



2020-2021 Women's Policy Institute Fellows & Faculty



Tamara Burman holds her Bachelors of Science and Masters of Business Administration from the University of Rhode Island and a professional certificate in Design, Partnering, Management, and Innovation for the Middlebury Institute. Tamara has spent her professional career channeling her passion for service in community based organizations and development work where she has cultivated an increasing interest in policy and equity. She spent several years at the Cumberland-Lincoln Boys and Girls Club where she led them through significant programmatic, organizational growth, and community services. She then went on to serve as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Sustainable Community and Economic Development sector in Kyrgyzstan, Central Asia. Her time in

the Peace Corps was instrumental in shaping her understanding and passion for authentic sustainable development alongside community members. She also helped in launching NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley's food business incubator/kitchen and other economic development programming/supports for the local community. Tamara currently serves her home city of Woonsocket in her current role as Project Manager for the Woonsocket Health Equity Zone where she works to prioritize equity and collaborative work addressing community needs while prioritizing the people of the community. She also works as an Executive Function coach and serves as Chair of the Rhode Island Area Peace Corps Association.

Twitter: @tamaraburman

[LinkedIn](#)

[Facebook](#)

Superpower: Auntie abilities



D'Nysha "DeeDee" Cook is a Graduate Student at Johnson & Wales University Human Resources program. She received her B.A in Communication Studies at New England College in Henniker New Hampshire, where she spearheaded multiple women of color events and created an organization dedicated to women of color at her institution. Through this experience, D'Nysha found her passion for nonprofit organizations dedicated to women. After undergrad, she volunteered for multiple Nonprofit organizations in New York City before becoming a Graduate Assistant in the Residential Life department at Johnson & Wales University.

[LinkedIn](#)

Superpower: Ability to Connect Others



Kelsey Edwards has always been passionate about social justice and being active in the community. Growing up in a political family meant being raised to value working for change and civil service which has led to a career in social work. Drawn to the field because of the emphasis on social justice, Kelsey will graduate with her MSW from Simmons University in December 2020. She previously worked as a bilingual case manager, discharge planner, and substance abuse clinician with The Providence Center at the RI Department of Corrections Women's Facility. Working closely with incarcerated women led to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of racism and oppression that are rampant in our society and continue to plague our social justice system. It was in this

setting that Kelsey became passionate about identifying and closing the gaps in care and vital services for folks living with mental illness and/or substance use disorders. Kelsey spent the entirety of her junior year of high school living in La Serena, Chile as a Rotary exchange student and received her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Rhode Island College. She is currently working

as a bilingual mental health counselor at VICTA. If she's not at work or in class, she can probably be found out on a run, listening to true crime podcasts.

Instagram: @tutfootdjibout

Twitter: @tootifrootidjibouti

LinkedIn Facebook

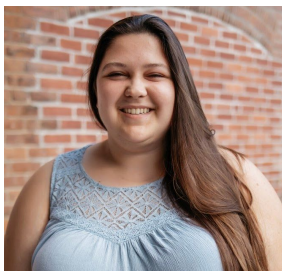
Superpower: Determination



Ebra Elsharnouby is a doctoral student at Clark University Developmental Psychology Program. Her research focuses on women's and girls' sexual development and health in faith-based communities. Currently, she is working with Muslim women to understand embodied sexual experiences, pleasure, and sexual well-being in the community. She is passionate about comprehensive values-based sex education and volunteers as a sex educator.

Twitter: @ebrauraloglu **LinkedIn Facebook**

Superpower: Researcher, Learner, Doer combo

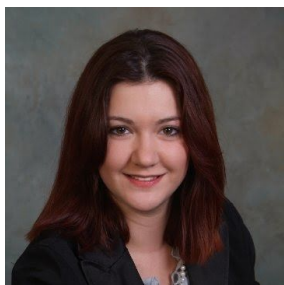


Emma Gauthier earned her Bachelor's Degree in journalism and English with a minor in political science at the University of Rhode Island. Her passion for advocacy and gender equity grew from her love of storytelling and journalism. As a student, she joined her campus newspaper, The Good 5 Cent Cigar. In her senior year, Emma was elected Editor-in-Chief, where she helped write and publish a series of stories exposing instances of campus sexual assault at the University. Motivated by the results of the 2016 election, Emma joined Lt. Governor Dan McKee's reelection campaign as an intern. Upon her graduation in 2018, Emma made Providence her new home, and was hired as the campaign's

Associate Director of Communications. While handling social media and email communications for the campaign, Emma also worked for her alma mater as a writer in the Office of External Relations and Communications. She served as the Legislative Co-Chair for the Rhode Island chapter of the National Organization for Women, and volunteered as a helpline advocate at Day One. Emma currently works in Boston as a Newsroom Editor for Business Wire, a global press release newswire.

