



Single mothers' vulnerability to homelessness and its impact on children

Side-Event to the 58th Session
of the UN Commission on Social Development (CSocD58)
on 18 February 2020

Speakers' Bio

Abbey Sussell MPH, BJ, BA New York Immigration Coalition, New York, USA

Ms. Sussell is the New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC)'s Public Charge Fellow. She coordinates the NYIC's organizational response and policy priorities related to a new rule from the Trump Administration that would dramatically re-define "public charge," and subsequently threaten the lives of low-income immigrant communities. Prior to joining NYIC, Ms. Sussell worked for the Mayor's Public Engagement Unit and GetCovered NYC. She managed a team of outreach specialists and developed strategies to connect low-income and immigrant communities with healthcare benefits. She brings her experience in community organizing, public health and public benefits, as well as a dedication to fighting for immigrant rights, to her work. Ms. Sussell received a Master of Public Health (MPH) from Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, and a Bachelor of Journalism (BJ) and Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Spanish Language and Literature from the University of Missouri.



Jacqueline Leduc, MUP, Make Mothers Matter, New York, USA

Ms. Jacqueline Leduc is an urban planner, specialized in housing and social development, with ten years' experience in the suburbs of Paris. Fighting to improve people's conditions is one of her core beliefs. Ms. Leduc is seriously committed to social causes. Indeed, in parallel to MMM, she volunteers with associations like New York Cares, to help people directly. She grew up in Mexico City and lived in Paris for 16 years. Double citizenship has afforded her extensive exposure to social realities in different countries. Fluent in three

languages (Spanish, French, and English), she can interact with many people.

Ms. Leduc received a Master of Urban Planning (MUP) from the Institut d'Urbanisme de Paris and a Bachelor of Political Science (BS) from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). She is currently a graduate student at Hunter College in the Urban Policy and Leadership program.



Bolly Jean Kouassi, Aide à la Jeunesse Défavorisée Africaine (AJAD), Côte d'Ivoire (video)

Mr. Kouassi holds a Master's degree in Educational Sciences and a DEA in Educational Psychology. He is a graduate of the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Abidjan. During his career, he has held various positions in the administration: Teacher, Trainer, Inspector of Education, Director of University Residences, Assistant Director at the Ministry of Fight against AIDS. Involved in the socio-humanitarian field, he is the Founding President of the NGO AJAD. He is also Administrator of Make Mothers Matter (MMM).

AJAD is a youth support structure specialized in the fight against early pregnancy. The association uses community and school awareness as a working tool to change the mentality of those involved in the field of education. AJAD action consists in directly involving local populations so that they participate in the development projects that involved their communities and can become real agents of development in their country. Its approach integrates the future beneficiaries of the projects, primarily women, through the creation of committees of mothers who are responsible for implementing these projects in the villages. AJAD is supported by local authorities and benefits from numerous contacts at the international and national levels, including: Make Mothers Matter, the Ministry of National Education of Côte d'Ivoire, the Ivorian National Commission for UNESCO and the UNESCO Office in Abidjan.



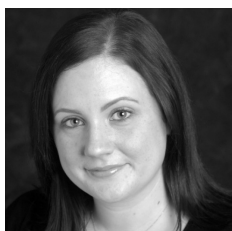
Zena Grimes, International Movement ATD Fourth World, Brooklyn, USA

Ms. Zena Grimes was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. She is a single mother with eleven children. Ms. Grimes has been an ATD Fourth World activist for thirty years. She has spoken several times at the United Nations, including for the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty at the United Nations in 2015. Today, she is part of the team in charge of Fourth World People's University, where people with a direct experience of poverty (activists), academics, and practitioners come together to share their knowledge of various issues related to poverty and human rights.



John Greenwood, Homes for the Homeless, New York, USA

Mr. John Greenwood is Chief Operating Officer at Homes for the Homeless (HFH), overseeing all shelter operations and programming for families experiencing homelessness. Mr. Greenwood previously held the roles of Deputy Administrator at Prospect Family Residence and Administrator of Williamsbridge Family Residence, both family homeless shelters operated by HFH, where he managed all daily operations and programming. He also spent several years working at the NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS), where he held the roles of Chief of Staff to the First Deputy Commissioner and Executive Director of Planning and Procurement for Family Capacity. Mr. Greenwood received his Master's in Urban Planning from Hunter College and has a BA in Sociology and Policy from Syracuse University.



