

# Leveraging Skill Building and Improving Job Search and Matching to Better Serve Workers

## Speaker Biographies

**Gayatri Agnew** is a leader in corporate and social impact strategy focused on human capital trends and the future of work, and she has dedicated herself to ensuring more people have access to meaningful work and effective ways to learn and grow. Gayatri serves on Walmart's Global Responsibility division leadership team, where she leads strategy and partnerships on economic mobility, specifically related to human capital, shared value, and philanthropy. Her team focuses on key issues such as changing employer practices, better serving frontline workers' learning and development needs, and scaling work-based learning and skills-based hiring.

**Peter Q. Blair** is on the faculty at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where he codirects the Project on Workforce. He also serves as a faculty research fellow of the National Bureau of Economic Research and as the principal investigator of the BE Labs, a research group with partners from Harvard University, Clemson University, and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. The group's research focuses on the link between the futures of work and education, labor market discrimination, occupational licensing, and residential segregation. Blair received his bachelor's degree in physics and mathematics from Duke University, his master's degree in theoretical physics from Harvard University, and his doctoral degree in applied economics from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

**Mary Alice McCarthy** is the director of the Center on Education and Labor at New America. Her work examines the intersection of higher education, workforce development, and labor policies. The center's work spans education, labor, and workforce development policy to forge a more holistic approach to the challenges generated from technological change that seeks to equip future workers with the knowledge, skills, and power to fulfill the terms of our social contract. She participates in various public engagement, technical assistance, and coalition-building efforts aimed at improving postsecondary education policy and practice. McCarthy's writing has been featured in publications such as *Washington Monthly*, *The Atlantic*, and the *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*.

**Parag Mehta** is the executive director and senior vice president of the Center for Inclusive Growth, the philanthropic hub of Mastercard. He leads a global team of professionals dedicated to ensuring the benefits of economic growth are broadly shared, leveraging the core competencies and assets of Mastercard to achieve this. In this role, Mehta oversees the center's programs, data philanthropy, research, engagements, and partnerships. He joined the center in 2017 as vice president for strategic engagement and was charged with building a community of global influencers to secure the center's position as a private-sector leader of inclusive growth. In 2018, he was promoted to executive director and senior vice president. Before Mastercard, Mehta served as chief of staff and senior adviser to the 19th surgeon general of the United States. He also spent more than four years directing communications for a civil rights agency in the US Department of Labor and served on Barack Obama's presidential transition team as a liaison to the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities and to LGBT Americans. Mehta has been a member of the Senior Executive Service and held several leadership positions in advocacy organizations and political campaigns. In 2019, he was elected to chair the board of directors of New American Leaders. Mehta earned a bachelor's degree with honors from the University of Texas at Austin and a master's degree in public administration from Syracuse University.

**Kristen Titus** is the executive director of the Cognizant US Foundation, which supports those working to develop, educate, and train the workforce of today and tomorrow. Previously, she was New York's chief technology and innovation officer and founding executive director of Girls Who Code and the NYC Tech Talent Pipeline. As New York's first chief technology and innovation officer, Titus oversaw the state's historic investments in technology education, workforce, and economic development. In New York City, she launched the mayor's NYC Tech Talent Pipeline, a \$10 million initiative mobilizing 150 executives in support of first-of-its-kind policy and programming, including a new tech training and education portfolio, investments to realign the city's top colleges, and the launch of Computer Science for All. Her work served as a model for President Obama's TechHire and CSforAll initiatives, now replicated in more than 70 cities. As founding executive director of Girls Who Code, the national nonprofit working to close the gender gap in technology and engineering, Titus received numerous accolades: she was named one of *TIME* magazine's 30 people under 30 changing the world, one of *Business Insider's* most influential young people in tech, and one of *Forbes'* women changing the world. Titus was also named an Aspen Ideas Festival scholar in 2013.

**David Zammiello** became president and chief executive officer of Project QUEST in June 2017. QUEST is a nonprofit organization and workforce development resource providing comprehensive support to help underemployed and unemployed adults achieve living-wage employment. He is responsible for QUEST's strategy and all aspects of its program service delivery. Zammiello retired from USAA in December 2016 after 32 years of professional achievement, including more than 20 years of experience leading high-performing teams and implementing strategic business plans. Upon his retirement, Zammiello was vice president of property and casualty staff operations. While at USAA, he also served in executive leadership roles within human resources and as the executive leader of the Workforce and Organizational Planning team. He has maintained his senior human resources professional designation since 2002. Zammiello holds an associate's degree from San Antonio College, graduated from the University of Texas at San Antonio with a bachelor's degree in accounting and business data systems in 1984, and earned a master's degree in computer information systems from St. Mary's University in 1992.