



Exploring Poverty Reduction Strategies and Advancement Opportunities in the Midwest

Speaker Bios

Jesse Heier Executive Director, Midwestern Governors Association

Mr. Heier has over 16 years of experience working with our nation's Governors, serving since 2003 with the Midwestern Governors Association (MGA). At the MGA, he coordinates the activities of the governors' staff advisory committee, the annual Chair's agenda, the MGA Partners Program and oversees operations of the Association.

Before joining the MGA, he worked in the Maryland governor's office where he focused on natural resources, energy and smart growth issues. Previously, he worked in the Office of Management Services at the National Governors Association. Mr. Heier holds a Bachelor's degree from American University and a Master's degree from the Johns Hopkins University.

Governor Sam Brownback Kansas

In 1986 Sam became Secretary of the Kansas Board of Agriculture. The farming industry was struggling in the late 80s. Sam worked to renew the rural heartland by actively engaging in re-opening U.S. beef trade in Asia, expanding market opportunities for agriculture products, and promoting new uses of farm commodities.

In 1994, Sam was elected to Congress and was selected by other freshman Congressmen to be the head of the New Federalists, a group focused on producing a smaller federal government and a balanced budget.

Two years later Kansans elected Sam to the U.S. Senate. In the Senate, Sam was an effective advocate for Kansas interests. He served as the top-ranking Republican on the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, which oversees USDA programs as well as agencies responsible for food safety and protection of public health such as the Food and Drug Administration. As a member of the Homeland Security Subcommittee, Sam's top priority was to ensure full support for the National Bio and Agro-Defense facility in Kansas. As part of the team that won this competition for Kansas, Sam worked hard to see that Kansas reaped the full benefits of this exciting development.

As the 46th governor of Kansas, Sam is focused on getting the state's economy growing again and creating jobs through streamlined regulations, controlled spending, and lower taxes. Since taking office, the administration has proposed fiscally responsible budgets, consolidated state agencies, eliminated outdated programs, cut taxes on all working Kansans and small business owners, and enacted laws that protect the sanctity of life.

Governor Brownback is committed to working with Kansas business and community leaders from across the state as well as current and former state legislators to craft Kansas solutions. Their "*Road Map for Kansas*" is a detailed plan to Grow the State's Economy; Excel in Education; Reform State Government; and Protect Kansas Families.

Bob Woodson Founder & President, Center for Neighborhood Enterprise

Robert L. Woodson, Sr. is Founder and President of the Center for Neighborhood Enterprise. Often referred to as the "godfather" of the movement to empower neighborhood-based organizations, Bob Woodson's social activism dates back to the 1960s, when as a young civil rights activist, he developed and coordinated national and local community development programs. During the 1970's he directed the National Urban League's Administration of Justice division. Later he served as a Resident Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. For more than four decades, he has promoted the principles of self-help and neighborhood empowerment and the importance of the institutions of civil society.

Dedicating his life to helping low-income people address the problems of their communities, in 1981 Woodson founded the Center for Neighborhood Enterprise (known then as the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise) for the purpose of strengthening and advocating for those neighborhood-based organizations struggling to serve their communities. The Center has provided training and capacity-building technical assistance to more than 2,600 leaders of community-based groups in 39 states. He was instrumental in

paving the way for resident management and ownership of public housing, and brought together task forces of grassroots groups to advise the 104th Congress on welfare reform. The youth violence reduction program he created, called the Violence-Free Zone, is effectively reducing violence in many of the nation's most troubled schools.

He has profoundly influenced the way people think about the strengths of low-income people. But more than just philosophy, he has promoted measurable results and living examples that provide proof of his principles in reclaimed lives and restored communities.

Woodson is the only person ever to have received both the liberal and conservative world's most prestigious awards – the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship and the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation Prize, as well as the Presidential Citizens Medal. Among numerous other awards, Woodson also holds an honorary doctorate from Colorado Christian University and the University of Cincinnati.

He is the author of *Youth Crime and Urban Policy, A View From the Inner City* (1981), *On the Road to Economic Freedom: An Agenda for Black Progress* (1987), *A Summons to Life, Mediating Structures and the Prevention of Youth Crime* (1988), and *The Triumphs of Joseph: How Today's Community Healers are Reviving Our Streets and Neighborhoods* (1998, reissued in paperback in 2008). He has also appeared on major network television talk shows including: Meet the Press, Nightline, and the Oprah Winfrey Show.

