

# Reclaiming the Promise of Public Education: *Conversation Series*

SPONSORED BY THE ALBERT SHANKER INSTITUTE AND THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

## Educational Justice and The Integration of American Schools

Wednesday, June 11, 2014

Noon to 2:30 p.m.

### PANELISTS

#### JOHN C. BRITAIN

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John C. Brittain is a tenured professor at the University of the District of Columbia, David A. Clarke School of Law. He previously served as dean of the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University in Houston; as a tenured law professor at the University of Connecticut School of Law for 22 years; and as chief counsel and senior deputy director of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, a Washington, D.C., public interest law organization founded by President John F. Kennedy to enlist private lawyers in taking pro bono cases in civil rights.

In 2013, he was named to the Charles Hamilton Houston Chair at North Carolina Central University School of Law, which was established to bring prominent civil rights law professors and litigators to the law school to teach constitutional and civil rights law for a year. Brittain was one of the original counsel team members in *Sheff v. O'Neill*, the landmark school desegregation case decided by the Connecticut Supreme Court in 1996. He is presently part of the legal team representing private plaintiffs in a federal lawsuit against the state of Maryland for denying Maryland's historically black institutions of higher learning opportunities that are comparable to and competitive with traditional white universities. Brittain has participated in filing nearly a dozen briefs in the United States Supreme Court, and he was a member of the legal team that filed a friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of the NAACP in two school cases decided by the Supreme Court in 2007, *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District* and *Meredith v. Jefferson County (Ky.) Board of Education*. He also filed a friend-of-the-court brief in *Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding v. Rell* (2010), a landmark finance adequacy case that recognized the Connecticut state constitution has a qualitative dimension guaranteeing all students an adequate education. He has been president of the National Lawyers' Guild, a member of the executive committee and the board of the American Civil Liberties Union, and legal counsel to the NAACP at the local level and at the national office. In 1993, the NAACP awarded Brittain the prestigious William Robert Ming Advocacy Award for legal service to the NAACP.

*The Reclaiming the Promise of Public Education conversation series is designed to engender lively and informative conversations on important educational issues. We deliberately invite speakers with diverse perspectives, including views other than those of the AFT and the Albert Shanker Institute. What is important is that these participants are committed to genuine engagement with each other.*

## **LEO CASEY (MODERATOR)**

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Leo Casey (moderator) is the executive director of the Albert Shanker Institute, a think tank that focuses on issues of public education, unionism and democracy promotion. Before he assumed his current position at the Shanker Institute, Casey was elected vice president from academic high schools for the United Federation of Teachers in New York City, after serving as UFT special representative for high schools. As vice president, he taught a class in global studies at Bard High School Early College in Manhattan.

Casey began his teaching career in 1984 at Clara Barton High School in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, N.Y., where, for 15 years, he taught classes in civics, American history, African-American studies, ethical issues in medicine, and political science. For 10 consecutive years, his classes—entirely students of color, largely immigrant and largely female—won the New York City championship of the national We the People civics competition, winning the New York state championship four times and placing fourth in the nation twice. He was recognized in the Congressional Record for the achievements of his classes in the competition.

Casey's union activism at Clara Barton began in 1987, when he led an effort to have the school building closed to clean up major asbestos contamination caused by the New York City Department of Education's renovations. He served as UFT chapter leader at Clara Barton for 10 years. He has a long history of union involvement, including work as a United Farm Worker's organizer and participation in the first unionization drive of graduate teaching assistants in Canada. Casey has won several awards for his teaching, and was named national Social Studies Teacher of the Year for the American Teacher Awards in 1992. Casey led the design team for the UFT's Secondary Charter School, and led the UFT's work with charter schools, including charter organizing, while he served as UFT vice president. He has worked with teacher unions and teachers in Russia, Tanzania and China on the development of civics education.

Casey attended Antioch College in Ohio, the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania and the University of Toronto in Canada, where he earned a doctorate in political philosophy

## **ERNEST G. GREEN**

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Ernest G. Green currently serves as a partner of Matrix Advisory, an asset management firm. His long involvement in helping states, cities, municipalities and governmental authorities finance their needs led to him helping usher Matrix into a new era of public-private partnerships. Previously, Green was the managing director of public finance at Lehman Brothers' (now Barclays Capital). He also served as president of Ernest Green & Associates, a minority consulting firm that provided technical assistance in marketing, financial management and economic forecasting.

Green was appointed chairman of the African Development Foundation by President Bill Clinton. He was also appointed by Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley to serve as chairman of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Capital Financing Advisory Board. During President Jimmy Carter's administration, Green served as assistant secretary of labor for employment and training, where he formulated policy and directed implementation on a range of issues, including federally funded comprehensive training, public service employment, employment security programs, apprenticeship programs, research and development, alien worker certification, work incentive programs for the disadvantaged, and technical assistance for labor market information for the nation's employment and training efforts. Prior to this appointment, he served as executive director of the Recruitment and Training Program Inc., an organization to recruit and prepare minorities for apprenticeship programs in the building trades.

Green was born in Little Rock, Ark., and earned his high school diploma from Central High School in Little Rock. He and eight other black students were the first to integrate Central High following the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* that declared segregation illegal. These students later would become known as the "Little Rock Nine." Green received a bachelord a Nineo in social science and a master's in sociology from Michigan State University. He also received honorary doctorates from Michigan State University, Tougaloo College and Central State University.

