

From Social Work to Public Service: Lessons Learned Along the Way

Keynote Speaker and Guest Bios



Dennis M. Walcott is President and CEO of Queens Public Library, one of the largest and busiest public library systems in the United States, dedicated to serving the most ethnically and culturally diverse urban area in the world.

Dennis was appointed in March 2016 following a lifelong public education and human services career. The former chancellor of the New York City public school system and a deputy mayor under Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Dennis joined the Library after working as the New York State-appointed monitor of the East Ramapo School District in Rockland County, initiating a series of reforms to ensure the equitable delivery of service and opportunity to the district's students.

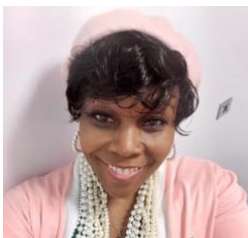
Before working at City Hall, Dennis was the president and CEO of the New York Urban League for more than 12 years and served as the Executive Director of the Harlem Dowling Westside Center. He began his career as a kindergarten teacher.

Dennis is a Queens native and a New York City public school graduate. He received a bachelor's degree in sociology and a master's degree in education from the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut. He also holds a master's degree in social work from Fordham University. Dennis and his wife Denise live in Queens, have four adult children, and are grandparents.



Clivia Torres, LCSW-R, is a bilingual Licensed Clinical Social Worker-R in SUNY Downstate's Center of Excellence for Alzheimer's Disease. Previously, she worked at Edwin Gould Services for Children, a preventive service offered to families through Child Welfare Administration, now known as ACS. Clivia was a social worker for Hostos Community College's CLIP program providing mental health services for newly arrived immigrants learning English. She has also worked helping to rehouse homeless families. Clivia has a master's degree in social work

from Columbia University-School of Social Work, followed by a career with the NYC Department of Education as a school social worker in the Bronx and Manhattan.



Felicia Thompson, LMSW, MPA, is the Director of Social Work at SUNY Downstate. During her tenure at Downstate, she has worked in the University Application Processing Center, has helped victims and survivors of 9/11, and provided counsel and resources for case management, social work, Medicare, Medicaid (MLTC), CHHA, and other counsel. Felicia is a contributing author of a published book, *Disability Studies for Human Services: An Interdisciplinary and Intersectionality Approach*. She is a graduate of Morris College, an HBCU in Sumter, SC, and has a Master's in Public Administration and a Master's in Social Work.



Michele Adams, RN, BSN, has a solid background as a Clinical Case Manager, Utilization Review, Performance Improvement/ Quality Assurance practices with an emphasis on data collection/ analysis of data collection, regulatory requirements, and standards, including but not limited to the Joint Commission, NYSDOH Article 28, Title 18 and all other Federal, State, and City regulatory agencies. She earned nursing degrees from CUNY's Borough of Manhattan Community College, University of Phoenix, and SUNY Downstate and is currently a doctoral candidate at Walden University.