

# 2023-24 SchoolHouse Connection Policy Fellows

## ALABAMA



**Denise Riemer, LICSW-PIP**

*Homeless & Foster Care Liaison/Mental Health Coordinator*



**Renata Hollins**

*McKinney-Vento Liaison*



**Courtney Riles**

*Community Engagement Coordinator, One Roof*

Courtney is an accomplished professional who began her work in homeless services as an Americorps member in the fall of 2019 as the Soar Assistant. During this time she worked with people experiencing homelessness to get access to disability benefits. Courtney has been with One Roof, a prominent homeless continuum in Birmingham, Alabama serving in different capacities and is currently in the role of the Community Engagement Coordinator. Courtney's dedication to serving the homeless population continues with her commitment to work towards sustainable solutions and advocating locally for system changes. By engaging with local communities, Courtney plays a pivotal role in raising awareness about homelessness, mobilizing resources, and facilitating collaboration among various service providers in Jefferson, Shelby and St.Clair Counties.

## CALIFORNIA



**Donna Smith**

*County Office of Education Coordinator*

## LOUISIANA



### **Tekoah Boatner**

*Executive Director, Youth Oasis*

Tekoah is a versatile multidisciplinary system professional with exceptional qualifications and a passion for growing teams and businesses. Her years of expertise in the human services industry demonstrate her capacity to adapt to customers' changing requirements in various roles. She specializes in creating outcome-based programming and integrating systems thinking into business models, directly correlating to a varied financing portfolio. She is exceptional at assisting people in turning their concepts into practical business models with procedures that are accountable to the mission, the target audience, and other stakeholders.

Tekoah's distinctive perspective and level of expertise stem from her upbringing in a society of conflicting ideas while being a Southern girl with northern ancestry. She is skilled at cutting through the "noise" that frequently results from fervent and strong opinions in order to discover the "still, quiet voice" that contains the answer. Her expertise in political science and multidisciplinary human services blends her capacity to assist people in navigating complicated human service systems with her quick analysis of policy issues and ability to communicate them in an engaging and likeable manner. The end result is a highly skilled individual who thrives on seizing the chance in a demanding setting. a specialist with the capacity to develop culture-based models that are flexible, scalable, and responsive.

In her personal life, Tekoah enjoys connecting with like-minded individuals in collaborative ventures to address community issues. She is a strong supporter of any cause that strengthens our access to Human Rights. Tekoah lives in Louisiana and loves to travel. Contact her via email at [tboatner@youthoasis.org](mailto:tboatner@youthoasis.org)



### **Dr. Robin P. Brooks**

*McKinney Vento Coordinator, InspireNola Charter Schools*

Dr. Robin P. Brooks is the McKinney Vento Coordinator for InspireNola Charter Schools. Dr. Brooks is a Licensed Master Social Worker and Doctor of Behavioral Health. She has 25+ years of experience as a social worker. However, 21 of those years she has worked in the Public School System as a School Social Worker. As a school social worker, working with students experiencing homelessness & unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) has always been her priority. Dr. Brooks accepted the position as the McKinney Vento Coordinator for the school term 2022-2023 to create policies and procedures, guidelines and to train administration and staff for InspireNola Charter Schools. She also works closely with the guidance counselors and school social workers to make sure student's academic and emotional needs are being met. Dr. Brooks has made it her mission to educate and provide awareness district wide, on the importance of providing assistance and fair opportunities to Families in Transition (F.I.T) and Unaccompanied Youths(UY).

## MICHIGAN



### **Dawn Jakubowski**

#### *State Policy Liaison Homeless Youth*

Dawn Jakubowski, currently serving as the Chief of Staff and Policy Director for a Michigan State Representative with close to five year's experience, two of those years were proudly spent as Constituent Director. I am a former small business entrepreneur with over twenty years of professional business leadership experience. I am versed in the community, administration, and environment in our community. I continue to be a community advocate and serve our citizens in District 13.



### **Lisa Cruden, LMSW**

#### *VP of Programs, Family Promise of West Michigan*

Lisa holds a Clinical Masters of Social Work license. She has over 20 years of experience in working collaboratively with community partners, local colleges, universities, faith-based communities and the non-profit sector to provide program development expertise, supervision, and leadership. Lisa received her MSW from Grand Valley State University, where she is also an Adjunct Instructor in the School of Social Work. Currently, she is the VP of Programs at Family Promise of West Michigan, where she leads a team of social workers and support staff who provide housing, shelter and support services to children and families experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity. Her career has been centered on working with families and young children experiencing the traumatic effects of homelessness. Areas of expertise include: Trauma Informed Care, Strength-Based Case Management, Supervision, Team Building, Collaboration and Program Development.



### **Catherine (Katie) Kubesh**

#### *McKinney-Vento Regional Grant Coordinator & District Liaison*



### **Holly Carpenter**

#### *Grant Coordinator*

## OREGON



### **Kirstin Doveri**

*McKinney-Vento and Foster Care Liaison, Klamath Falls City Schools*

Kirstin Doveri grew up in Klamath Falls and has spent her entire life there. She is a Klamath Union High School graduate. Later attended Southern Oregon University where she received her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with a minor in Early Childhood Education. After SOU she worked at Head Start before joining Klamath Falls City Schools as a McKinney-Vento Liaison. She is starting her sixth year as the McKinney-Vento and Foster Care Liaison with Klamath Falls City Schools.



### **Woody Crobar**

*HELP Program Coordinator, Lincoln County School District,*

Woody is a passionate advocate for the rights of students and families experiencing homelessness. Originally graduated from the University of Oregon, Woody first became involved with education through teaching art. Throughout his time with the school district Woody would come to understand that many of the families he worked with had material concerns that were critical to improving their experiences at school, which led him to pursue working with programs that focused on those goals. As the HELP Program Coordinator Woody manages a diverse team of professionals who work to improve Lincoln County and the lives of the people who live there.



### **Andrea Shaver**

*McKinney-Vento Liaison, Douglas Educational Services District*

Andrea Shaver is a graduate of the University of Oregon (Go Ducks!) Family and Human Services program and resides with her family in Oregon. Andrea enjoys breaking new ground by creating and implementing programs specializing in educational and resource support for families and underserved youth in her rural community. She brings over 25 years of experience working with youth and families to her new role at the Douglas Educational Services District, where she will be continuing her advocacy work to reduce barriers to education for youth experiencing homelessness. She is excited to expand that work to include the development of new systems to support the valuable work of McKinney-Vento Liaisons in multiple school districts in her county. Andrea enjoys micro learning a diverse variety of topics and spends much of her spare time immersing herself in the beauty that the Pacific Northwest offers.

## NEBRASKA



### **Megan Reese**

*McKinney-Vento Liaison*

## INDIANA



### **Aseret Hesse, PhD Student**

*Department of Criminal Justice, Indiana University*

Aseret is a passionate young advocate for topics concerning youth homelessness, higher education accessibility, mental health and generational trauma. Aseret has spoken at numerous events, including SXSW Edu, with audiences of other youth advocates, social work professionals, and all levels of school administration. Aseret Hesse graduated from Indiana University with a Bachelors of Science in Psychology with minors in Sociology and Criminal Justice in 2022, during which Aseret studied in social psychology labs and joined research teams studying probation and parole intervention and training techniques. Aseret is now continuing their academic career at Indiana University, working on a PhD in the Department of Criminal Justice with research interests covering offender mental health, interdepartmental cooperation, policing/police training, crisis unit efficacy, socio-economic disparities in policing.