Hundreds of organizations have honored Mr. Green during his career and he is the recipient of numerous awards. These include the Urban Leagues Frederick Douglas Freedom Medal, the John D. Rockefeller Public Service Award. At the age of seventeen, he was the youngest recipient of the NAACPs Spingard Medal. In 1957, the Boy Scouts of America honored him and two other African American for their achievements with their highest rank, that of Eagle Scout. In November of 1995, the Boy Scouts of America also awarded him with the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award. On November 9, 1999, Mr. Green, along with the other eight students, was presented by President Clinton with the highest honor this nation gives to a civilian, the "Congressional Gold Medal," for his outstanding bravery during the integration of Little Rock Central High School in 1957. On August 20, 2005, they were honored with a commemorative stamp by the United States Postal Service, and in 2007 President George Bush signed an Executive Order authorizing the U. S. Mint to issue a one-dollar coin commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the "Little Rock Nine."

## **LANI GUINIER**

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Lani Guinier is the Bennett Boskey Professor of Law at Harvard Law School. She became the first woman of color appointed to a tenured professorship at the Harvard Law School. Before her Harvard appointment, she was a tenured professor at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, where she was on the faculty for 10 years. Guinier worked in the Civil Rights Division at the U.S. Department of Justice and then headed the voting rights project at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund in the 1980s. She has published many scholarly articles and books that are accessible to a general audience, including *The Tyranny of the Majority* (1994); *Becoming Gentlemen: Women, Law School, and Institutional Change* (1997) (with co-authors Michelle Fine and Jane Balin); *Lift Every Voice: Turning a Civil Rights Setback into a New Vision of Social Justice* (1998); and *The Miner's Canary: Enlisting Race, Resisting Power, Transforming Democracy* (2002) (co-authored with Gerald Torres). She is currently working on *The Tyranny of the Meritocracy: How Wealth Became Merit, Class Became Race and Higher Education Became a Gift from the Poor to the Rich* (forthcoming Beacon Press, 2014).

In her scholarly writings and op-ed pieces, Guinier has addressed issues of race, gender and democratic decision-making, and sought new ways of approaching questions such as affirmative action while calling for candid public discourse on these topics. Her leadership on these important issues has been recognized with many awards and 10 honorary degrees, including from Smith College, Spelman College, Swarthmore College and the University of the District of Columbia. Her excellence in teaching was honored with the 1994 Harvey Levin Teaching Award from the graduating class at the University of Pennsylvania Law School and the 2002 Sacks-Freund Award for Teaching Excellence from Harvard Law School.

## RICHARD D. KAHLENBERG

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Richard D. Kahlenberg is a senior fellow at The Century Foundation. He has been called “the intellectual father of the economic integration movement” in K-12 schooling, and “arguably the nation’s chief proponent of class-based affirmative action in higher education admissions.” He is also an authority on teachers’ unions, private school vouchers, charter schools, turnaround school efforts, labor organizing and inequality in higher education. Kahlenberg is the author of five books: *Why Labor Organizing Should Be a Civil Right: Rebuilding a Middle-Class Democracy by Enhancing Worker Voice* (with Moshe Marvit) (Century Foundation Press, 2012); *Tough Liberal: Albert Shanker and the Battles Over Schools, Unions, Race and Democracy* (Columbia University Press, 2007); *All Together Now: Creating Middle-Class Schools through Public School Choice* (Brookings Institution Press, 2001); *The Remedy: Class, Race, and Affirmative Action* (Basic Books, 1996); and *Broken Contract: A Memoir of Harvard Law School* (Hill & Wang/Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1992). In addition, Kahlenberg is the editor of nine Century Foundation books, including: *Bridging the Higher Education Divide: Strengthening Community Colleges and Restoring the American Dream* (2013); *The Future of School Integration: Socioeconomic Diversity as an Education Reform Strategy* (2012); and *Affirmative Action for the Rich: Legacy Preferences in College Admissions* (2010). Kahlenberg’s articles have been published in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New Republic* and elsewhere. He has appeared on ABC, CBS, CNN, Fox, C-SPAN, MSNBC and National Public Radio.

Previously, Kahlenberg was a fellow at the Center for National Policy, a visiting associate professor of constitutional law at George Washington University, and a legislative assistant to Sen. Charles S. Robb (D-Va.). He also serves on the advisory boards of the Pell Institute and the Albert Shanker Institute, and on the Research Advisory Panel of the National Coalition for School Diversity. In addition, he is the winner of the William A. Kaplin Award for Excellence in Higher Education Law and Policy Scholarship. He graduated magna cum laude from Harvard College and cum laude from Harvard Law School. Between college and law school.

## MICHAEL PETRILLI

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Michael Petrilli is an award-winning writer and one of the nation’s most trusted education analysts. As executive vice president of the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, Petrilli helps to lead the country’s most influential education-policy think tank and contributes to its Flypaper blog and weekly Education Gadfly newsletter. He is the author of *The Diverse Schools Dilemma: A Parent’s Guide to Socioeconomically Mixed Public Schools*, published in 2012. Petrilli is also a research fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution and executive editor of *Education Next*. Petrilli has published opinion pieces in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Bloomberg View*, and *Wall Street Journal* and has been a guest on NBC Nightly News, ABC World News Tonight, CNN, and Fox, as well as several National Public Radio programs, including *All Things Considered*, *On Point*, and the *Diane Rehm Show*. He is author, with Frederick M. Hess, of *No Child Left Behind: A Primer*. Petrilli helped to create the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Innovation and Improvement, the Policy Innovators in Education Network, and Young Education Professionals. He holds an honors-level bachelor’s degree in political science from the University of Michigan.

**THE CONVERSATION SERIES WILL RESUME AGAIN ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2014.**

Go to [www.shankerinstitute.org/conversations2014-2015/](http://www.shankerinstitute.org/conversations2014-2015/) to see the topics and dates for the next series.