Roy L. Austin, Jr.

**Deputy Assistant to the President for the Office of Urban Affairs, Justice and Opportunity
The White House**

In March 2014, Roy L. Austin, Jr. joined the White House Domestic Policy Council as Deputy Assistant to the President for the Office of Urban Affairs, Justice and Opportunity. In this position, Austin coordinates the formulation and implementation of policy covering criminal justice, civil rights, housing, labor, human services and initiatives such as Promise Zones. Austin is also a member of the My Brother's Keeper Task Force.

Austin began his career as an Honors Trial Attorney with the Criminal Section of the Civil Rights Division investigating and prosecuting hate crime and police brutality cases around the country. After approximately five years, he joined Kecker & Van Nest LLP in San Francisco, as an associate working on complex civil and white-collar criminal cases, including a successful pro-bono civil lawsuit aimed at preventing racial profiling by the California Highway Patrol. In 2002, he joined the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia where he prosecuted domestic violence, adult and child sexual assault, human trafficking, homicide and fraud and public corruption cases. He left in 2007 to become a partner at McDermott, Will & Emery working primarily on white collar criminal cases. In 2009, Austin returned to the D.C. U.S. Attorney's Office as a Senior Assistant United States Attorney and Coordinator of the D.C. Human Trafficking Task Force.

In January 2010, Austin was appointed Deputy Assistant Attorney General (DAAG), Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice. As a DAAG, Austin supervised the Criminal Section, and the Special Litigation Section's law enforcement (police departments, corrections and juvenile justice) portfolio. In addition, he supervised work under the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Person Act (RLUIPA) and Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act. Among numerous other matters, Austin worked on cases involving the New Orleans Police Department, Missoula (MT) law enforcement and the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office.

Over his career, Austin has tried thirty jury trials to verdict. He served as an adjunct trial advocacy professor at George Washington University Law School from 2007 - 2013. Austin received his B.A. from Yale University and his J.D. from The University of Chicago and he grew up in State College, Pennsylvania.

Jake Horowitz

State Policy Director, the Public Safety Performance Project, The Pew Charitable Trust

Jake Horowitz is the state policy director for the **Public Safety Performance Project** (PSPP), overseeing state engagement and strategic planning for Pew's work to advance data-driven, fiscally sound policies and practices in the criminal and juvenile corrections systems that protect public safety, hold offenders accountable, and control costs.

As lead on state policy for PSPP, Horowitz oversees the selection, partnerships with, and assistance provided to states, including data analysis, policy development, and public- and policy-maker education on sentencing and corrections reform. He is a frequent speaker on these issues and has testified before many state legislative bodies as well as professional and academic associations.

Before joining Pew, Horowitz was a social science analyst at the National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice. He has also served as a legislative fellow in the U.S. House of Representatives and as a counselor and teacher at Eckerd Youth Alternatives.

Horowitz holds a bachelor's degree in history from Reed College and a master's degree in public policy from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Secretary Eloise Anderson
Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

Governor Scott Walker appointed Eloise Anderson as the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families effective January 3, 2011. Secretary Anderson is nationally and internationally known as a leader in public policy creation and implementation. She has extensive experience in child welfare and work support issues. Secretary Anderson began her career in Milwaukee as a social worker before joining state government. She has over 20 years in state service in a variety of roles, including serving as the Administrator of the Division of Community Services at the Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services.

Secretary Anderson returns to Wisconsin from California where she served as director of the California Department of Social Services, the largest welfare system in the country, where she oversaw diverse programs such as child support enforcement, foster care, adoptions, child abuse prevention, child care, refugee support, and emergency assistance. Her other experience includes President of Job Wave America, Director of the Project for the American Family at the Claremont Institute, and most recently as President of Anderson Resource Management Services assisting families in obtaining wellness and becoming contributing members of the community. In these positions, Eloise honed her policy leadership and organizational management skills which led to transformation of human service policy and delivery.

Secretary Anderson has two adult children and lives in Marshall, Wisconsin with her husband, Patrick.

