

Families Moving Forward: The Fundamentals of Economic Mobility

Manda Klein: Good afternoon. Thanks for joining us for our closing plenary, our final session of “Families Moving Forward: The Fundamentals of Economic Mobility.” I’m Manda Klein, the director of the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. I wanted to remind everyone about their session console. I know you’ve been doing this for a couple of days, but I wanted to make sure to review the benefits of the console, so that you can maximize your experience today. At the bottom of the screen, you will see several engagement tools. There’s a Media Player. You use this to watch the presentation and any videos during the session. The Questions for Presenters. Obviously, you’re going to use that tool to share a question or a comment during the session.

The Slides – we want to use this tool to display the PowerPoint presentation on your screen. There’s Related Resources and Links, and that tool has the list of resources available for download, as well as helpful links that you can also find your slide deck and your session handouts there. The Presenter Bios are also available. You can use that tool to learn a little bit more about us. Then, of course, that Certificate of Attendance. Use this tool to access the certificate. At the end of the session, you will need to meet the criteria before you can earn the certificate. These engagement tools are also resizable and movable. If you minimize any of these tools, you can click the icons at the bottom of your screen to make them reopen.

I want to go over a couple of learning objectives for today. We’re going to explore, examine, understand, and demonstrate. First, we’re going to explore how poverty has a direct impact on family well-being and indirectly affects other family and child outcomes. Then we’re going to examine the elements of economic mobility. Third, we’re going to understand how Head Start program staff, parent and family engagement practices, and knowledge about economic mobility helps to move families forward in their financial stability. Finally, we’re going to demonstrate with how the right supports in place and when building from their own strengths, families can profoundly change their lives economically.

I want to introduce our facilitator for today, Professor Alfred E. Osborne, Jr., the senior associate dean and director at Price Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the Anderson School of Business at UCLA. Now, you can go into the resources that I shared with you earlier to see his numerous clubs and boards and all of the things that he does at the Anderson School.

I wanted to introduce to you Dr. Osborne personally. I came to know him through the Anderson School of Business, Johnson & Johnson Management Fellowship through the Head Start program many years ago. I won’t date myself, it’s more than 20. I continue to stay in touch with Dr. Osborne. When we were talking about who might close this session and how we would support this work, I didn’t have to think very long to consider Dr. Osborne to help us with this message. Not only is he grounded in finance, economics, and all of those things, that he is a friend of Head Start and has been for many years. He understands the program and cares

deeply about it. I'm thrilled to welcome my friend, Dr. Osborne, to join us, and lead us in this session. Dr. Osborne?

Dr. Alfred E. Osborne, Jr.: Amanda, thank you very much for that warm introduction. I am delighted to be able to participate in this program. The National Center is doing great work for families and parents, and the operative word here of engagement is really critical. That is really what's so fundamentally necessary for what we're trying to do for the children and families that we're trying to move out of poverty.

My agenda is before you, and what I would like to do today is talk a little bit about the challenge of poverty. Then I want to spend some time looking at what I consider the key elements of economic mobility. What is it that we really need to move forward economically and be mobile in that process?

Then, a foundation for mobility is some of the issues associated with a stable family, parent and family engagement with each other and with the community, and, fortunately, for those of us familiar with Head Start, with the kinds of programs and opportunities that Head Start can present to families at economic risk in our society. It would be helpful, therefore, while I conclude with what I think the path forward is and will have a chance, therefore, to set the talk to a couple of parents who have moved forward and demonstrated what is possible with mobility.

Let me begin, therefore, now by talking about the challenge of poverty. To me, the fundamental question here is, "How can families and communities climb on to what I'm calling the ladder, the ladder in pursuit of their own version of the American Dream?" It is about upward mobility, given where we are starting from, in many cases. We need to be able to be comfortable that we can get somehow on the ladder as families who find themselves in poverty.

When you think about poverty, you need to remember that people are poor, and being poor means that you have few, if any, resources. More importantly, you have challenges in accessing what you need to move upwards, to realize your version of the American Dream. It is fundamentally, at core, fundamentally an economic problem, because poverty is not having money to command resources. How do we get a foothold on the ladder? What are the elements of moving up the ladder toward the American Dream? What's up there in the sky that can await us if we're able to move forward, rung by rung, toward our aspirations?

