



Board Members, 2024-25

Tim Lawler

Board 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 on the Alzheimer's ward play games and assisting the staff with caring for residents. Tim enjoys playing tennis, reading and traveling.

Julie Zalkind, PhD

Vice Chair; Scholar & Alumni Affairs Committee Chair

Julie Zalkind, PhD, is the daughter of immigrants who benefited from mentoring and financial aid in college. She is a mathematician by training, president of a commercial real estate investment company, and 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, Esq.

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 and has represented people in immigration courts against allegations that could result in their removal. His 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 scholarship and mentoring committees and is chair of the Molly & Joseph Herman Foundation Dream Scholar Loan Fund Committee. 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.

Dayana Hudson

Secretary

Dayana Hudson (born Torres-Alvarado), is a Yorktown High School and George Mason University graduate. During her time in college, she advocated for immigration reform and co-founded the Dreamers of Virginia and the Virginia Student Power Network. She first joined the Dream Project as a scholarship recipient in 2012 and later served the organization as an intern, administrative assistant, and technology consultant. She currently works as a senior software engineer, mentors other women in technology, and serves on the Dream Project Board of Directors in the Governance Committee and the Scholar and Alumni Support Committee.

Nancy McEldowney

Communications and Advocacy Committee Chair; At-Large Member

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.

Meg Tucillo

At-Large Member

Meg Tuccillo retired from Arlington Public Schools after serving as the Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services for seventeen years. Prior to that time, she was principal of Abingdon and Tuckahoe elementary schools. Meg has been a member of our board 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. In addition to her commitment to A-SPAN, Meg is also chair of the Arlington Community Foundation Workforce Development Committee, Past President of Arlington Chapter of AAUW, a founding member of The Partnership for Children, Youth and Families and member of the Partnership Foundation and member of The Second Chance Advisory Board.

Ninfa Amador-Hernandez

Ninfa Amador-Hernandez, a graduate of Randolph College, a Dream Project alumni and is currently a dedicated Research and Policy Analyst at CASA, specializing in state policy, including healthcare expansion for immigrants and housing justice for working-class families. Growing up undocumented in the vibrant DMV area and originally from Honduras, Ninfa's journey is deeply intertwined with the fabric of diverse communities. Growing up, she witnessed firsthand the hurdles faced by the undocumented community, and the divestment in communities of color, experiences that ignited her passion for people-centered policy. Ninfa is passionate about community engagement and financial literacy as a transformative tool for achieving stability and fulfillment in life. In her free time Ninfa enjoys spending time with family and friends out in nature, and exploring new places.

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, she was awarded a Dream Project Scholarship, and now serves on the Board of Directors in addition to working 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. She also received a B.A. from Virginia Tech in Political Science. Throughout these studies and her time living, studying, and working in Brussels and Hong Kong, she gained a deep interest in immigration, refugees and education. After graduating with her second master's, Dawn went to work for the Horatio Alger Association administering scholarships and supporting partnerships and scholar services. This gave her the skills and expertise she needed to join the Dream Project as a board member, where she now assists with the annual Summit, and other events. Dawn currently works at the National Association of Medicaid Directors managing their data systems, administering surveys, and assisting with the leadership program and events.

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 Alumna 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 that encourage educational opportunities for women in Senegal and South Africa. Her current research focuses on the development and acceleration of academic skills for English learners.

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. Prior to that, he served as an Assistant Director in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at GW. Jeff played an important 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 resume, prepare for admissions interviews, and improve their overall chances of gaining admission to these programs.

