthy marriage grantees serving adults**

**Francesca Adler-Baeder** is the Alumni Professor of Human Development and Family Studies at Auburn University in Alabama and has directed the Alabama Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education Initiative for 20 years, partnering with multiple community-based organizations. She has developed HMRE curricula and resources, implemented programs for diverse groups of youth and adults, and conducted research and evaluation. She has written more than 80 publications on HMRE work that primarily centers on understanding and promoting relationship health, interpersonal competence, and family and individual resilience, with special emphasis on the experiences of more vulnerable, structurally complex families.

**Kay Bradford** is a professor of family studies at Utah State University. At the undergraduate level, he teaches a course in child guidance. At the graduate level, he teaches family theories, family research, and ethics in couples and family therapy. His research focuses on processes and outcomes in relationship education, and his current funded projects reach youth in high-risk contexts and incarcerated fathers. Bradford is also an active marriage and family therapist.

**Galena Rhoades** is a research professor in the Psychology Department at the University of Denver. Her research is on maternal health, development and functioning of romantic relationships, the related implications for children and adults, and the effectiveness of prevention programs and interventions for families. She has authored more than 100 publications in these areas and leads several related federally funded evaluations. In addition, Rhoades runs MotherWise, a community program that serves women during pregnancy and postpartum.

**Melissa Herzog** is an assistant teaching professor of human development and family science at the University of Missouri. She is the co-investigator for ShowMe Healthy Relationships, which is now in its second cycle of HM funding and currently serves single adults in 23 Missouri counties. In addition to her work with ShowMe Healthy Relationships, Herzog is the lead faculty and advisor for a graduate program in youth development, where she teaches courses in positive youth development frameworks, youth–family relationships, and youth sexuality and relationship education.

**Session II: Healthy marriage grantees serving youth**

**Tiffany Clarke** is a program manager of youth services at Bethany Christian Services based in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She helped incubate a community center that serves more than 500 youth annually with opportunities often not available to marginalized youth. Clarke enjoys yoga, tacos, and being outside as often as possible.

**Jackie Parker** is the executive director for Strong Families Strong Wyoming, an organization that provides relationship classes, community support services, and comprehensive economic self-sufficiency services to help teens make

good future relationship decisions and reduce Wyoming's high incidence of divorce. Parker has nearly 10 years of experience educating and empowering youth in achieving their future success under the HMRF initiatives.

**Mary Ann Slanina** is the program manager at Youth & Family Services, an organization that provides programs and services to more than 14,000 children and families in western South Dakota that focus on building healthy relationships and financial wellness. She joined the organization in 2016 as a youth educator after retiring from a teaching career of 28 years and became program manager in January 2020.

**Ani Yazedjian** serves as associate provost at Illinois State University. Prior to this role, she served as chair of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences. In 2013, Yazedjian was awarded the designation of University Professor, the highest recognition that can be achieved by an academic administrator at Illinois State. Her current research interests focus on evidence-based practice and adolescent development. She most recently served as the principal investigator and project director on a five-year, $5.19 million grant from the Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration for Children and Families to implement the Champaign Area Relationship Education for Youth (CARE4U) program. The program provides over 200 at-risk youth (ages 15–24) per year with relationship education, as well as job readiness and financial management skills to enhance youth’s well-being and support their successful transition to adulthood.

**Session III: Responsible fatherhood grantees**

**Kirk Berry** is a project manager with Public Strategies, where he serves on the Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Technical Training and Assistance team. Berry has worked in the social services field for over a decade, most recently directing Project D.A.D. (Developing Active Dads) on behalf of the Philadelphia nonprofit organization People for People. In this role, Berry stewarded the project from its inception, including recruiting, hiring, training, and developing a talented team of 15 staff members who provided services to more than 500 fathers annually. Berry’s areas of expertise include responsible fatherhood, parent–child relationships, youth empowerment, and program development and management.

**Avis Files** is the director of family and supportive services for Pathway Inc.’s Brothers United Fatherhood Program and Sisters United Motherhood Program, which provide programs and services to mothers and fathers who reside in Lucas County, Ohio. Files has also served as a program director for federal Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood programs. Files is very passionate about fathers: her motto is “Change a FATHER, Change a FAMILY, and Create a FUTURE!”

**Katrina Johnson** is the founder and chief executive officer of Horizon Outreach, which specializes in serving military and non-military families by providing evidence-based programming to stabilize the family unit through healthy relationship education and job readiness training. Johnson is also a United States Air Force Veteran, real estate entrepreneur, and former corporate businesswoman.

**Armon Perry** is a professor at the Kent School of Social Work within the University of Louisville. Perry’s research efforts center on the interpersonal and external factors that influence men's involvement in the lives of their children and families, as well as the impact of that involvement on family well-being. The findings of his research have pointed to the tools, resources, and experiences that shape men’s ability to be involved fathers; the role that mothers play in facilitating or inhibiting fathers’ involvement; and social service providers’ attitudes toward engaging fathers.

**Cheri Tillis** has been a force in the social services community of St. Louis, Missouri, for more than 25 years. Tillis has worked within the urban core and underserved communities with the Fathers & Families Support Center. The center has served more than 17,000 fathers, extending its impact to more than 45,000 children for 18 years. Tillis has a passion for reconnecting families and ensuring that every child has two responsible parents. She has spoken at countless venues where she has shared the advantages of responsible fatherhood and the importance of father–child bonding.