



Board Members, 2023

Dr. Emma Violand-Sánchez

Founder and Board Chair

Dr. Emma Violand-Sánchez is the founder and chair of the Dream Project. She immigrated from Bolivia to Virginia when she was 16 without her parents to study in high school. She sees herself in many immigrant students facing financial difficulties pursuing a college education. Fortunately, she received a scholarship to attend Radford University and graduate with B.S. and M.S. degrees. Dr. Violand-Sánchez received her doctorate from George Washington University. Education is her passion, and it changed her life. Dr. Violand-Sánchez was the first Latina elected to the Arlington Public Schools Board. She was Chair of the Board and served for eight years. She retired in 2007 as the Supervisor of programs and services serving the English Language Learners Office, PK-12, Arlington Public Schools. She is the founder of the non-profit Escuela Bolivia, now Edu-Futuro. For eight years, she served as a Northern Virginia Community College Board member representing Arlington County. Dr. Violand-Sánchez has expertise in education policy, curriculum development, family involvement, multicultural education, and learning styles. She has authored several publications on these topics, including “Mentoring and Retaining College Dreamers” in *TEACHERS AS ALLIES* published by Teachers College Press (2018). Dr. Violand-Sánchez is an active community and educational leader. She has received many awards, including a senior scholar Fulbright Award, the James Hunter III Human Rights Award, the MALDEF Community Service award, the VCSS Award for College Board Exemplary Service, the AAUW Fellowship, the Spirit of Community Award, a Lifetime Achievement Award for Extraordinary Service to the Community, and was named the 2016 Washingtonian of the Year.

Julie Zalkind, PhD

Vice Chair; Scholar & Alumni Affairs Committee Chair

Julie Zalkind, Ph.D., is the daughter of immigrants who benefited from mentoring and financial aid in college. She is a mathematician by training and the president of a commercial real estate investment company. Julie has served the community on the boards of the Donaldson Run Recreation Association, the Clarendon Alliance, the

Mosaic Theater, and as President of Beth Chai Jewish Humanist Congregation. She lives in Arlington with her husband, a Wakefield grad, two dogs, and a cat. Her sons, both graduates of Arlington Public Schools, live across different oceans.

Robert Remes

Treasurer; Finance & Administration Committee Chair

Bob has been an immigration lawyer since 1977. He has helped thousands of people receive immigration status through family relationships, employment, asylum, DACA, special immigrant juvenile status, and cancellation of removal. He has represented people in immigration courts against allegations that could result in their removal. Bob's clients come from many different countries, including Pakistan, Iran, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, and he appears before immigration courts and CIS offices throughout the United States. Bob graduated from Cornell University and received his law degree from Boston University. He is a former president of the Washington, DC, chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. Bob has been on the Dream Project Board since 2017. He is on the governance, Herman Loan /Emergency Relief funds, Scholarship, and Mentoring committees. Bob also provides pro bono immigration advice upon request to members of the Dream Project community and mentees and has made immigration law and policy presentations at many Dream Project events.

Mark Habeeb, PhD

Secretary; Communications, Advocacy & Outreach Committee Chair

William Mark Habeeb is a Professor of Global Politics and Security at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service and President of Habeeb Associates, LLC, a consulting firm that provides analysis and advice on the U.S. foreign policy process, the bilateral and multilateral aid industry, and international trade policy. He is the author of several scholarly books, numerous articles, and a multi-volume social studies reference series on nations of the world targeting middle-grade and high school students. His first novel was published in 2021. Earlier in his career, Mark was foreign policy assistant to former senator Gary Hart, director of research at a Washington think tank, consultant to the United Nations, and vice president of several Washington-based consulting firms. Mark was born and raised in Alabama as the son of a Lebanese immigrant and the grandson of a Cuban immigrant. He is a fellow of the Middle East Studies Association, a member of the Board of Virginia Humanities, and a member of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues and the Authors Guild. He also serves on the Steering Committee of the Arlington County Democratic Committee. Mark received his B.A. from Georgetown University and his M.A. and Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University, and he also studied at the University of Sussex and the Washington Center for Psychoanalysis.