Well, you may have heard about some of the issues being planned for our society, like for example, the American Jobs Plan the President has put forth. You've heard about we're going to rebuild the infrastructure in our community. Well, policy statements like that shape possibilities that we are able to maybe engage in our effort to move forward. But what is your version of the American Dream? Up there in the cloud for most people, maybe it's the opportunity, an aspiration to have a middle-class life. Firm middle-class values and experiences and resources. For example, perhaps owning a home somewhere, the chance to have an

automobile that works, or the opportunity to be able to be in a community where you have a school that you can send your children to and be comfortable that they will be taken care of.

Upward mobility, then, moving on the rungs, involves several fundamental elements to be able to afford a home and perhaps a nice car and live in a decent community. One has to have a stable job. How do you think about a stable job to carry out your dream? Well, at the bottom of the ladder, therefore, is a – important requirement to figure out how are you going to earn a living to support your family? Which means education really matters. Sacrifice really matters. Find that to be able to have recurring stable income means that you must have the opportunity to access training and education that allows you then to command and offer services that others would value in their own pursuits.

Our economy, therefore, is based on finding opportunity – opportunity for you to be the best that you can, with the skills that you have, by providing access to the services that help you go forward up the ladder, and education and training that works for the skills you would like to develop. Now, that requires that you have some hope. If you're going to dream and aspire, you have to believe that it can happen, and no matter what the foundations are that find you in poverty, you can reach out to those that will help reduce the barriers that keep you from moving up the ladder. There are lots of things. It could be that we are where we are by accident or by circumstances of birth that we could do nothing about. But it does you no good to sit there and wallow and worry about those. You have to say, "I can overcome." A little bit of hope, I believe, and dreaming becomes an important part of all of this.

Things like status and voting and perhaps recognizing that there is a gap that can be closed becomes an important element also of you developing an identity for yourself. This challenge is very real, and we have to figure out how are we going to acquire skills and attitudes and a way of moving forward with knowledge that allows us to move from rung to rung.

Let's talk about what it might look like in the context of this pursuit by looking at the next slide that I have here for you, which talks about the privilege and the importance of a strong family. I'm going to talk about some economic issues in a minute. But, as this graphic indicates, a family that is together, that is stable, that can work with one another, whether it's the ultimate dream of a husband and a wife and two children living in the suburbs with a white picket fence – let me just put that in quotes. I don't mean to offend anybody, but that may not be what it is that most of us want these days. But whatever it is, the importance of family that support and empathize with one another is fundamental.

A family that talks, that communicates, that shares their dreams and their experiences with each other is so basic that it almost goes without saying. Are we communicating? Are we developing empathy and feeling for one another? Are we engaged in positive experiences that allow us to see, yes, we can move from one rung on the ladder to the next? Often, that means that we have to develop an ability to sacrifice for each other.

I can think of the family where Mom was working many hours in the evening. Perhaps Dad has two jobs, one to be able to put food on the table, and two to be able to support perhaps the

wife going to school to learn a skill so that the family can move with greater income. The first requirement, then, family engagement, requires some agreement among all family members on how they're going to work together to move forward.

By the way, this notion of family engagement can extend to community and other partner resources, because "family" is often more than just the nuclear family. "Family" would involve the neighbors or those parents who you have met through your association in the Parents Council, or your ability to meet others in the community. All of that creates, I believe, the opportunity for an enduring relationship and engagement that will help with upward mobility.

You see, because if you communicate with each other in this broader, extended family, and you, therefore, understand the context – and I'll say a little bit more about that in a minute – in which things take place, you will be learning. You'll be learning those critical skills that you can add to your stock of knowledge and experiences, so that you can build relationships and connections that allow and facilitate mobility up the ladder. You just don't stand on the ladder, and you just don't need to do it yourself. Reach out. There are those who will help you break down the barriers that may exist. But you have to be willing to communicate and to talk and try to make an honest assessment of what it is you think you need.

This is where Head Start has such great resources and success for families to create the engagement that may be needed and create, if you will, the hub that I will talk about in a minute, that is fundamental to nurturing with the whole community, allowing all of us to move forward. Family engagement is the fundamental thing, is trying to be honest and real and transparent with your needs, and articulate them if you can in such a way that others can help you fill the gaps that might be necessary, so you can move up the ladder.

