Sharmaine Jackson, Ph.D.

Sharmaine Jackson serves as the Racial Equity Director at the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) at the University of Colorado Boulder. In her role, she spearheads the incorporation of racial equity strategies throughout the organization, collaborating closely with NCWIT's leadership, researchers, alliance and program managers, and consultants. Her work encompasses training and education, the development of racial equity initiatives, and policy formation. Leveraging her extensive background in social science and law, she advocates for the transformative power of diverse teams to drive innovation.

Prior to joining NCWIT, Sharmaine was the Director of the Africana Studies Program at Stetson University, where she nurtured a culture of equity and inclusion through various initiatives aimed at dismantling systemic barriers and fostering diversity. She is a seasoned researcher, with a focus on how communities and young people utilize local knowledge, collective action, and the arts to counter social inequality. She examines these elements through the lenses of race, class and gender. Her comparative work, especially in Australia, enhances her insights into these dynamics.

During her tenure as a Postdoctoral Associate at the Urban Ethnography Project at Yale, Sharmaine played a pivotal role in exploring and advancing innovative, community-led solutions for violence prevention and social renewal. She holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of California Irvine, where she was a Fellow of the Center for Citizen Peacebuilding and the Jack W. Peltason Center for the Study of Democracy. Additionally, she earned a Juris Doctor, with a concentration in Taxation from Rutgers School of Law, Newark. She received her

Bachelor's Degree in Women's Studies from the University of Colorado at Boulder. Her extensive and diverse experience forms a strong base that underpins her 20-year commitment to nurturing inclusivity and belonging across multiple institutional environments.

First Name Sharmaine

Last Name Jackson

Organization University of Colorado Boulder

Position Racial Equity Director

Jen Kracha

Jennifer (Jen) Kracha is a Project Engineer with TeachEngineering Digital Library — a free online collective of K-12 STEM resources — within NCWIT at the University of Colorado Boulder. Jen is passionate about democratizing engineering and making hands-on engineering curricula accessible to K—12 teachers and students across the globe.

Jen brings strong foundational design knowledge and expertise with the concept of iteration to catapult product development to the team. She leads the planning and execution of several special projects aimed at helping educators to feel confident bringing engineering design into their classroom.

Jen attended the University of Colorado Boulder where she earned

a design-rich, project-focused degree in Integrated Design Engineering, with an emphasis in Mechanical Engineering and a concentration in Engineering Management. She has co-authored several academic papers and holds a design patent through Medline Industries.

First Name Jen

Last Name Kracha

Organization University of Colorado Boulder

Position TeachEngineering Project Engineer

Dua Chaker

Dua Chaker is a Senior Project Engineer at TeachEngineering- a free online collective of K-12 STEM resources — within NCWIT at the University of Colorado Boulder. Dua graduated summa cum laude from the University of Colorado Boulder in 2013 with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering.

With a career spanning over a decade, Dua has been an integral part of the TeachEngineering team since 2011. She leads the planning and execution of special projects aimed at evaluating and aligning educational standards to curricula, ensuring the delivery of high-quality STEM lessons and activities to K-12 educators nationwide. She currently manages the publication process, guiding authors to submit and publish high quality resources. Dedicated to advancing engineering education, Dua has co-authored several academic papers and presented at numerous conferences, including the National ASEE and NSTA Conferences.

First Name Dua

Last Name Chaker

Organization University of Colorado Boulder

Position TeachEngineering Senior Project Engineer

Sarayu Sundar, Ph.D.

Dr. Sarayu Sundar serves as a Higher Education Research Associate with the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) at the University of Colorado Boulder. In this role, Dr. Sundar focuses on leveraging quantitative and qualitative data to broaden participation in computing. Her charge includes the collection and analysis of quantitative longitudinal enrollment, retention, and degree completion data from various Higher Education Alliance institutions, particularly those involved in NCWIT's systemic change initiatives. She also supports the higher education team's work with Learning Circles, by leading training sessions for LC participants to make data-driven decisions, as well as the Higher Education Alliance Meeting of the Minds webinar series and the Higher Education Alliance Advisory Board. Additionally, she works with the Higher Education Alliance Co-Chairs.