Monica Burgos Flores

Monica Burgos Flores is a Washington-Liberty High School graduate. She graduated from the College of William & Mary with a B.A. in Economics and Philosophy in 2020. As an Economics major with a background in OOP, Monica currently works as a Global Market Data Analyst for Bloomberg LP. Monica has been with the Dream Project for several years. She started as a mentee in the Mentoring Program, was awarded a Dream Project Scholarship, and now serves on the Board of Directors and works with the Fundraising Committee and the Scholar and Alumni Affairs Committee.

Dawn Cutler-Tran

Dawn received a Dual Master's Degree from the University of Kent in Brussels in International Conflict, and Security and Virginia Tech in Public and International Affairs. Throughout these studies and her time living, studying, and working in Brussels and Hong Kong, she developed a deep interest in immigration, refugees, and education. Dawn first became acquainted with the Dream Project when she was working at the Horatio Alger Association administering scholarships and supporting scholar services. This gave her the skills and expertise she needed to join the Dream Project as a board member, and assist with the scholarship selection process and the Summer Summit and other events. Dawn currently works at the National Association of Medicaid Directors, where she serves as a Project Manager, and she brings those skills to bear at the Dream Project through her work managing the Summer Summit and serving on the governance committee.

Cinthia Fernholz

Cinthia Fernholz is an experienced investment banker and entrepreneur with particular expertise in strategy, finance, operations, and planning. She has worked at Lehman Brothers, Citigroup, Deloitte & Touche, and Goldman Sachs. Cinthia works as an investment consultant for Monticello Capital Partners, sourcing investment opportunities in Latin America in the Fintech space. She is a former CEO and founder of Coucou LLC, a children's clothing wholesaler. She has also assisted nonprofits with strategic and operational improvement consulting services. She is a former investment banker focused on M&A and a consultant. She is a project coordinator for the Arts & Culture Committee of Harvard Business School Community Partners in New York. She serves on the Board of Park Children's Day School of NYC and is a former member of the Pediatric Support Committee for Weill Cornell Hospital. She holds a B.S. from the University of Virginia and received her Harvard MBA in 2002. She is a native of Bolivia.

Ann A. Kennedy, PhD

Mentoring Committee Chair

Ann A. Kennedy, Ph.D., joined the Dream Project Board in 2016. She has retired from teaching at Arlington Community High School and continues to teach as an adjunct professor at Georgetown University. She has been GMU's CEHD Alumnus of the Year, Greater Washington Reading Council's Teacher of the Year, and a Fulbright Scholar. Her educational travels have taken her to Jamaica, India, Guatemala, Thailand, Brazil, South Africa, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Vietnam, and Cuba; she is active in international organizations encouraging educational opportunities for women in Senegal and South Africa. Her current research focuses on the development and acceleration of academic skills for English learners.

Tim Lawler

At-Large Executive Committee Member and Fundraising Committee Chair

Tim joined the Dream Project as a mentor in November 2021. He is a retired professional with over 44 years of experience in information technology and finance. Tim was a senior executive for financial management at the Federal Aviation Administration and provided consulting services as a Managing Director at Grant Thornton for nearly 12 years. Tim served several times as a volunteer instructor with the Presidential Classroom for Young Americans, helping high school seniors learn about their government and how it functions. In addition, Tim was a volunteer at the Washington Home, helping residents in the Alzheimer's ward play games and assisting the staff with caring for residents. Tim enjoys playing tennis, reading, and traveling.