Now, let's talk about what some of the things are that will help you on the ladder. Let's look at some of the elements, therefore. First of all, we're going to look at the top of this chart. What's essential here is understanding the environment you're in. We know we're poor. We know we don't have a lot of income, but let me try to understand what's going on in our environment. What is the context?

A key part of all of this is getting educated. In education, I may not, for example, be able to go to school, but maybe I could go to community college. Or maybe I could go to a job-related fair. Or maybe I could find myself with some union assistance, an apprentice opportunity. With the kinds of things that are happening in the broad environment today, apprentice opportunities and working on the ladder and being – trying the best way to be legal about all of it will make a difference. Understanding the external environment around you, OK, and knowing that there's a way to move through it is ultimately important. So education.

Now, it could well be then that you're worried about the next generation, which is your children. You want to do what you can to be sure that they are able to do the best that they can when they have a school. See, many of our communities are poor. Not just because there's low-income families. It's because there is no wealth. A lot of things have to happen to move the economy down – the community down to where there is community wealth, where there's

prosperity and the community that can afford social services that are important, or private firms and others offering advantages to members of the community. That depends on what I call “community wealth.”

Wealth is accumulated over time. A community is not prosperous unless the citizens and the members of the community themselves are prosperous, and they must develop prosperity through savings. The lack of investment in a community is an important part of the poverty that is aligned and makes it difficult for families to move up the ladder. What can we do about that?

Well, I have some hope that the infrastructure discussions that we’re having at a national level and the job training associated with this can accelerate the movement up the ladder. Now we have to do something for ourselves. We have to save. If we happen to be trained and have a job, then we have to find a way where we can put a way for tomorrow and not consume it all today. An important element of mobility is some kind of savings. Now, you can say that, well, “How can I save when I’m not making much of anything?” Yes, you can. You have to find a way to be more effective in your ability to plan for tomorrow. Savings is necessary. But if you have a good job and you’re able to have that stability of income, then, over time, you will be able to accumulate what might be necessary.

But maybe it’s not a job that’s part of your aspiration. Maybe you want to start your own business. Many immigrant families work together and have entrepreneurial experiences. They start small businesses, and small business is one of the most important engines in moving a community forward. We know that the small grocery store, or the small retail shop, or the dress shop, or the service appliance supplier, or any number of smaller businesses that you control, perhaps based on skills that you develop, without necessarily thinking you have to go to college, can be fundamental to your skill acquisition.

We see all of that in the services that are needed, for example, in health care or industries related to senior assisted living, for example. All of these are skills that one can develop, in some cases, the appropriate licenses for, where they can pass the tests. One of the fastest growing professions is cosmetology. Well, being able to deal with that and being able to provide those skills is, I believe, an important way to earning income. The services sector. You don’t need necessarily the technology. I am comfortable that we would be able to do something with all of these areas.

The hub of helping all of that happen is the relationships and connections in the community. An important element to be connected to, in addition to your Head Start agency, is the marketplace, and to businesses. Getting to know the businesses in your community and what their needs are offers an opportunity for employment right there in the community. Of course, you can work outside of the community, but then you have to import your salary. You think about you’re spending what you earn in the community and keeping small businesses thriving, so that you can add to what I’m going to call, the “Business Wealth” in the community.

As I’ve tried to say right here is, there are ways in which you can move yourself forward. But the way the community becomes sustainable is when it has wealth. Families can begin to have

wealth through savings. Businesses can begin to have wealth through profits. Businesses are able to have profits if they have customers who are able to buy products and services there. That lifts everybody and creates a possibility for moving up the ladder by establishing community wealth. Let me let me pause here for a second as we get set to do the part two of my presentation.

Manda: Yes. I think we have one question. Let me just ask it really quickly. I know the audience is starting to ask some questions, and I think one of the questions was if you could just talk a little bit about how Head Start, specifically, is supporting that economic mobility.

