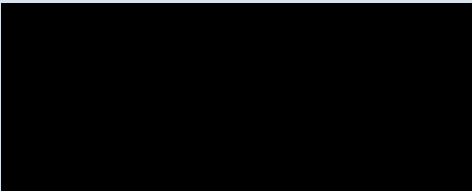


CARLA MESTAS, MA

COMMUNITY • CONNECTION • BELONGING

CONTACT



HONORS & AWARDS

- Livingston Fellow
Bonfils Stanton
Foundation
- Executive Directors of
Color Institute
Leadership
Development
- Rosa Parks Diversity
Community Member
Award
- *Visiones* – Hispanic
Chamber of Commerce
Leadership Program

SKILLS & EXPERTISE

- ACTIVIST
- BELONGING
- CULTURAL PROFICIENCY

ABOUT

Currently the Founder and Executive Director of the Denver nonprofit, C.I.R.C.L.E. Organization. CIRCLE stands for Connecting Inclusive Responsive Communities Leading Education. A multifaceted 501(c)3 organization that works with nonprofits, schools, and businesses to address systemic inequity and interpersonal inclusiveness. Dedicated to social justice, diversity, equity and inclusiveness for over 20 years. Professionally have worked in numerous capacities as a consultant, public speaker, trainer, writer and community leader.

Work extensively in diverse communities on the national, state and local levels. Commitment to the causes of Black/Brown, Indigenous, People of Color. Supportive of allies and the efforts that create and sustain community well-being through taking action, where *all* people experience a sense of belonging. Keen sense of community and promotes transformational leadership amongst diverse leaders, communities and organizations in the public and private sectors.

Advocate and love of the arts, visual and performing, with a strong commitment to *Artivism*.

EXPERIENCE

Founder & Executive Director, CIRCLE Organization

2015-Present

Founder and Executive Director of the Denver nonprofit, CIRCLE Organization. With the desire to meet a need in community,

- DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSIVENESS
- EDUCATOR
- EXPERT PRACTITIONER
- COMMUNICATION & DIALOGUE
- COMMUNITY ORGANIZER
- CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT
- FACILITATOR
- MENTORSHIP
- PROFESSIONAL COACH
- PUBLIC SPEAKER
- RACIAL EQUITY
- SOCIAL JUSTICE
- TRAINER
- WRITER

PROFESSIONAL

Professional Affiliations & Boards

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:

- Executive Directors of Color Institute-The Denver Foundation
- Colorado Diversity Network
- Association for Colorado Independent Schools ACIS
- International Hispanic Network IHN
- National Alliance for Hispanic Health
- National Association for the Education of Young Children, NAEYC
- National Association for Independent Schools NAIS

BOARD & ADVISORY

founded the CIRCLE Organization, modeled on own values and Indigenous Ancestral wisdom and consulting firm. CIRCLE is an organization dedicated to social justice. Three effort areas of promoting social justice include transformative consulting and training, multi-cultural youth leadership development and Social Justice leadership camps (STAMP Program), and promoting, planning and implementation of Keynotes, Speaker Series & Conferences. CIRCLE works towards guiding organizations on their journey to meet their equity goals. Our intentionally inclusive organizational efforts model culturally relevant practices in everything we plan, create and implement. We currently work and partner with various organizations, foundations and schools in the Metro Denver & Aurora area. These relationships work towards providing more access and exposure to gain practice and an awareness of inclusiveness within their own organizations, educational settings and their lives. Developing these leadership skills is an immeasurable benefit. CIRCLE and STAMP programs have successfully engaged youth and adults in experiences, conversations and learnings aiming to build and nurture a more empathetic and culturally responsive community. CIRCLE programming has existed for over a decade.

Founder & Principal, Mestas Consulting, LLC

1999-Present

Over 20 years of private consultation, facilitation and training for various organizations, *across sectors*. Non-profit and for-profit in the area of Leadership development, Coaching/Peer Mentoring, Cultural Competency, Culturally Relevant Practices, specializing in areas of Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness. Including Equity and Diversity in Education.

Sectors include arts, government, public and private, profit and non-profit, foundations, business, and education sectors (k-12 and higher education).