Instagram: @emmadeniseg **Twitter:** @emmadeniseg **LinkedIn Facebook**

Superpower: Story Telling



Jenna Giguere, Esq is Deputy Chief of Legal Services for the R.I. Department of Business Regulation. She provides a wide range of in-house legal services, including comprehensive internal legal advice, appearing in administrative hearings and court proceedings, and advising on legislative matters. She has experience in a myriad of regulatory law subjects, with a current focus on liquor regulatory matters as well as providing legal counsel on issues pertaining to financial industries, certified public accountants, and even some cases in the medical marijuana and automotive recycling industries. She finds satisfaction in identifying opportunities for process improvements, working collaboratively with businesses on complex licensing and regulatory compliance

issues, and mentoring law students through supervising legal internships. She is a member of the Leadership Rhode Island (LRI) Class of 2019 and on the Steering Committee of the LRI Women's Network. She serves in various leadership roles including the Rhode Island Bar Association House of Delegates, Chair of the Government Lawyers Committee, and active contributor on the Bar Journal Editorial Board; RI Women's Bar Association Newsletter and Community Outreach Committees; Roger Williams Law Alumni Association Board of Directors; United Way of Rhode Island Young Leaders Circle Executive Committee; and as Chair of the Northern Region and Executive Committee for the National Conference of State Liquor Administrators. Her pro bono legal work has focused on supervising Roger Williams Law students helping incarcerated individuals with civil law issues.

Instagram: @EsqGiguere **LinkedIn**

Superpower: Problem Solving



Kassie Hawkins (she/her) received her B.A. in Sociology with a minor in Women & Gender Studies from the University of Texas. She has worked in human services for 20 years with a variety of populations, including LGBTQ+ folks, homeless individuals, victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, children, and folks with substance abuse and/or psychiatric or physical disabilities. She joined Sojourner House in 2017 and is the Manager of LGBTQ+ Programs. She coordinates the only shelter in Rhode Island that prioritizes male and trans victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking, leads a team of HIV testers, and provides outreach and education to community members and agencies on LGBTQ+ cultural competency and Intimate Partner Violence.

Superpower: Karaoke!



Trinice Holden works with passion to resolve conflicts, nurture social vision, and bridge communication gaps with businesses, community programs, government and private agencies. She uses her 17 years of knowledge and skill in the nonprofit field to inspire change and hope for a socially conscious future. Trinice was a coordinator for the Council of Educational Exchange, working with international exchange students and host families. She was the Program Manager, overseeing multiple youth development programs, for Thompson Ecumenical Empowerment Group, TEEG. Trinice is the current Executive Director of the Youth Restoration Project, a Certified Restorative Justice Trainer, a Certified

Social Justice Mediator, and a High-Performance Coach, giving clients a deeper understanding of cultural competency, self-awareness, and growth. Trinice has experience facilitating workshops on trauma-informed practices, community building, triggers, and leadership development. She leads training for schools involving racial healing and equity. She values Restorative Justice Practices as an ancient tradition that's been practiced internationally by indigenous people placing the highest value on listening and speaking from the heart.

Superpower: Speaking from the heart



Susan Killenberg completed her psychiatry residency training at Brown University in 1996. Over her psychiatric career, she has worked as a clinician and an educator, most recently at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, with expertise in the field of women's reproductive psychiatry. Susan has also worked as a medical administrator with social security disability. She is currently the chief psychiatrist at Disability Determination Services in Rhode Island. Susan volunteers at Planned Parenthood as a patient escort and at Year Up, Providence as a student mentor. She earned her BA from Yale University and her MD from the University of Connecticut School of Medicine.

Twitter: @sdkillenberg **Facebook:** Susan Killenberg

Superpower: Listening



Olubunmi Olatunji Born and raised in Providence to Nigerian immigrant parents, Olubunmi is a product of the Providence Public School System (Go Panthers!) and a first-generation graduate of The University of Rhode Island. Most recently Olubunmi works as the Program Director of Youth in Action, a nonprofit, where she nurtures an environment that empowers YIA students and staff to challenge and change the power dynamics of Rhode Island and beyond. She has a personal passion for improving the lives of the people in her community and strongly believes in the power of local individuals' ability to enact positive change. She believes that change can come about through systematic change in and

outside of legislation. Her personal and professional vision is to provide proactive (and perhaps at times, validly disruptive) people with the tools and support they need to make the changes we all need to see.

Superpower: Vision/ Re-imagining



Tiffany Sanders is Assistant Director of Career Placement on the Career Services Team at the Community College of Rhode Island. She is a Johnson & Wales alumna and holds a Master's Degree in Counseling: Human Resource Development. With a combined background of Retail and Human Resources over 16 years, Tiffany has been able to transition her expertise into Education. Working with students over the last 8 years has not only confirmed but also increased her passion to be a resource to others and provide a relatable face to professional roles.

LinkedIn

Superpower: Patience



Evan Sargent is an entrepreneur, author and founder of COMMIT, a strategic and creative firm that builds a brand in a day or a week for clients that span thought leaders, nonprofits, startups, and businesses in social impact spaces including social justice, global development, spirituality / wellness, and purpose-driven business. Evan is passionate about disrupting the way work gets done and exploring new ways of collaboration and leadership. Her mission is helping people and organizations with world-changing ideas get their work out into the world quickly, effectively and beautifully. Evan is also passionate about political engagement and activism. Her first kids book, *We the People: The US Constitution Explored and Explained with Quarto Kids* is available in stores and online.