Dr. Osborne: Well, thank you for allowing me to pause and see what some of the questions might be. Someone has asked, to issue, "How can Head Start really be part of this notion of building wealth in a community?" One of the great contributions that Head Start has made and continues to make, it is building relationships and assembling resources that allows companies – that allow families to move forward and accelerate their trip up the ladder toward their version of the American Dream.

Head Start provides an opportunity for children, for example, through early education, to understand what getting ready for school is all about. There are nutritional services and health services available, like dental services, for example. There is a medical home that can be established. All of that is fundamental at providing support when a family may have thought that they did not have access to these kinds of services. Head Start steps in and helps with you.

Head Start has family social workers and, in many cases, try to understand what the needs of the family might be for things like employment. Head Start works to connect family members to jobs where possible, as well. In looking at the whole family, Head Start works real hard besides just getting the children ready for school, having a curriculum that creates an educational component that is rivaled all over the world. Head Start is an important asset for the family and the children. Through the activities with the Parents Council, we begin to learn some of those soft skills that are necessary to negotiate up the rung, up the various rungs of the ladder. Being in the Parent Council, being able to provide oversight, helps parents learn how to work and negotiate for themselves and create access and opportunity.

Being involved with Head Start as a parent and helping your child and other children, but being connected with others is an important part, I believe, of moving forward, because you need to be able to have those connections, and Head Start can help pull together the community and business relationships that are necessary for coming together to grow and for economic mobility.

The graphic here shows the many hands that Head Start can put in a situation. Head Start plays an important role in nurturing the ability and creating, if you will, if I can use this analogy, the garden and the soil that is necessary to allow our children and our own family members to grow and have an identity over time. But it takes a lot of hands. If you were to take away seven or eight of these hands and be left with one, you don't develop the strong trees that are necessary. If I can use this analogy a little deeper, this is how growth takes place. It's like

nurturing a plant, and this plant would grow from one rung to the next by the care that Head Start and others in the community can give you.

The challenge of poverty, then can be resolved if we're able to do something about the relationships that close the gap, and the key word here is collaboration and cooperation and finding streams of economic resources that can help move a family up the ladder. It is hands coming together, like plants that get fertilized, that build the resources.

I believe in something called a community hub. Head Start is part of numerous hubs. If you're going to go upstream, it's important that these community care – cooperation – be allowed to work with you. Whether it's finding financial supports, housing support. Head Start tries to be the one-stop shop to work with all of the needs that members of their community might have as a result of being enrolled in the Head Start program.

That's what this engagement is all about. I hope that I've answered your question. What does all of us working together do? I think it reduces the risks that you will not get on the ladder, or that you will fall off a rung as you go up the ladder, but that you will have a support network that allows you to take that necessary step with confidence because you felt a little bit more educated, a little bit more knowledgeable about the environment in which you work so that you can function as an economic unit, perhaps get a job, perhaps start a business, but begin to have income that the family could save, that the business you started can produce to build wealth.

Communities are poor because they don't have wealth. Head Start brings an enormous amount of intangible wealth that allows you to develop that tangible wealth, which is the basis of fulfilling your version of the American Dream. Let me conclude by suggesting what might be the path forward. Well, the path forward is first understanding where you are and resolving to move forward, resolving to improve your situation. Head Start can help you with the engagement that it promises to parents and families, and, most important, children. Education is at the core of all of that.

I want to share with you a conversation that we can have with a couple of examples of families who have moved forward and moved up the various rungs in the ladder – getting educated, getting healthy, having a job, developing the social skills, moving forward all the way on up to their version of the American Dream.

Let me then take a moment here to see if there are any questions from our audience.

Manda: Thank you, Dr. Osborne. We're going to answer some of those in the chat, and we want to definitely hear from our parents. Let's have that conversation. Thank you.

Dr. Osborne: Well, very good. [Speaking Spanish] My esteemed colleagues, it is a pleasure to introduce to you, Xitlali Sosa. She is a parent and a teacher at ABCD, an ambassador for parents also, a coordinator, a teacher who is dedicated to her studies, she has a CDA that has been, and she is studying for her Bachelor's in Early Childhood Education at the University of Cincinnati.