- Professional development at all levels
- Transformational leadership development
- Evaluation of programs and inclusiveness efforts
- Programmatic development including strategic planning and implementation
- Community dialogues and circle practice
- Intentional strategies to enhance overall inclusiveness goals, policies and practices
- Creation of workshops in equity, cultural competency, and anti-bias curriculum
- Individualized training and workshop designs to meet the individual needs of various programs
- Follow-up support to programs
- Creation and implementation of training, support and technical assistance in Coaching & Peer Mentoring models
- Ongoing consultation for programs, schools to assist with their policies and practices in cultural competence

- CIRCLE Board President (2014-2023)
- RiNO Arts District Business Improvement District Board-BID (2019-present)
- Curious Theatre (2017- 2019)
- Board of Trustee, Paddington Station Preschool (2012-14)
- Early Childhood Task Force, Mayor's Office for Education & Children
- Advisory Board for Denver Early Childhood Council
- Board of Advisors for Denver Preschool Program
- Multicultural Early Childhood Leadership Team
- Advisory Committee for The Bea Romer College for Parental Arts
- Board of Trustees member for Stanley British Primary School (2000-08)
- Chair for Diversity Committee, Stanley British Primary School (2000-08)

EQUITY EFFORTS CLIENTS & PARTNERS

Alianza NORCO Ft. Collins, CO
 American Cancer Society, Rocky Mountain Division
 Arapahoe Community College
 Aspen Family Services, Lafayette CO
 Assets for Colorado Youth, Denver CO
 Aurora Mental Health
 Aurora Public Schools
 Bonfils Stanton Foundation
 Boulder Colorado Aids Project
 Boulder County Early Childhood Council
 Boulder County Head Start
 Boulder Women's Health
 Boys & Girls Club Metro Denver
 City and County of Boulder, Children Youth & Families
 City of Boulder
 City of Boulder Police Department
 City and County of Boulder Knight Foundation Latino Provider Project
 Caring for Colorado Foundation
 Clayton Foundation/ Family Futures
 Clyfford Still Museum, Denver CO
 Colorado Academy, Denver, CO
 Colorado Children's Campaign
 Colorado Coalition for the Homeless
 Colorado Creative Industries OEDIT

- Design review for programs, grants and other public awareness materials
- Educational consultation for Early Childhood through High School

University & Academia Affiliation

1993-2012

University of Colorado Denver Health Sciences Center, Department of Pediatrics, Denver, Colorado

Ongoing contribution and collaboration to various statewide and national projects

- Multi-Cultural Early Childhood Leadership Team. A statewide collaboration effort of various leaders in early childhood and cultural competency to enhance opportunity and access to families and children from diverse backgrounds. A collaborative project funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Multicultural Early Childhood Team Training through George Mason University.
- LEADS Project ~ JFK Partners Literacy Education & Disabilities
- Developed First Web-Course in Colorado – UCHSC Department of American Indian & Alaskan Native Health 2004
- University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah-Maternal Child Health (MCH) Regional Collaborative grants. Design and author of web course for health care providers entitled "Cultural Factors in Health Care" March 2003

Multiple Curriculum Development & Publications - A Sampling

"Emerging, Multicultural, Transformational Leadership Development Program" Development and implementation of this leadership curriculum for The Denver Foundation Philanthropic Partners Non-profit Internship Program– Summer 2013; revised June 2016 and 2019

"STAMP Social Justice Equity and Inclusiveness Leadership" Development and implementation of curriculum for high school students summer leadership program. Summer, 2015; revised March 2019

"STAMP 2.0 Social Justice Equity and Inclusiveness Leadership" Transformational Leadership for 2nd year high school participants of STAMP Camp. – Spring, 2017

"Internship & Leadership; Community Perspectives" Facilitator and Author; The Denver Foundation's' Inclusiveness Project – Facilitator and Lead Author – Summer, 2012

"Dialogues in Leadership" Facilitator & Co-Author for evaluative team of The Denver Foundation's' Inclusiveness Project – Summer, 2013

Colorado Department of Education, Early Childhood Initiatives/Prevention Initiatives
 Colorado Department of Education, Early Childhood Connections
 Colorado Department of Human Services
 Colorado Springs Utilities
 Colorado State Division of Wildlife
 Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment
 Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, CO Cultivando
 The Colorado Trust Internal Staff
 The Colorado Trust –Health Equity Advocacy Project
 Community Foundation of Boulder, CO
 Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation
 Denver Art Museum
 Denver Foundation; Community Leadership
 Denver Foundation; Inclusiveness Project & Consultant’s Consortium
 Denver Foundation; Strengthening Neighborhoods Program
 Denver Foundation; Philanthropic Partnership
 Denver Foundation; Non-Profit Internship Program (NPIP)
 Denver’s Great Kids Head Start
 Denver Mayor’s Office for Education & Children
 Denver Museum of Nature & Science
 Early Reading First ~ Federal Funded Literacy Program
 Escuela de Guadalupe, Denver CO
 Florence Crittenden ~ Parent Pathways
 Graland Country Day School
 Havern School
 History Colorado Center
 Howard Dental, Denver CO
 Jefferson City & County
 Kent Denver School
 LiveWell Colorado
 Metro State University
 Montezuma County Head Start
 Museo de Las Américas, Denver, CO
 NAIS People of Color Conference; Afinity Group Co-Chair for The First Nation’s Affinity Group
 Native Roots, Denver, CO
 Nonprofit Internship Program, Intern Coaching & Leadership Development
 North Dakota Council of the Arts
 Paddington Station Preschool, Denver CO
 Piñon Project, Cortez CO ~ Early Reading First
 Project Angel Heart, Denver, CO
 Regis University, Denver, CO
 RE:Vision, Denver, CO
 St. Elizabeth’s School, Denver, CO
 Stanley British Primary School, Denver, CO
 State of Colorado; Professional Development Center