Dr. Elizabeth Werner, Columbia University, New York, USA

Dr. Elizabeth Werner, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of Behavioral Medicine in the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, Columbia University Irving Medical Center and serves as the Senior Director of Research Operations and the Director of Clinical Intervention Research in the Perinatal Pathways lab. Dr. Werner is the Lead Supervising Clinician in the PREPP program, a clinical research trial aimed at preventing Postpartum Depression. She is also the Associate Director of Women's Mental Health at the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, through which she also provides clinical care. Dr. Werner specializes in the treatment of mood disorders and stress management, particularly working with women during the perinatal period. Dr. Werner is a Co-Investigator on several projects funded by the NIH and has published papers on a variety of topics in the fields of perinatal psychiatry and developmental psychobiology. She was selected as a NIH CHIPS fellow (Child Intervention, Prevention, and Services) and as a New York State Office of Mental Health Policy Scholar.



Dr. Angelica Ponguta, Yale Child Study Center, New Haven, USA

Dr. Angelica Ponguta's work centers on the advancement of Early Childhood Development (ECD) in low and middle-income countries with a focus on policy and program evaluation and implementation research. Dr. Ponguta has led and participated in ECD policy-making and policy analysis projects in over 10 countries in Africa (Kenya, Angola, Uganda, Ethiopia, Rwanda), Southeast Asia (Laos, Timor Leste), Eastern Europe (Kosovo, Serbia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Moldova), Latin America (Peru, Colombia,

Nicaragua, Brazil) and the Middle East (Palestine). These projects include the development of comprehensive and integrated ECD policies and national implementation plans, national feasibility studies for ECD program implementation at scale, and an international comparative study on the mechanisms of governance and finance of ECD in four world regions.

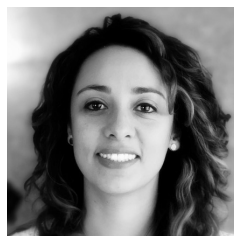
Dr. Ponguta is currently working on the development and evaluation of a novel school readiness program to build community youth leaders' vocational skills as early childhood educators in rural Pakistan and Colombia. She also participated in a randomized control trial evaluating a school readiness and parenting intervention targeting mothers and children living in Palestinian refugee camps and marginalized communities in Beirut. She is an advisor to groups conducting randomized control trials and observational studies of parenting and school readiness programs in Brazil, Colombia and Saudi Arabia. She is also leading a global whole-sector characterization of early childhood development and education in humanitarian crises.



Marie-Noelle Couderc, La Maison de Tom Pouce, France (video)

Ms. Couderc has been the Director of "La Maison de Tom Pouce" since the creation of the association in 1987. At the time, she was asked by Pr Jérôme Lejeune and Geneviève Poullot, founders of the association, to take care of the first women hosted in the house. As a social worker, she worked to develop the association's welcoming capacities and increase its recognition by public services and private partners. Today, she still manages the two shelters, which employ nearly 25 employees and welcome more than 80 mothers or mothers-to-be each year. Every day of the year and 24 hours a day, Ms. Couderc also answers emergency calls from women in distress.

La Maison de Tom Pouce welcomes unconditionally any pregnant woman or new mother excluded in relation to maternity. More than 3000 babies were thus born since the creation of the association.



Vanesa Treers, Soroptimist International, New York, USA

Ms. Vanesa Treers is a gender equality advocate and a UN Representative of Soroptimist International, an ECOSOC accredited organization that works to better the lives of women and girls worldwide through education, scholarships, leadership programs and advocacy. Ms. Treers has been actively involved at the UN Commission Status of Women and the High Level Political Forum since 2015, supporting the women's movement, UN-Women's Major Group and the Agenda 2030. She Co-Chairs the NGO CSW Forum Orientation

Committee, which provides advocacy training to hundreds of women's organizations every year attending the CSW. Ms. Treers is the founder and Director of The Embroidery Project, an organization that supports Women's Economic Empowerment in South America. She is the president and co-founder of the NY-Metro Soroptimist Chapter and a member of the Steering Committee of The Coalition for Global Citizenship 2030.