

**Advancing Adequacy-Based Funding for  
Community Colleges in Illinois**

South Suburban College– September 25, 2024  
10:00 AM

**Report Presentation**



**Dr. Frank Fernandez** | *Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin, Madison*

Frank Fernandez is an Associate Professor in the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. His work addresses educational equity and policy issues. He is the co-director of Data Analytics for Minds Matter Chicago.



**Mike Abrahamson** | *Senior Manager of Research and Policy, Partnership for College Completion*

Mike Abrahamson is the Senior Manager of Research and Policy for the Partnership for College Completion, where he works on policy affecting equitable college access, affordability, and accountability in Illinois. Before joining the Partnership, Mike worked as a Fellow for the Chicago Mayor's Office and One Million Degrees while completing a master's degree from the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy.

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*(Report presentation, cont.)*



**Caitlin Power** | *Policy Analyst, Partnership for College Completion*

Caitlin Power is the Policy Analyst at the Partnership for College Completion and conducts policy research related to racial equity across Illinois' higher education system. Caitlin completed their Master's in Education Policy at Loyola University Chicago where their research focused on student voice in schools and district policy-making.

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## **Community College Student Panelists**



**Amelie Pineda** | *Student, Harper College*

Amelie (or Ami), is a second-year student at Harper College. Ami is currently studying pharmacy. Ami's current goals are to get into a good pharmacy program, get a scholarship to help pay for college and sleep more. Ami loves art and music and her current obsession is making clay magnets.



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*(Community college student panelists cont.)*



**Lizbeth Atenco** | *Student Trustee, South Suburban Community College*

Lizbeth Atenco is a dynamic blend of dedication and passion. As the president of the S.O.L.E.S Club, Atenco leads with purpose and drive. When she isn't immersed in my studies or student work, you'll find her at the South Suburban Humane Society Animal Shelter, where she channels her love for animals into meaningful action. Her downtime is spent lifting weights at the gym and exploring the beauty of nature on walks. Balancing academics, leadership, and personal passions, Atenco is on a mission to make a difference in every sphere of her life.



**Salvador Delgado** | *Student, University of Illinois at Chicago*

Salvador Delgado is a first generation student and professional. He completed an associates degree from Harold Washington College in Paralegal Studies, and a bachelor's degree in Public Policy from UIC. He is currently working full time as a HR Specialist for a small federal agency while simultaneously attending graduate school.

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### **College Stakeholder Panelists**



**Dr. Lynette Stokes** | *President, South Suburban College*

Dr. Lynette D. Stokes was appointed in 2018 as the College President at SSC. As such, Dr. Stokes became the first African American female to hold the position in the college's 91-year history. She joined SSC in 2013 as the Vice President of Academic Services and has a rich history of 22 years in higher education as an administrator.



**Dr. Brian Durham** | *Director, Illinois Community College Board*

Dr. Brian Durham is the Executive Director of the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), holding that post since 2018. As the Executive Director, Dr. Durham works with the ICCB to provide coordination and oversight of the state's 39 community college districts. He works in close partnership with Governor Pritzker's Education Team, the Board of Higher Education, the State Board of Education, and members of the Illinois General Assembly, as well as the Council of Community College Presidents and the Illinois Community College Trustees Association. Dr. Durham holds an Ed.D. in Education Policy, Organization and

Leadership from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, an MA in Political Science from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, and a BA in Political Science from the University of Evansville.



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*(College stakeholder panelists cont.)*



**Jessica McDonald** | *Assistant Professor, Olney Central College*

Jessica McDonald is the full-time Speech/Communication Assistant Professor at Olney Central College (part of Illinois Eastern Community Colleges). In addition, she is the Director of Strategic Communications for the IECC district. She is part of the IBHE Faculty Advisory Council and is the faculty representative on IECC's Strategic Engagement Plan Council. She currently works with the council on topics such as enrollment, student engagement, and IECC's transition to guided pathways. Jessica has a master's from Eastern Illinois University and a bachelor's from Indiana University. She had the honor of working alongside Holocaust survivor, Eva Kor, at the CANDLES Holocaust Museum and Education Center before becoming an instructor at Olney Central College. In her free time she is heavily involved in the Olney Central College Theater, loves cooking, Stephen King, traveling, and all things outdoor.

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