Andrew Hysell
Executive Director, Kansas Reading Roadmap

Andrew Hysell is the Executive Director of the Kansas Reading Roadmap. Prior to that he served as the Associate Vice President for Policy and Advocacy for Save the Children's U.S. Programs. In that role he oversaw public and private fundraising in excess of \$55 million and served as the national lead for policy change on educational and poverty issues impacting children in rural America. He has also served as the Director for the Campaign for Healthy Kids, leading thirty-three successful state level policy change campaigns targeting childhood obesity as well as a national campaign to engage faith groups to participate in summer feeding, afterschool supper, and childcare nutrition programs. Andrew holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Carroll University in Waukesha, Wisconsin and a Juris Doctorate from the Georgetown University Law Center in Washington, D.C.

Isabel Blanco
Senior Director of Strategic Consulting, Casey Family Programs

Ms. Blanco is Senior Director of Strategic Consulting with Casey Family Programs, the nation's largest operating foundation solely focused on safely preventing the need for foster care and building communities of hope across America. She leads Casey's system reform efforts in Kansas and Mississippi and consults in jurisdictions across the country in value driven, data informed performance enhancements in child welfare system outcomes.

As Deputy State Director for South Carolina and Child Welfare Director in Georgia, Ms. Blanco led unprecedented Child Welfare Outcome improvements founded on practice and organizational culture change. In Georgia outcomes attained included nearly a 50% safe reduction in the number of children in care along with one of the lowest rate of repeat maltreatment in the country. In South Carolina outcomes included a 23% safe reduction in two years and a 50% increase in adoptions from FY10 to FY12.

In addition, Ms. Blanco assisted in the creation and led the implementation of "Permanency Roundtables," a Harvard University recognized intervention designed to facilitate the permanency planning process by identifying realistic solutions to permanency obstacles for youth. This model is currently in use in 34 States.

As the Vice President of the Jane Addams Hull House Association, Ms. Blanco guided the creation of nationally recognized child welfare and family support programs (Neighbor To Neighbor). As the Chief of Social Services for the Chicago Housing Authority, she led the human capital plan for the largest housing transformation plan in the country.

Mike Dean
Director, Franklin County Youthbuild

Pastor Michael Dean, affectionately known as "Pastor Mike", is a native of Columbus, Ohio and is the founding Pastor of Power & City Church also in Columbus. He is the Director of the Franklin County YouthBuild program and also serves as member of the Franklin County Urban Coalition.

As the former President of the National Alumni Council (NAC), the governing body of the YouthBuild USA National Alumni Association, Pastor Mike provided leadership to more than 100,000 young Americans throughout United States. Pastor Mike is also a part of the Graduate Speakers Bureau and has traveled to Capitol Hill to address the U.S. Congress on issues pertaining to low-income housing and crime in the low-income communities. In addition, he is a former member of the International Youth Corps (IYC) founded by the late Coretta Scott King and carried on by her son, Martin Luther King, Jr. III.

In 2007, Pastor Mike's presence was requested by the planning committee of the prestigious Congressional Black Caucus in Washington, D.C. In 2008, he presented at the Youth Service Conference in Orlando, Florida and the Aspen Ideas Festival in Aspen, Colorado on behalf of the Graduate Speakers Bureau, where former President Bill Clinton was in attendance. A sought-after national lecturer, facilitator and youth advocate, Pastor Mike has conducted numerous radio and television interviews throughout the nation. Then in January 2015, his long-awaited memoir entitled "What If I Had a Father?" debuted in digital and print media and is available for purchase through national venues including Amazon.

Celebrating 10 years of marriage, Pastor Mike and his wife, Val, are parents to five children. He credits his mother as the source of his perseverance and sense of self-reliance. Armed with a special anointing to meet people right where they are - rich or poor, young or seasoned, educated or uneducated, businessman or ex-con - Pastor Mike is called to minister to people from all walks of life and especially to those who have never met Christ.

Scott Miller
CEO and Founder, Circles® USA

Scott Miller is CEO and founder of Circles® USA, established in 1992 to inspire and equip communities to resolve poverty. He is also the lead developer of Circles® model, a community-building approach that builds relationships across income lines to support families moving out of poverty and into economic stability.

