

**SESSION 1 of 3**

# **UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL CAPITAL**

**Presenter:** Jennifer Lowe, Ph.D.

**Moderator:** Jack Myrick



ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**  
Office of Family Assistance





**Jack Myrick**  
**MODERATOR**

**Jack Myrick** is the co-developer of *WorkForward*, a 40-hour career transition curriculum, and *Winning the Workplace Challenge*, a skills approach to better relationships in the workplace setting.

Jack has been a partner in over 20 businesses for the last three decades and is now a trainer and certified Career Transition Coach. He is the author of three books: *The Shipbuilder*, *The Merchant*, and *Hitting Your BullsEye*, all business parables to help people reach their full potential in business and life.



**Jennifer Lowe, Ph.D**  
**PRESENTER**

**Jennifer Lowe** serves as the Vice President of Shared Learning and Member Networks at Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath) in Boston, MA. In this role, she leads the organization's Economic Mobility Exchange, a global member-based learning network of over 100+ nonprofits and government agencies. Jennifer previously provided oversight and strategic direction of EMPath's outcomes initiative and research projects.

Jennifer authored *Social Networks as an Anti-Poverty Strategy (2012)*, and co-authored *From Opportunity to Burden: Profiles of Low-Income Households Caught in the Credit Trap (2014)* and *Massachusetts Economic Independence Index (2013)*.

# WELCOME!

## GOALS

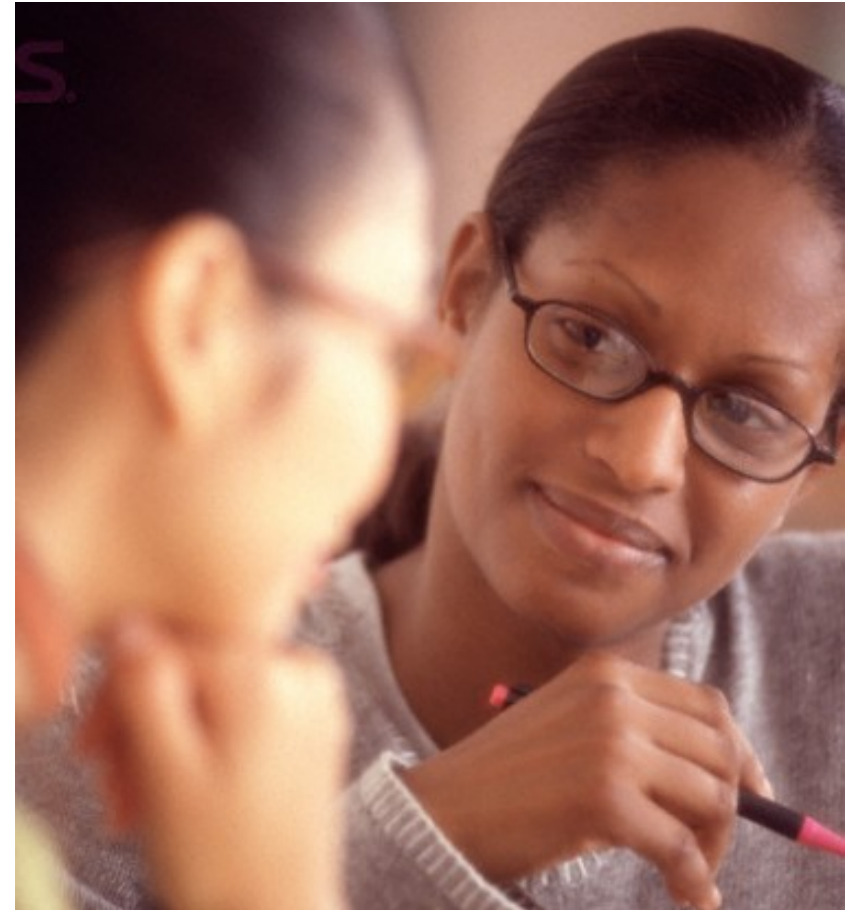
1. Gain an understanding of what **social networks** and **social capital** are, and why they matter.
2. Learn what factors **influence** social networks and social capital, and where **disparities** exist.

# DEFINING CONCEPTS

- **Social Network** is an interconnected group or association of people and organizations – our *social ties*
  - Colleagues, family, friends, etc.
- **Social Capital** is the social value generated by and resources found within our social networks
  - Information, opportunities, trust, favors, good-will, reciprocity

# REFLECT ON A TIME...

Think about a time when **you helped or supported someone**, OR when **someone helped or supported you**...personally, academically or professionally



# REFLECTION QUESTION

- How close were you to this person?
  - **Strong tie** – close, high emotional investment
  - **Weak tie** – less in common, acquaintance

# REFLECTION QUESTION

What type of assistance or guidance was provided?

- **Leverage** – helps to get ahead
- **Support** – helps to get by





## WHO YOU KNOW MATTERS

# WHY?



# SOCIAL CAPITAL

## Bonding VS. Bridging

# ACTIVATING SOCIAL CAPITAL

TRUST, RECIPROCITY, AND DURABILITY





# FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE OUR SOCIAL NETWORKS

**These are just a few...**

- Geography
- Education
- Connection to labor market
- Gender

# SOCIAL NETWORKS OF LOW-INCOME PEOPLE

WHAT DOES RESEARCH SAY?

# BIRDS OF A FEATHER FLOCK TOGETHER



## **HOMOPHILY:**

the tendency to associate and connect with others who are similar, resulting in homogeneous networks

- Similar sociodemographic, behavioral, and intrapersonal characteristics

# WHAT'S NEXT?

HOW CAN WE SUPPORT OUR CUSTOMERS?



# THANK YOU!

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