Nancy McEldowney

Ambassador Nancy McEldowney is a diplomat and an educator. She has worked on US foreign policy including global migration issues for over three decades. Most recently, she was National Security Advisor to Vice President Kamala Harris from January 2021 until April 2022. Prior to this, Ambassador McEldowney served as the Deputy Director of the Biden-Harris Transition Team for the US Department of State and was a foreign policy advisor to the Biden Campaign. From 2017-2020, Ambassador McEldowney was a Distinguished Professor of Practice and Director of the Master of Science of Foreign Service program at Georgetown University. During her tenure as a career diplomat with the Department of State, she served as Ambassador to Bulgaria and Deputy Chief of Mission in both Turkey and Azerbaijan. She was also Director of the Foreign Service Institute, Senior Vice President of the National Defense University, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the European Bureau, and Director of European Affairs at the National Security Council. Her commendations include the Joint Distinguished Civilian Service Award, the Bulgarian Medal of Honor, the State Department's Superior Honor Award, and the Sinclair Linguistic Award. She holds an undergraduate degree from New College and graduate degrees from Columbia University and the National Defense University. She lives in Arlington County with her husband and two daughters.

Jeff Miles

Jeff Miles served as the Director of Graduate Admissions at George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs for 26 years (1987-2013), making final admission and financial aid/fellowship decisions on tens of thousands of applications. Before that, he served as an Assistant Director in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at G.W. Jeff played an essential role in the growth and development of the Elliott School, where he helped build one of the world's leading schools of international affairs. Jeff now works as a part-time admissions consultant, advising students interested in pursuing graduate study in international and public affairs, MBA and other graduate business programs, global/public health, and other professionally oriented Master's degree programs. He helps students identify their best-fit schools and scholarship opportunities, edit and strengthen their essays and resumes, prepare for admissions interviews, and improve their overall chances of gaining admission to these programs.

Gustavo Minaya

Mr. Gustavo Minaya is an educator and an advocate for undocumented and immigrant families. He is also the founder of Mi Futuro Education (MFE), a company that helps undocumented students make college affordable. For the Fall 2020 semester, MFE has helped students receive over \$20,000 in grants and tuition discounts. Mr. Minaya has over 15 years of experience in college admissions and financial aid. He has helped thousands of students and families of all backgrounds navigate college enrollment. He currently works in the Financial Aid Office at Montgomery College but has worked in the admissions offices for the Community College of Baltimore County and Towson University. He has earned awards for the Exemplary Faculty and Staff and Counselor of the Year. He has also served as Board Member for the Latino Providers Network, and Amigos of Baltimore County, nonprofits that assist the immigrant community in Maryland. He is a proud Peruvian immigrant, former undocumented youth, and first-generation student. He is a proud alum of Community College of Baltimore County, Towson University, and the University of Baltimore, where he earned his Master's in Public Administration.

Nataly Montaña Vargas

Nataly Montaña Vargas is a Washington-Liberty High School graduate. She graduated from Texas Tech University with a B.S. in Biology and minors in Chemistry and Spanish in 2016. With her background in biology, she also worked in clinical research at the George Washington University School of Medicine & Health Sciences. She recently graduated from Brown University with a Master of Science in Medical Sciences. Ms. Montaña Vargas has been involved with the Dream Project since 2011 and was part of the 2nd cohort of scholarship recipients. She has remained involved with the organization throughout her college and professional career and is now a member of the Board of Directors.

Roxana Montaña

Roxana Montaña is an active community member and an advocate for immigrant and undocumented families. She received her Childhood Development Associate Credential and works as a full-time professional childcare provider. Her engagement in the community and schools started as a concerned parent of two undocumented children. She began as a parent volunteer at Barrett Elementary School and was later made the First Latina PTA Vice President. She was also the Hispanic Committee Vice President at Washington-Liberty High School. After volunteering in Arlington Public Schools, she received an Honored Citizen Award. In hopes of helping other parents, she participated and co-led the Parent Leader Facilitators Workshop- a continuation of the "Participa" program of APS schools- learning how to become a facilitator for parent outreach programs and later applying skills to help parents advocate in Arlington Public County. She was also involved in the Civic Committee and ESOL/HILT Committee of the Community. Additionally, she has helped create the Parents Committee since the foundation of the Dream Project, serving as the President and continuing as a parent volunteer.

