

TWO GENERATIONS. ONE FUTURE. ASPEN INSTITUTE ASCEND FELLOWSHIP

To learn more about Ascend at the Aspen Institute and two-generation approaches, visit:
<http://ascend.aspeninstitute.org>  @aspenscend  /aspenscend



The Aspen Institute Ascend Fellowship invests in a cohort of diverse leaders with breakthrough ideas to build educational success and economic security for low-income families. The Ascend Fellowship is for entrepreneurial leaders with a vision for ensuring the American dream passes from one generation to the next.

Through a values-based leadership program, Ascend supports Fellows with resources and a platform to create, amplify, and expand proven and promising strategies that focus on children and parents together. The 18-month fellowship spurs new partnerships, increases the impact of Fellows' work, strengthens their leadership capacity and networks, fuels their passion, and — most important — inspires them to action.

BUILDING ON A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

Since its founding in 1949, the Aspen Institute has invested in the world's leaders. The Aspen model is based on enduring values and providing a nonpartisan venue for dealing with the critical issues of the day. To that end, the Institute:

- Cultivates up-and-coming leaders committed to tackling the great challenges of our times;

- Hosts 17 Fellowships spanning regions and issue areas;
- Includes global, entrepreneurial, business, education, and policy-based leadership programs; and
- Leverages the creativity, energy, and resources of strong leaders and networks.

INCREASING IMPACT AND SPURRING ACTION

Building on the Institute's 50+ year history of investing in leadership, the Aspen Institute Ascend Fellowship supports visionary leaders with entrepreneurial mindsets who can think across systems and issues. We seek leaders poised to make

When you head an organization, you get a title. But, that doesn't make you a leader. Over the past few years, I've faced several thorny challenges. Thankfully, colleagues in the Ascend Fellowship have given me concrete solutions to deal with these values-based challenges that have been incredibly helpful to me personally and profoundly propelled our organization forward. I look at those moments and know I will draw on them forever.

—Katie Albright, San Francisco Child Abuse Prevention Center; inaugural Ascend Fellow

quantum leaps in their work to translate big ideas into action for children, parents, and families. Specifically, the Fellowship:

Invests in values-based leaders

- Learn from outstanding faculty and new solutions; and
- Leverage the Aspen Institute's wealth of leadership experience and resources.

Amplifies voices and ideas

- Participate in signature Institute convenings, publications, and media platforms; and
- Tap the power of networks.

Catalyzes change

- Join a network of social justice leaders ready to make a real difference in the lives of children and families; and
- Carry out action plans to spur new partnerships, scale approaches, and fuel creative strategies.

ASCEND FELLOWS: POWERFUL AGENTS OF CHANGE

The inaugural Aspen Institute Ascend Fellows cohort was comprised of outstanding leaders representing all sectors of society and making a significant difference in the lives of children, parents, and families. The class was made up of 50 percent people of color, with an equal mix of men and women. The 20 Fellows came from 11 states and stewarded more than \$3 billion in resources.

In addition to the Fellowship forums, Fellows took advantage of opportunities for individual strategic work group meetings, learning trips, targeted financial support, and convenings. Fellows made significant progress through their action plans, and many are continuing to expand their work. Below are some examples of their impact:

Systems-level change – human services

The Colorado Department of Human Services is integrating the two-generation approach across their \$2 billion statewide system to improve outcomes for all Colorado families. Under the leadership of Ascend Fellow Reggie Bicha, the state is developing an approach to employment for both custodial and non-custodial parents, increasing college savings options for low-income children, and expanding the percentage of low-income children in high-quality early education.

Transforming institutions – post-secondary

As the president of Miami Dade College, Ascend Fellow Dr. Eduardo Padrón is reimagining the student

experience for student parents. Through a unique partnership with the Florida Department of Children and Families, Miami Dade will expand eligibility and access for students served by its Single Stop service, which connects students with benefits. Dr. Padrón is leveraging the college's position in the community by directly connecting with a resilient population of Miamians who are committed to their educational success and economic security.

Quantifying the impact – social capital

Recognizing the power of social capital, or networks, in families' ability to build a durable path toward economic security, Ascend Fellows Dr. Mario Small, Dr. P. Lindsay Chase Lansdale, and Henry Wilde have invested in a groundbreaking pilot to foster relationships among parents in three centers at an Acelero Learning Head Start site and assess the impact on their children's educational outcomes. Each center's approach is structured differently to identify which is most effective. Results will be released in 2014-2015.

Models with potential for scale – Head Start

Head Start serves more than 1 million children each year, making it a major national lever in creating better outcomes for families. The Community Action Project of Tulsa, led by Ascend Fellow Steven Dow, is piloting a pathway for the parents of Head Start children to earn credentials in the healthcare field. In the Twin Cities, Jeremiah Program, led by Ascend Fellow Gloria Perez, helps single mothers complete postsecondary education while their children are successfully prepared for kindergarten. Jeremiah is now expanding to North Dakota and Texas.

ABOUT ASCEND AT THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

Ascend is the national hub for breakthrough ideas and collaborations that move children and their parents toward educational success and economic security. We embrace a two-generation approach and a commitment to racial equity and a gender lens.