Melanie Nezer

Fundraising Committee Chair

Melanie Nezer is a leader in global refugee and humanitarian policy and advocacy, development, and communications. She has over 25 years of experience at mission-driven nonprofit refugee-serving organizations. She has extensive knowledge of immigration, asylum, and international refugee and humanitarian law through legal practice, drafting legislation and advocating in Washington and internationally, teaching and training, and monitoring refugee programs in Venezuela, Panama, Ecuador, Colombia, Ukraine, and other countries hosting forcibly displaced people. Melanie currently serves as the Vice President for Advocacy and External Relations for the Women's Refugee Commission, which works to improve the lives and protect the rights of women and children displaced by conflict. Before joining WRC, she was HIAS' Senior Vice President of Global Public Affairs, and Immigration Policy Director for the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants. Before her work in Washington, Melanie was in private legal practice in Miami, Florida, where she specialized in immigration law and criminal defense. Melanie lives in Arlington with her husband David; their three kids are Arlington Public School graduates and are in college.

Ron Pillay

Ron Pillay is a seasoned Senior Level Executive with a remarkable career spanning over 30 years, demonstrating exceptional expertise in corporate strategy, technology project development, and implementation. He has a wealth of consulting experience, specifically in supporting federal agencies. His comprehensive knowledge encompasses program and project management in the areas of Information Technology. He has successfully built a startup firm driving business development activities in the IT sector.

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. A Latin American and migration specialist, Marie has conducted research on migration within Latin America and Latino migration to the United States. Most recently her work has focused on the impact of forced return due to U.S. deportation policies. On a global scale, she has investigated immigrant settlement in global cities developing a longitudinal data set. 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*, 5th ed. (2016).

Giancarla Rojas

Giancarla Rojas is an indigenous Quechua scholar from Bolivia. She immigrated to the U.S. over a decade ago. Her journey as a formerly undocumented activist has shaped her determination, confidence, and unwavering commitment to serving her community. She first joined the Dream Project as a scholarship recipient in 2012. In 2014, she achieved a significant milestone by becoming the first undocumented student to receive a full scholarship and was named Ambassador of Change at Radford University. Following her graduation in 2016, she was invited to the White House to share her inspiring story as a DACA recipient. Building upon her achievements, she pursued a Master's degree in International Commerce and Public Policy from George Mason University. Undeterred in her pursuit of knowledge and impact, she is currently pursuing a second Master's degree in Public Management at Georgetown University.

David Rothwell, Esq.

David's law practice is devoted exclusively to immigration law. He has 36 years of experience in a wide range of immigration cases including immigrant and non-immigrant visa applications, family visa applications, deportation defense, and political asylum. He has a large practice that includes 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 case in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals 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 cities in the U.S. and at consulates outside the U.S. and has also been an invited speaker on immigration matters at conferences and seminars.

Julius D. "JD" Spain, Sr.

JD is a 26-year military combat veteran and highly recognized civil rights advocate. He has devoted his entire life to public service and the well-being of others. JD 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, JD believes in the power of collaboration, honesty, humility, and trust. JD believes in the fair treatment of others no matter their background or income level. JD 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. Currently, Mr. Spain works as a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accountability Consultant at LMI in McLean, VA. In 2021, LMI was awarded a Top Workplaces 2021 honor by The Washington Post. In 2019, Mr. Spain was a political candidate for the Virginia House of Delegates. He previously served as a federal investigator and an analyst in the acquisition intelligence workforce (Pentagon). Mr. Spain earned a Bachelor of Science in political science from the University of Maryland, University College, and completed advanced studies in legislative affairs from Georgetown University, Government Affairs Institute, Capitol Hill Fellowship Program. Mr. Spain has excelled and remained involved in civic affairs throughout his career. He previously served as the regional vice president of 13 branches of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), located in Northern Virginia. He also flourishes as the president of the Arlington branch of the NAACP. As the leader of his branch, Mr. Spain believes in the NAACP's core mission and objectives as the nation's oldest civil rights organization to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of minority citizens of the United States and eliminate race prejudice. The NAACP seeks to remove all barriers of racial discrimination through democratic processes. Over the years, Mr. Spain has developed an expertise in managing program operations at the highest levels of both executive and legislative branches of government. In addition, he has worked tirelessly among various demographics in the community to lead phenomenally successful community service and civic engagement platforms.

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.