Marie Price, PhD

Scholarship Committee Chair

Marie Price is a Professor of Geography and International Affairs at the George Washington University. She is a migration scholar interested in integration policies and transnational linkages who has worked extensively in Latin America. In 2016 she became the President of the American Geographical Society, the oldest geographical society in the U.S. In 2012, she joined the Board of the Dream Project. She is also a non-resident fellow of the Migration Policy Institute, a think tank that focuses on immigration. Her publications include the following books: *Migrants to the Metropolis: The Rise of Immigrant Gateway Cities* (2008), *Migrants' Inclusion in Cities* (2013), *Diversity Amid Globalization: World Regions, Environment and Development*, 7th ed. (2017), and *Globalization and Diversity: Geography of a Changing World*, 6th ed. (2020).

David Rothwell, Esq.

David's law practice is devoted exclusively to immigration law. He has 36 years of experience in various immigration cases, including immigrant and non-immigrant visa applications, family visa applications, deportation defense, and political asylum. He has an extensive practice representing many people from Latin America and has prepared and filed more than 40 DACA cases. He was the lead attorney in *Perez v. Vargas*, a Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals case in which the court interpreted a section of the Immigration & Nationality Act to successfully support certain immigrants' applications who had to change their employer during the process. He has gained relief for persons who have suffered persecution due to their political or religious beliefs or sexual orientation, including persons who have suffered female

genital mutilation before arriving in the U.S. and have the same fear for their daughters. He has appeared on behalf of clients in immigration courts, and at agency hearings in over a dozen U.S. cities and consulates outside the U.S. He has also been an invited speaker on immigration matters at conferences and seminars.

Robert Smith, PhD

Governance Committee Chair

Governance Committee Chair Robert G. Smith retired in September 2019 after ten years as Associate Professor in the Education Leadership Program of the College of Education and Human Development of George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. Before joining the faculty at Mason, he served 44 years in various positions in K-12 education, the last 12 of which he spent as Superintendent of Arlington Public Schools in Virginia. He served the previous 16 years as the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instructional Services for the Spring Independent School District in the Houston, TX area and the first 16 years of his career in the Frederick County, Maryland Public Schools. In Frederick, he performed various roles, including teaching high school social studies, chairing a high school social studies department, heading an adult evening high school and junior high school, supervising federal and adult education programs, conducting and supervising planning and evaluation as an assistant to the superintendent, and directing K-12 curriculum and staff development. He is the author or co-author of many journal articles and book chapters. He co-authored two books: *Striving for Equity: District Leadership for Narrowing Opportunity and Achievement Gaps*, and *Gaining on the Gap: Changing Hearts, Minds, and Practice*. During his time in Arlington, Smith was honored to receive the Distinguished Alumnus of Davis and Elkins College (2010), the Leadership Arlington Legacy Award from Leadership Arlington (2009), the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Mid-Atlantic Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (2009), the Outstanding Professional Educator award from the University of Maryland College of Education (2008), the James B. Hunter Human Rights Award from the Arlington Human Rights Commission (2008), the Community Appreciation Award from the Arlington NAACP (2008), the Citizens Award for Service to the Community from the League of Latin American Citizens Council 4610 (2007), the Distinguished Service to Education Award from George Mason University College of Education and Human Development (2006), and the Region IV Superintendent of the Year award from the Virginia Association of School Superintendents (2006). Rob and his wife Sandy live in Arlington. They are the parents of two adult women and grandparents of five young college graduates or students. Their son Shawn, who died in 2007, is memorialized, in part, by a named Dream Project Scholarship.

Julius D. "J.D." Spain, Sr.