Scott began his focus on poverty in the late 70's as a volunteer serving people who were homeless in Rochester, NY. Since then, he has initiated projects throughout North America that directly help families out of poverty while educating the community about what changes must be made to eventually eradicate conditions that cause poverty.

Circles® is now in 75 plus communities in the US and parts of Canada, and has been featured on the CBS Evening News, TedX, CNN, PBS, and the Huffington Post.

Scott is the author of the book, *Until It's Gone: Ending Poverty in our Nation, in our Lifetime*, and *The Circles Story, How Circles Can Help Your Community Find New Ways to Resolve Poverty and Thrive*.

He makes his home in Albuquerque, New Mexico with his wife Jan. Both have volunteered for years as allies to families involved in Circles.

Jake Sipe
Executive Director, Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority

Jake Sipe has devoted the past sixteen years to serving the needs of families and individuals with low to moderate incomes in Indiana. Jake joined the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) in September 1999; he learned the ropes and advanced into positions of greater responsibility. In July of 2012, Jake was named Interim Executive Director and was appointed Executive Director in January 2013.

In his former position as head of the Real Estate Department at IHCDA, Jake was responsible for administering the Section 42 Rental Housing Tax Credit Program, Federal programs such as HOME and CDBG, and State monies including Indiana's Housing Development Fund and Neighborhood Assistance Program. His prior responsibilities with IHCDA also include managing the Community Development and Multi-Family Departments.

At the 2011 Indiana Statewide Conference on Housing and Community Economic Development, Jake was awarded the Michael Carroll Community Economic Development Leadership Award for his dedication to the advancement of affordable housing partnerships and production. He is a graduate of Indiana University's School of Public Environmental Affairs and currently serves on the advisory council for LISC Indianapolis and is a board member of the Community Investment Fund of Indiana, Inc. and of the Indiana Community Finance CDE.

Chris Marvin
Principal, Marvin Strategies

Chris Marvin is the principal for Marvin Strategies, a consulting practice focused on veteran-related strategy and communication. He specializes in developing veteran narratives for corporate communications, film and television productions, and veteran-facing programs. Previously, as the founder of Got Your 6, Chris advocated for accurate portrayals of veterans in the entertainment industry

and popular media. He served for seven years as a US Army officer and Black Hawk helicopter pilot and is a veteran of the war in Afghanistan. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Notre Dame and an MBA from the Wharton School.

Ken Smith
President & CEO, Jobs for America's Graduates, Inc. (JAG)

Mr. Kenneth M. Smith serves as President and CEO of Jobs for America's Graduates, Inc. (JAG), the nation's largest, most consistently applied model of dropout prevention and school-to-career transition for at-risk young people of great promise.

In 1979, Mr. Smith worked with Governor Pete du Pont of Delaware on the design of the first statewide test of the JAG Model, and has served as President and CEO since its inception. JAG currently serves 48,000 at-risk young people annually, in more than 1,000 high schools in 32 states. Over one million youth have been throughout JAG's 35 year history.

The non-profit JAG national Board of Directors is chaired by Governor Phil Bryant of Mississippi. It includes among its 50 members—nine Governors and several executives of major corporations and business and community organizations.

In recognition of his knowledge of national employment and training issues, three Presidents have appointed Mr. Smith to national commissions. He was appointed in 1981 and again in 1983 by President Reagan as Chairman of the National Commission for Employment Policy. Designed to analyze the full range of government policy related to employment, the Commission continues with a \$2 million annual appropriation and a 15-member professional staff. Mr. Smith also accepted an appointment by President Reagan to the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education, where he had previously served under appointment by President Ford. President Nixon appointed Mr. Smith as Vice Chairman of the National Advisory Council on the Education of Disadvantaged Children for the period 1973-76.

Mr. Smith is also Chairman and Chief Executive of Strategic Partnerships LLC.

Prior to founding JAG, Mr. Smith served as staff aide to President Nixon (1969-70); as Director of Special Projects for the Distributive Education Clubs of America; and founder and President of 70,0001 Ltd., a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping high school dropouts obtain employment. Thereafter, he served in a new post as Senior Advisor to the Governor of Delaware on all activities related to education at the secondary and postsecondary levels. During this period, he chaired the Commission of the Future of Education in Delaware and was nominated to serve as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Delaware Technical College.