Twitter: @evansargent **LinkedIn Facebook**

Superpower: Creative Collaboration



Jo-Ann L. Schofield is the President and CEO of MENTOR Rhode Island. A staff member since 1997, she has over two decades of experience in mentoring, training, and facilitation. Starting as Program Assistant in the Warwick Mentor Program, Jo-Ann has consistently grown with the organization holding many positions over the past 20+ years. As President and CEO for the past 7 years, she is responsible for the strategic direction of the organization, donor and stakeholder relationships, as well as fiscal and grant management. As a Master Trainer for MENTOR: the National Mentoring Partnership, she provides consulting services and delivers high-quality training for mentors and mentor program coordinators. Jo-Ann is a lifelong learner and most recently earned a Certificate

in Nonprofit Studies from Rhode Island College, learning best practices in everything from Strategic Planning and Fund Development to Governance and Compliance. Jo-Ann believes that every child is one caring adult relationship away from being a success story. Jo-Ann's enthusiasm and dedication can be seen in every aspect of her interactions with youth, staff, board members, donors, mentors, and community members. Jo-Ann is past chair of the Central RI Chamber of Commerce board of directors and is a member of the Mentoring Affiliate Advisory Council for MENTOR: the National Mentoring Partnership. The Mentoring Affiliate Advisory Council (MAAC) provides MENTOR and the youth mentoring field with capacity-building expertise and strategic guidance on a variety of national initiatives and projects. She lives with her spouse and three dogs in Warwick.

Instagram: @JoJoloscho **Twitter:** @joloscho **LinkedIn Facebook**

Superpower: Empathy



Kisa Jo Takesue has been engaged in education and advocacy for over thirty years, from her days as a college activist to her current role as Director of Pre-College and Leadership Programs at her alma mater. After receiving her M.S.S.W from the University of Texas at Austin, Takesue began her professional life as a community-based social worker in Texas, providing supportive services to pregnant and parenting teens, immigrant families, and low-income medical patients. She then transitioned to a career in higher education first as Assistant Dean of Student Life, then as Associate Dean and Coordinator of the Third

World Center (now the Center for Students of Color), and later as the inaugural Director of Student Activities and the Stephen Robert '62 Campus Center. During her tenure at Brown, she has collaborated with students, faculty, staff colleagues, and community organizations to implement a wide range of educational and academic programs focusing on leadership and diversity. She has taught a pre-college course on "Women and Leadership" and received a Brown Excellence Award for Diversity and Inclusion. Takesue grew up in Hawai'i and Massachusetts, but now calls Cranston, Rhode Island home.

Superpower: Curiosity



Lori Viner is an experienced nonprofit leader with a strong background in the areas of human resources and operations management. She served as Human Resources Director for the Rhode Island Blood Center before moving on to successfully lead the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island's social enterprise donation center for over 10 years. Her current role as Human Resources Manager for The Children's Workshop has inspired her commitment to work towards meaningful change in the areas of gender equity, educational access and economic progress.

She is a University of Rhode Island graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and a Master's Degree in Human Resources and Labor Relations. In her spare time, she enjoys photography, spending time with her husband and two dogs, and volunteering for Amenity Aid.

Instagram: @401LoriV **Twitter:** @onepalechick **LinkedIn** **Facebook**

Superpower: Critical thinking and maintaining a sense of humor



Paula Hodges, Facilitator Paula began her political and management career in Missouri working for the Secretary of State, America Votes and the Missouri National Education Association. She led the Governmental Relations team at Planned Parenthood in Rhode Island 2011 to 2014 and the America Votes New Hampshire coalition 2014 to 2017. In 2018 she was the founding Executive Director of New Hampshire Progress Alliance, a pooled social change impact investing alliance. She was the founding chapter director for New Leaders Council NH and is the advisory board co-chair for New Leaders Council RI. She continues to build progressive power through strategic facilitation, planning, start up management and fundraising through her social enterprise, [Anchor Strategies](#). She earned her B.A. from Truman

State University and M.B.A. from the University of New Hampshire.

Twitter: @PaulaJHodges

Instagram: @PaulaJHodges

LinkedIn

Super Power: Organizer (of people, friends and things)



Andrea Gustafson, WPI Intern Andrea born and raised in Coventry. Currently a junior at Boston University, Andrea studies Political Science and International Relations. Andrea is passionate about fighting discrimination and hopes to find a fulfilling career after college helping people through policy. This summer Andrea participated in the Rhode Island State Internship Program and created a policy to increase voter turnout among youth in the state. Andrea also enjoys writing and is currently editing a piece on COVID-19's effect on American Federalism, to be published in the Social Science Research Council's Democracy Papers series.

Instagram: @andreagustafson_ **Facebook Profile** **LinkedIn Profile**

Superpower: Drive