Julius D. (J.D.) Spain, Sr. is a proud Arlingtonian and a lifelong public servant. In 1990, he began a 26-year career in the US Marine Corps, retiring in 2016 after 26 years of

honorable service. J.D. believes in equality for all, and regardless of a person's socio-economic background, everyone must feel that they have an equal shot at reaching their dreams. As a Veteran, change agent, and community activist, J.D. believes in the power of collaboration, honesty, humility, and trust. J.D. believes that the economy should work for everyone, that healthcare is a right, and that our diversity is our greatest strength and most common thread that can, and should, bring us all back together. J.D. gained valuable leadership experience working on a diplomatic assignment with NATO Brussels Belgium for four years, served as U.S. Senate Congressional Fellow, a senior Pentagon legislative advisor, and a former federal investigator. In addition, he has devoted himself to building up Arlington and ensuring everyone in our community has a voice. For over a decade, he served in institutions that are the bedrock of our County, such as PTAs, neighborhood associations, commissions, and the oldest civil rights organization in America, the NAACP. J.D. is a Gold Life member of the NAACP and recently completed a second two-year term on December 31, 2022 as the President of the NAACP Arlington Branch with over 1000 members, where he tirelessly led a team of volunteers. J.D. is eager to continue to serve the people of Arlington. He has a vision for our community, the experience to lead, and the drive to fight for our shared values. Professionally, JD is a senior consultant working for a consultancy in McLean, VA dedicated to powering a future-ready, high-performing government, drawing from expertise in digital and analytic solutions, logistics, and management advisory services. In addition, he is a member of George Mason University, President's Innovation Council, and the Intelligence and National Security Alliance -Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Council. J.D. has received numerous awards and recognition over the past several years, which can be viewed here:

<https://www.jdforarlington.com/accomplishments>. J.D. is married to the former Adriana Contreras, also a veteran, and they recently celebrated 30 years of marriage and are blessed with three wonderful children (and a grandchild!). They reside in the Penrose Community of Arlington.

David Springberg

David Springberg is a graduate of The University of Michigan School of Engineering and The George Washington University School of Business. After eight years as a Sales Engineer for Washington Gas, David started his own real estate development and construction company. He has been developing land and building custom homes for the past 20 years. He and his wife Justine, a high school ELL teacher, have lived in Arlington for the past 30 years and have been involved in various community activities and advocacy groups.

Meg Tuccillo

Meg Tuccillo retired from Arlington Public Schools after serving as the Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services for seventeen years. Before that time, she was the principal of Abingdon and Tuckahoe elementary schools. Meg has been involved with PathForward (formerly A-SPAN) since 1992 and has served as Chair of the Board, Chair of the Development Committee, and Co-Chair of A-SPAN's Streets to Stability Capital Campaign. She is currently Chair of its Emeritus Council and Chair of its 30th Anniversary event. In addition to her commitment to PathForward, Meg is also Chair of the Arlington Community Foundation Workforce Development Committee, a member of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce Education and Workforce Development Committee, a founding member of The Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth, and Families, and member of the Partnership Foundation and The Second Chance Advisory Board. She has served as President of the Arlington Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW). Currently, she serves as its Program Vice-President and Co-VP for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging for the Virginia State Board of AAUW.

Bryan Viera

Bryan Viera is a former Dream Project Scholar and recent graduate from Marymount University with a B.S. in Information Technology and a minor in Computer Science. Born and raised in El Salvador in a low-income household, he set out to achieve his dream of attaining access to higher education in 2016. Determined to achieve what seemed impossible and break many barriers, Bryan became the first person in his family to attend and graduate from college. Through his years living in the U.S., he has been involved in various student committees and organizations in High School and College that advocated for underrepresented community members. Bryan has been involved with the organization since 2019, and he's currently a co-chair of the Dream Project Student Leadership Council, where he helps to organize and lead advocacy and lobbying events.