Mrs. Sosa, it's a pleasure to speak with you, and perhaps you could tell us a little about how you climbed the ladder that we're talking about, to begin to achieve your dreams. Tell everyone here a little about ... what can we learn from your experience? I know that you have a favorite quote, and I want to share it; it is important too. "The only thing that is impossible to achieve is the one we do not attempt." Talk to us about your attempts and how you climbed the ladder.

Xitlali Sosa: [Speaking Spanish] Hello, professor. Good afternoon to everyone in the audience. My name is Xitlali Sosa, and I am a mother to my kids at ABCD. They also attended the migrant program at Early Head Start and that was the foundation for my involvement in my children's education. That's where I learned that our children's first teachers are us, the parents, and that the most important thing is to educate and prepare ourselves so that we can be a great example for our children. I am Mexican, and I emigrated to this country in 1999 to have better opportunities. In 2003, I found out about the ABCD agency when my 3-year-old son enrolled there. It was as if a door opened for me because they spoke my native language, which is Spanish. They understood my needs. And the most important thing is that not only were they involved in my daughter's education, but they also supported my goals, as a family.

I brought ... since in Mexico I wasn't able due to the economy. Here they offered me help and support so that I could keep studying. I got my CDA, and right now I am taking online courses at the University of Cincinnati to get an associate's degree as an early education teacher of infants and toddlers. I feel very proud to be part of ABCD, since they have offered the ladders and the steps to climb so that little by little we could grow as a family. Now I have a 21-year-old daughter who is at the university. I feel very proud of her, since she is the first one in the family that, Lord willing, will graduate in a year as a nurse. My 16-year-old daughter is in high school, and she is participating in VOCES. She wants to be [Inaudible]. I have a 10-year-old son who is doing very well in school, and we motivate him and encourage him so he will keep studying and become a professional.

Our job as parents is to get involved in our children's early education. That's why I ask various agencies to support us and offer resources, the kind of agencies like Head Start, like the ABCD agency, since they support us with others ... on the Mexican side, like the Cuálitas agency, which educates us with preparation so we know how to save our money the best way we can. Thanks so very much for your support and for including me in this event. Thanks very much, and good afternoon.

Dr. Osborne: [Speaking Spanish] Very well stated, Xitlali. What you're saying is important and parent involvement in programs like Head Start is necessary to start progressing. Families like yours can keep going, it is the basis. Can you tell us about the difference that Head Start has made in your life and [Inaudible], and maybe you can tell us a little about time you have spent with the family social worker. Did she help you?

Xitlali: [Speaking Spanish] Yes, as I mentioned at the beginning, I arrived here from Mexico with only a high school level of education. Here at ABCD in Early Head Start, they supported me, paying so I could go through the program to get my CDA. After that, I started to enroll in the university, and they gave me basic courses like computer science. As I mentioned, we are a low

income family. My husband started out doing field work. Our three children have gone to programs like this one. Because thanks to this program, many doors have opened for us. We have been able to meet more people, and we have gotten more involved with ways to help our community so that everyone can get ahead.

Dr. Osborne: [Speaking Spanish] Very good, very good. Thank you very much for that. And allow me to ask another question. If you have some words or advice, rather, for other parents, what advice would you give them?

Xitlali: [Speaking Spanish] My advice would be that it is never too late to study. Any time is a good time to start. And doors will open when we get involved in reading involve our kids. They have the great privilege of being bilingual. The Early Head Start program, the ABCD offers this support, so that we parents can feel comfortable, since our children are being cared for by bilingual teachers. It is never too late to begin, and you always have to remember that if a door closes, three more will open for you.

Dr. Osborne: [Speaking Spanish] Thanks very much. Thanks very much, Mrs. Sosa. It has been a pleasure to speak with you. And I see that you, with that matter, the American Dream, right?

Xitlali: [Speaking Spanish] That's right, professor.

Dr. Osborne: [Speaking Spanish] Thanks.

Xitlali: [Speaking Spanish] Good afternoon.

Dr. Osborne: [Speaking Spanish] Thanks a lot. You too.

Well, let me ask another family, a mom who has ascended the ladder and who has had a chance to move forward as a result of her Head Start experience. We're fortunate to have with us April Messenger, who can tell us a little bit about her effort to climb the ladder and the success that she's had in doing so. April, if you could join our conversation, that would be terrific.

April Messenger: Thank you, Dr. Osborne. I'm here.