Mr. Smith serves as a Trustee of the America's Promise Alliance, founded in 1997 with General Colin Powell as Chairman and chaired today by Alma Powell, is a cross-sector partnership of more than 300 corporations, nonprofits, faith-based organizations and advocacy groups that are passionate about improving lives and changing outcomes for children.

Mr. Smith holds a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations from the School of International Science at American University.

Jeannine La Prad
President & CEO, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce

Jeannine is CSW's dynamic leader, responsible for the organization's mission of transforming work and education through research and action. In addition to providing overall executive leadership, Jeannine has led a range of client engagements with public agencies, foundations, and industry associations.

These projects have focused on reshaping postsecondary education to make it more accessible for non-traditional students as well as reinventing employment policies, systems, and practices that are more supportive of meeting the needs of both businesses and workers and creating more equitable outcomes for low-income communities.

Jeannine's experience also includes developing national industry sector partnerships with business and education leaders and forming national and international networks to strengthen communities of practice. She has deep subject matter expertise in program design, implementation and evaluation as well as policy analysis, research, and data analytics. Her industry expertise is broad and includes work the manufacturing, renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, health care, and education sectors.

Jeannine also brings strong subject matter expertise and diverse relationships across the economic, workforce, and community development fields in the Midwest. She previously led CSW's work with the Midwestern Governors Association to develop a New Energy Economy Jobs Platform and has led other projects with states in the Midwest focused on better aligning workforce development and human service systems and programs to create more educational and career pathways for low-income people.

Prior to joining CSW, Jeannine did consulting work with a number of departments and programs at the University of Michigan. As well, she developed innovative training and distance learning programs for the chemical, petrochemical, and automotive industries. She has a Bachelor's degree in organizational psychology and communications and a Master's degree in higher education policy from the University of Michigan.

Audrey Rowe
Administrator for the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)

Audrey Rowe is the Administrator for the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in Washington, D.C. FNS provides children and needy families with better access to food and a more healthful diet through its 15 nutrition assistance programs and nutrition education efforts.

She brings to the Federal government over 20 years of experience in human services policy development, fiscal management, program design, service delivery and marketing with a particular focus on vulnerable populations, low income women, children and youth.

Most recently, Rowe served as Deputy Administrator for Special Nutrition Programs at FNS, leading the effort to pass the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, the legislative centerpiece of First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! initiative to end childhood obesity in a generation.

Rowe has extensive experience working on issues related to FNS programs. Her leadership has included roles as Human Resources Administrator in New Haven, Connecticut, and Social Services Commissioner for the State of Connecticut and the District of Columbia. In addition, she served as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the National Urban League.

In private industry, Audrey served as Senior Vice President and Managing Director for the Children and Family Services division for Affiliated Computer Service (ACS), formerly Lockheed Martin IMS. In this capacity, she spearheaded industry leadership in the realms of child support payment processing and enforcement and the electronic dissemination of public assistance benefits, including implementing Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) programs in over 20 states. Additionally, Audrey was appointed Senior Vice President for Public Affairs where she managed the corporation's government relations, philanthropy, and community relation programs.

Audrey's publications include:

- * The Feminization of Poverty: An Issue for the 90's, Yale University Journal of Law and Feminism, Fall 1991
- * Editor, The State of Black America, 1991, "To Be Equal," National Urban League.

Audrey is a graduate of Federal City College and was a fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government Institute of Politics at Harvard University.

Scott Bernstein
President and Co-Founder, Center for Neighborhood Technology

Scott Bernstein is President of CNT, which promotes sustainable communities by helping local leaders to better use their hidden assets; CNT received the MacArthur Foundation Award for Creative & Effective Organizations; President Clinton appointed Scott to the President's Council for Sustainable Development, where he co-chaired its task forces on Metropolitan Sustainable Communities and Cross-Cutting Climate Change Strategies; and Scott helped launch the Presidential Climate Action Program, offering a challenge to all 2012 presidential candidates and delivering a "first 100 days" action plan to incoming President Obama. He studied engineering and political science at Northwestern University, served on the research staff of its Center for Urban Affairs, was a founding board member of the Brookings Institution Metropolitan Program, and has taught planning at UCLA in the graduate school of policy.

