

## Conversation Series

# Civic Education: Is There Common Ground?

March 13, 2019 | noon to 2:00 p.m.

### LEO CASEY

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Leo Casey is the executive director of the Albert Shanker Institute, a think tank established by the American Federation of Teachers which focuses on issues of public education, unionism and democracy promotion. He previously served as vice president from academic high schools for the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), New York City's 200,000 person strong teacher union. After a stint in political organizing, Casey began his teaching career at Clara Barton High School in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, where he taught for fifteen years. For ten years in a row, his classes—composed entirely of students of color, who were largely immigrant and predominantly 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. Casey won many additional awards for his teaching and was named national Social Studies Teacher of the Year for the American Teacher Awards in 1992. In 1999, Casey became a full-time UFT special representative for high schools and was elected vice president from academic high schools in 2007. While vice president, he taught a class in Global Studies every day at Bard High School Early College in Manhattan. 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, serving as vice president of the Graduate Student Union at the University of Toronto and on the executive of the Ontario Federation of Students. 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.

### PETER LEVINE

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Peter Levine is the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Lincoln Filene Professor of Citizenship & Public Affairs in Tufts University's Jonathan Tisch College of Civic Life. He also has appointments in the Tufts Philosophy Department, Political Science Department, and the Tufts Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute. He was the founding deputy director and then the second director of Tisch College's CIRCLE, The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement. In addition, Levine co-leads the Civic Studies major, teaches the Summer Institute of Civic Studies, and organizes the annual Frontiers of Democracy conference. Levine graduated from Yale with a degree in philosophy. He studied philosophy at Oxford on a Rhodes Scholarship, receiving his doctorate in 1992. Previously, he was a research associate at Common Cause and a member of the Institute for Philosophy & Public Policy in the University of Maryland's School of Public Policy. During the late 1990s, he was Deputy Director of the National Commission on Civic Renewal. Levine is the author of *We Are the Ones We Have Been Waiting For: The Promise of Civic Renewal in America* (Oxford University Press), five other scholarly books on philosophy and politics, and a novel. He has served on the boards or steering committees of AmericaSpeaks, Street Law Inc., the Newspaper Association of America Foundation, the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, Discovering Justice, the Kettering Foundation, the American Bar Association Committee's for Public Education, the Paul J. Aicher Foundation, and the Deliberative Democracy Consortium.

## JESSICA MARSHALL

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Jessica Marshall is the former director of Social Science and Civic Engagement for the Chicago Public Schools, which has emerged as a national leader in K-12 civic education. At CPS, Jessica led strategic planning, curriculum development, professional learning initiatives, and the development of school improvement tools targeted at school wide civic learning implementation. She served on the Illinois Social Science Task force, which revised state social studies standards, and was a member of the steering committee of the Illinois Civic Mission Coalition that successfully advocated for adoption of new graduation requirements to include a high school civics course. Jessica began her career in education in 2006, as a teacher in the South Bronx, NY at Fannie Lou Hamer Freedom High School. She returned to Chicago to serve at Alcott College Prep in 2010 where she led student voice and civic education initiatives that earned the school designation as an Illinois Democracy School. Jessica earned a BA in Sociology and Latin American Studies from Dartmouth College and an MS in Special Education from City College – City University of New York. She is currently a PhD student in the Learning Sciences at Northwestern University. She is the co-author, “Let’s Go There: Making A Case for Race, Ethnicity and a Lived Civics Approach to Civic Education.

## ROBERT PONDISCIO

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Robert Pondiscio is senior fellow and vice president for external affairs at the Thomas B. Fordham Institute. He has also been a senior advisor to Democracy Prep Public Schools, a network of high-performing charter schools based in Harlem, New York. He writes and speaks extensively on education and education-reform issues, with an emphasis on literacy, curriculum, teaching, and urban education. After twenty years in journalism, including senior positions at *TIME* and *BusinessWeek*, Robert became a fifth-grade teacher at a struggling South Bronx public school in 2002. He subsequently served as vice president for the Core Knowledge Foundation. Robert’s articles and op-ed columns on education have appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Atlantic*, the *New York Daily News*, *Education Next*, and many other publications.

## JOE ROGERS

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Joe Rogers is Director of Public Engagement and Government Affairs at the Center for Educational Equity (CEE) at Teachers College, Columbia University, where he develops strategic relationships for policy reform, co-facilitates the statewide DemocracyReady NY Coalition, supports students’ and parents’ educational-rights leadership and advocacy, and has conducted extensive school-based research on students’ access to required learning opportunities. In 2018, he was appointed to serve on the New York State Education Department’s Civic Readiness Task Force as well as its Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Advisory Panel. Previously, Joe served as Director of Policy and Civic Engagement with Education Voters of New York and as a Program Associate in Teaching and Learning at New Visions for Public Schools. After beginning a career in education as an AmeriCorps VISTA at a Georgetown University center for volunteer and public service, he went on to launch a literacy-focused AmeriCorps program for a coalition of community-based organizations serving adults, children, and families in Washington, D.C. In his civic life, Joe has served on the boards and steering committees of numerous community-based cultural, educational, and governmental organizations. Joe holds a master's degree in education leadership, policy, and politics from Teachers College, Columbia University, and a bachelor’s degree in psychology from The George Washington University.

## MARLA UCELLI-KASHYAP

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Marla Ucelli-Kashyap is Assistant to the President for Educational Issues at the 1.7 million member American Federation of Teachers, where she serves as strategic advisor to AFT President Randi Weingarten and leads a team working on key areas of policy, practice, technical assistance, and professional development aimed at helping teachers and their unions improve education quality and their profession. The Educational Issues Department portfolio includes the teacher career continuum and teacher leadership, community schools expansion, the AFT's signature professional conference, and its Share My Lesson resource sharing website with more than 1.4 million registered users. Previously, Marla was Director of District Redesign and Leadership at the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University. She oversaw the Institute's technical assistance, knowledge building and tool development efforts in support of "smart systems" --school districts and communities redesigning themselves to get results and equity for all students. Marla was a senior program officer at the Rockefeller Foundation, where she was responsible for the Foundation's efforts to improve the education and development of school children in poor urban communities. She served as Special Assistant for Education to New Jersey Governor Thomas H. Kean. Early in her career, Marla was Special Assistant to then President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Ernest L. Boyer. Marla has been an independent consultant in education policy, a political press secretary, and a reporter. She is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of New York University and holds an M.P.A. from Rutgers. From 2009-2013, Marla chaired of the board of Editorial Projects in Education, Inc. (publisher of *Education Week*). She has served on numerous boards and advisory groups and as a founding co-chair of Grantmakers for Education. Marla has presented and published on a range of issues in pre-K-12 and higher education throughout the US and elsewhere.

**Next Event: TEACHING: ART, CRAFT OR SCIENCE?**

**Wednesday, April 10, 2019 | Noon to 2:00 PM | 555 New Jersey Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20001**

**Registration and More information: <http://www.shankerinstitute.org/event/teaching-art-craft-or-science>**