Dr. Osborne: Good.

April: Thank you. I get often asked how Head Start has supported my family, and I think there are so many ways that that question can be answered. When I enrolled my oldest daughter in Head Start, I had no idea what the program was, only that it gave me a few hours a day to help prepare for my second child, who was on the way, and gave my daughter the opportunity to get ready for kindergarten.

By this time, my second daughter was old enough for Head Start, I had been fighting with my doctor to help figure out what was happening with her and why she wasn't developing correctly. She wasn't speaking correctly and had a language that only myself and her dad could understand. We were able to get into a screening through our local program and determined

that she had a severe hearing loss of 75% in one ear and 25% in the other that would have not been detected if it weren't for that screening.

My doctor fought me tooth and nail, saying that there was nothing wrong with her and that it was just that her sister was speaking for her. Through that community screening, we were able to get Lauren speech therapy three times a week and preschool four days a week, where we also determined that she just needed a minor surgery to help prepare her for kindergarten and get her on track.

The entire time I was fighting with doctors and speech therapists and the state for Medicaid to pay for the services that she needed, my Head Start family support worker was behind me the entire way. The director was consistently checking in with me to see what they could do to help me. Many times, my family support worker and my director were the same person because I was in a really rural area. They really got to know my family and the needs that we needed – the needs that we had to be successful. By learning to advocate for myself and my child, at that point, I really learned that I had a voice, that I had something to say and that I knew what was best for my child. I really had the support of my Head Start program to help push me, to believe in myself, and to believe that I knew what was best, even when the doctor was telling me that something – that I wasn't right.

My Head Start family encouraged me to run for Policy Council and invited me to get involved in things like balancing the budget and deciding what food the children were going to eat that week and what field trips they would go on. It really opened my eyes to how I could be involved in my child's education in a way that I never knew existed.

From that point, I was – my world became open to a program called Parent Ambassadors. That was a year-long advocacy training and policy leadership program that helped Head Start and ECAP parents, specifically. ECAP is our state-funded version of Head Start, and it really gave me some more tools to be able to recognize where I had parent power and where I could stand up and really be a voice for others in my community.

Shortly after that policy training and leadership development, I applied for a job in the Head Start Collaboration Office. Because I had been studying and volunteering in different tables that were connected to early learning throughout our state, the state officials knew who I was and knew what I was capable of doing, even though I didn't have the correct credentials for the job. My Head Start program encouraged me to apply and use my skills and my ability that I had learned in their classroom and volunteering in the tribal Head Start program down the road from my house, and to use that and apply. I was granted the job, and I never thought that I would be eligible to do something like that.

I remember the day that I accepted the offer with the state. I called my family support worker, and I was terrified. I said, "I'm going to lose my child care. I'm going to lose my food stamps. I'm going to lose my medical. I'm climbing out of this hole, but where am I headed to?" She said to me, "April, you can buy food with green money." I will never forget that because I was terrified of losing that safety net that I had around me living in poverty. I had food stamps, I had

medical, I had child care. But by climbing that, I was terrified what was next. That was eight years ago.

Today, I am now the program administrator for the Parent Ambassador program that helped me when I was a Head Start parent. I'm the parent who – and I'm the staff person who now tells other parents that they can buy food with green money. I have a retirement plan, I have a medical and dental and vision, and my children have their health care. It was all because my Head Start family believed in me. They pushed me. They helped tap into my natural resources and ability and helped me put on a path to climb that ladder that you were mentioning earlier. I don't know where I would be without them.

Dr. Osborne: April, what a wonderful expression of how Head Start has made a difference in your life and how the family service worker and the Ambassador program contributed to your economic mobility. You are a wonderful role model. I like the empathy that you have shared. It is fearful sometimes to leave the secure advantage of being in the program. As you say, green money works, also. But you have demonstrated that, by letting go and taking that risk, you're able to climb up the ladder and be economically mobile to putting together a larger and more successful life for your family. I congratulate you by moving forward. I think your advice, if you had to say it in a few words, to families that you're helping now, what would you tell them?

April: I would tell them anything is possible. Never to be too scared to take the leap, because you never know what's on the other side.