“Healthy Preschool Evaluation Qualitative Evaluation ~ Family & Provider Dialogues” Evaluator and Lead Author, Mayor’s Office for Education & Children; Healthy Preschool Program – Spring 2012

“Strengthening Neighborhoods Collaborative Inquiry on Neighborhood Inclusion ~ Supporting Neighborhood Inclusiveness through Intentionality, Leadership & Dialogue” Author of Collaborative Inquiry for Denver Foundation’s Strengthening Neighborhoods Project.
 -Spring-Fall 2010

Community Development Consultant

1996-2000

Colorado State Department of Education

Early Childhood Initiatives/Early Childhood Connections
 Statewide Community Development Consultant for Federal Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act I. D. E. A. - Part C (birth to three)

Part of grant making team allocating five million dollars per year across the state to local communities and provision of technical assistance and consultation.

Other roles included:

Project Director for “Enhancing Cultural Competency in Early Childhood” Initiative across the state which included Program Development, Administration, Implementation, Training, Dissemination, Curriculum Development, Evaluation and Fiscal Management (\$150,000.00 statewide project)

Project Director for the Statewide Public Awareness Campaign. Products included Statewide Newsletter, Poster, Brochure, Information Packets, Videos and Logos. (\$100,000.00 statewide project)

Project Supervisor for Neonatal Intensive Care Unit NICU Project \$95,000.00 statewide project for providing support and services for families with infants in local and statewide NICU’s.

Facilitator and Trainer; provided extensive training throughout the state with several communities, both metro and rural to include board training, community development and other various training and facilitation

Curriculum Development and Training on varied Early Childhood Initiatives including Cultural Competency, Community Capacity Building, Inclusionary practices, and Family Directed Services.

Co-Coordination of statewide annual 8th Summer Institute “Culture, Diversity and Families; Individual Consideration” 300 participant conference, organization of conference activities and staff, keynote speakers, 10 breakout sessions, and fiscal management. Organized an “Ethnic Market” to accompany the conference.

USA Olympic Committee -Volleyball Team
Board of Directors
University of Colorado Health Sciences, JFK
Partners, Denver CO
University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT
Ute Mountain Ute Head Start,
Towaoc, CO
WESTAF – Western States Arts Federation
White Privilege Conference – Co-Chair for
Accountability & Action Team
White Privilege Conference – Presenter,
“Good Listener” and Fundraising Team
Women’s Foundation of Colorado
Girls Leadership Council

EDUCATION

University of Northern Colorado

Master of Arts Degree
Bachelor of Arts Degree

INTERESTS

Arts & Culture!

Museums, Theater, Plays, Street
Fairs, Musical Performances, Film,
Writer’s Workshops.

Word Weaver of Poetry and other
Musings.

Nature

Being in nature, honoring the
natural, *Red Road Indigenous* way of
being. Walking, hiking, moving in
nature.

Tending to flowers, plants and
anything that grows.

Travel

Favorite Places to Visit – Places i call
home

- Southern Colorado
- New Mexico
- New York City
- Maui, Hawaii

Additional Fun Facts

Lived Experience outside of Colorado

Lived and worked in New York City post graduate school.
Worked in several boroughs including South Bronx, Spanish Harlem,
Harlem, Manhattan and Washington Heights. Most of my work in New
York was as a Special Educator.
Also, worked in the education department of the Metropolitan
Museum of Art, NYC.

Enrolled in additional post-graduate course work at both Columbia
University & New York University – decided against terminal degree
program.

Education Director - University Affiliated Program – St. Luke’s
Roosevelt Hospital (6 years)

Education Coordinator, Trainer & Tour Guide
Metropolitan Museum of Art, Discoveries Program (6.5 years)

Community Engagement – Educational Tutor for children in Harlem
experiencing systemic inequities (housing, education, economic).