Scott is known for promoting location-efficient regions, with tools ranging from mortgage lending to foreclosure prevention to transit-oriented development. CNT created the H+T Affordability Index, to help communities understand their direct transportation costs, including maps & data for all US regions, including all places and regions in Michigan, helping shift public investment to sustainable infrastructure and creating new financing for affordable housing near transit; HUD's strategic plan commits to making U.S. communities both energy- and location-efficient, and HUD & DOT competitive grant applications are now screened using this tool. The new affordability index is now being used in a majority of cities across the country in applications ranging from financial counseling to planning for increased affordability to justifying new mass transit investments. CNT prepared a version of this Index for the federal government, the Location Affordability Index which was released by HUD Secretary Donovan and USDOT Secretary Foxx in November of 2013.

Scott co-founded the modern transportation reform movement through helping convene the Surface Transportation Policy Project in 1990 which created the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act or ISTEA; and defined Transit Oriented Development as it is practiced today through co-authoring The New Transit Town (Island Press 2005) and as one of three partners in the Center for Transit Oriented Development; CNT helped bring car-sharing to the US, operating a large system in Chicago for ten years and is one of three founding partners of the new Shared Use Mobility Center.

Lisa Houser
Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity of Iowa

Lisa Houser is the Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Iowa. Habitat for Humanity of Iowa is a state support organization that works with 32 local Habitat affiliates covering 64 or the 99 Iowa counties. Habitat for Humanity of Iowa offers support in four main areas: 1. Resource development, 2. Training and technical assistance, 3. Disaster preparedness and recovery, and 4. Advocacy and legislative work. In 2014, over 200 families were served by Habitat affiliates in Iowa ranging from new home construction, rehabilitation, weatherization, and critical home repairs.

Ms. Houser has provided leadership to non-profit organizations since 2000, with the past seven years focusing on affordable housing. Ms. Houser led efforts in rural Iowa to develop the capacity of a local Habitat organization. Seeing firsthand the challenges facing rural housing organizations, Ms. Houser accepted the role of the state Executive Director in 2012 in hopes to grow Habitat throughout the state. Now Ms. Houser, and her team, work with local Habitat organizations to increase their capacity to provide affordable housing solutions. The majority of Habitat affiliates serve rural populations and range in staffing capacity from all volunteer affiliates without staff to large affiliates with multiple staff.

An Iowa native, Ms. Houser volunteers with her church, multiple community organizations, and enjoys time spent with her children and husband. Ms. Houser received her bachelor's degree in Child & Family Studies/Psychology from Northwest Missouri State University and attended the University of Iowa, Master of Social Work program. Ms. Houser also holds a Certificate in Community Development Finance from the University of New Hampshire.

Stephanie Nichols
Program Manager, Housing Assistance Council

Stephanie Nichols, Program Manager and Housing Specialist, manages HAC's OneRural Consortium's awards under HUD's Community Compass (HCC) Initiative. Under HCC, she oversees administrative and programmatic activities including technical assistance and capacity building activities for HUD's customers, including grantees, public housing authorities, and tribes. Stephanie provides direct technical assistance to rural organizations on organizational development and housing development, particularly the implementation of the HOME Program in rural areas. Stephanie has been with HAC in its Midwest Office since 1999. She has a B.S. in Housing and the Near Environment from Iowa State University and is a Certified HOME Program Specialist-Regulations.

Dennis Mesa
Executive Director, Kansas Housing Resources Agency

In former service :

Western Kansas Regional Director for US Senator Sam Brownback, 1997-2010
Mayor of Garden City 1991-92, 1994-95
City Commissioner of Garden City 1989-1997
Graduate: Garden City High School/ Class of 1972
Garden City Community College / Class of 2008
Garden City High School Hall of Fame-Class of 2000
Leadership Kansas' Class of 1996

Served on community boards/civic groups, including:

Garden City Chamber of Commerce
St Catherine Hospital
Finney County United Way
Finney County Relay for Life
Garden City Public Schools Foundation
Garden City Community College Endowment Association
Finney County Habitat for Humanity
Russell Child Development Center

Western Kansas Community Foundation
Garden City Community Day Care
Mira Vista Community Center
Garden City Rotary
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
Knights of Columbus
Honorary Board Member- Real Men, Real Leaders

State Board of Directors for:
Kansas Humanities Council

Kansas State Historical Society