Dr. Osborne: Fantastic. I just have to say to our audience, we have had, in April Messenger and Xitlali Sosa, two women who talked about how opportunity can come your way and how Head Start, through the engagement that the family service worker can have you, can help lead the way.

I want to say to all of you, don't be afraid to take that leap. Head Start prides itself in families graduating into the larger economy, and you can move up the ladder. But Head Start helps you get on the first rung, and you can then move on to the second and the third rung – getting educated, developing a skill, getting a stable income, perhaps buying a home, raising the family, getting the children more educated as they move through elementary school and high school. All of that is possible. Head Start is in the business of making dreams happen. April and Xitlali are two wonderful examples.

I thank you ladies for allowing me to learn a little bit about your experiences, and I wish you continued – I wish you good health and continued success as you reach for even higher levels of fulfilling your version of the American Dream. Thank you for sharing with us.

Manda: Thank you, Dr. Osborne. Thank you to both of our parents. This has been an amazing session. I want to remind everyone about the certificate and session resources. You can download your certificate of attendance and the session handouts from the Content tool. Then the survey that we have for the Institute is so important to us. We really want your feedback for future planning for some of the events that we'll be doing in the future. This is a slide about the

survey, so please take the time to give us that feedback and share how we can improve, what you enjoyed, and what were your favorite parts of the Institute.

I also want to invite you to continue learning and continue this discussion on MyPeers. If you're already a member of MyPeers, you can find economic mobility community there under all communities, and you just select under that blue Join button. If you're not a member of MyPeers, please join it. We're excited to continue this conversation in that platform, and we know that there's lots based on some of the feedback we've already gotten as part of the session today and questions that we'll continue answering in the chat, and that there is a lot of interest in this area, and we want to keep that conversation going.

I also want to remind everyone about the "Let's Get Vaccinated" campaign. Obviously, our friends over at the National Center on Health are looking at this issue very closely and really helping our Head Start staff move forward. We know that the COVID vaccine is safe for adults, it's effective, and it's available in your area. This administration has prioritized our Head Start programs, and we're looking for ways to make that happen in our communities so that we can reopen our centers.

I want to close with thanking everyone for joining us for these last two days and for everything that has gone into this session – not only this session but all of the sessions throughout the institute. I want to thank our entire staff at the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. We had a team of trainers, our partners at LIFT, and we had obviously our keynotes who came on from the Fred Rogers Center, and of course, Dr. Osborne from the Center and the Anderson School of Business. We have just had a great time planning this institute and learning so much in the process.

I want to thank the Office of Head Start and Dr. Futrell and for her opening remarks and for joining us for this institute. I especially want to thank our Federal Project Officer, Kiersten Beigel, for her support and dedication to ensuring that the content that we presented was meaningful and consistent with our PFCE Framework.

There are so many people to thank, and I couldn't thank them all individually, but I would like to call out a few. Two of our staff – well, more than two of our staff – but a couple of our staff that have been really instrumental, are Maureen Gomes and Jackie Muniz, who have partnered with a consultant to bring us this online platform. We hope that in the future, we will be seeing you live and in person at future institutes. But in the moment, I'm so grateful to have this platform to connect with you and to continue the conversation on MyPeers.

I'm so grateful for all of the people that have worked behind the scenes at the National Center. We will continue to bring you information and learning opportunities as they relate to the important topics that even Dr. Osborne was recognizing, the American Rescue Plan. As we've heard from parents during this institute, when program, families, and staff work together towards economic mobility, the impact on children and families is profound. I want to thank you for being part of that profound impact that we're having on families and children.

I want to thank our two parents, especially, who joined us today, for the words that they left us with. Hopefully, it's an inspiring message to take back into our programs, to know that this is possible, that these dreams do have happy endings, that we can continue to work together, whether it's to reopen our centers, whether it's to create and support vaccine campaigns, whatever it might be, we know that, as the Head Start family, we're going to remain united and that we will continue to see meaningful impacts from this program in all of our communities.

I want to thank you again for joining us and wish you all the very best in the coming months as we start to plan for next year and see what's possible, and that we hope to see you again. Please continue to follow us on MyPeers. If you have any questions – I'm going to move to another slide here – here is our 800 number and our email address. Again, thank you for joining us, and have a great evening.