Prior to joining NCWIT, Dr. Sundar served as a Research Analyst for five years with UCLA's Momentum, a research team dedicated to examining diversity efforts and progress among computing departments committed to increasing gender and racial/ethnic diversity in their undergraduate computing programs. She has also held a variety of student affairs roles at the University

of Houston's Bauer College of Business and most recently served as the Associate Director of Student Experience at Rice University's Jones Graduate School of Business.

Dr. Sundar's research centers women's experiences in higher education. In addition to her work within undergraduate computing, she has also examined the role of women's cultural and gender identities in shaping their college decision-making processes. Dr. Sundar has presented her research at national conferences for the Association for the Study of Higher Education, the American Educational Research Association, and the Association for Institutional Research. She has co-authored peer-reviewed papers that have been published in Research in Higher Education and Computer Science Education.

Education:

BBA: University of Houston, Accounting (2011)
M.Ed.: University of Houston, Higher Education Administration (2014)
M.A.: University of California, Los Angeles, Higher Education and Organizational Change (2018)
Ph.D.: University of California, Los Angeles, Higher Education and Organizational Change (2022)

First Name Sarayu

Last Name Sundar

Organization University of Colorado

Position Higher Education Research Associate with the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT)

Education Ph.D. in Higher Education and Organizational Change

Kiersten Ferguson, Ph.D.

S. Kiersten Ferguson is a social scientist for the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) and a research associate in the College of Engineering & Applied Science at the University of Colorado Boulder. Her scholarly and teaching interests include gender equity and inclusion in higher education; diversity planning and implementation with a focus on systemic organizational change; recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and students; and inclusive pedagogical and curricular choices in higher education.

Prior to joining NCWIT in 2023, Kiersten was a clinical associate professor in the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development at Southern Methodist University (SMU) teaching graduate level courses and leading the M.Ed. in Higher Education program. Throughout her time at SMU, she received numerous teaching awards including the Provost's Teaching Recognition Award in 2021, which honors full-time non-tenure-track faculty who demonstrate a commitment to excellence and a consummate dedication to teaching and learning. In addition, she served as Provost Faculty Fellow for Equity and Inclusion with the Associate Provost for Faculty Success. Before her time at SMU, Kiersten held a variety of roles in the comprehensive Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE) at The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin), including faculty fellow, postdoctoral fellow, and senior graduate research assistant. She focused on translating research and best practices into viable organizational change models, as well as the development and coordination of department-level and campus-wide diversity and equity initiatives. Prior to DDCE, she

also worked in the Executive Vice President and Provost's Office at UT Austin coordinating university-wide projects. Kiersten's dissertation focused on the experiences of faculty mentoring undergraduate women students in engineering. She was recognized as a top five finalist in the 2010 national Paul P. Fidler Research Grant competition by the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.

Education: Ph.D. Higher Education Administration & Doctoral Portfolio Concentration in Women's & Gender Studies, The University of Texas at Austin; M.Ed. Curriculum & Instruction, The University of Texas at Austin; B.A. Cultural Anthropology and Government & International Relations, University of Notre Dame

First Name Kiersten

Last Name Ferguson

Organization University of Colorado, Boulder

Position Faculty Research Associate

Education Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration & Doctoral Portfolio Concentration in Women's & Gender Studies

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Mary Bell, MBA

As a Workforce Alliance Relationship Manager Consultant for NCWIT, Mary partners with organizations to leverage NCWIT's vast array of services and programs to meet their company's goals.

Mary brings over a decade of experience in operations management, project management, and community engagement to the team. She is passionate about supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts and creating opportunities for individual and organizational excellence.

Mary is also the CEO and Principal Consultant of Max Professional Services, where she provides consulting services to help small businesses and nonprofits develop and implement strategic initiatives. Mary is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP) and holds an MBA from Kennesaw State University. She has also completed an international consulting residency in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Mary's unique perspective and results-oriented approach ensure sustainable growth and impactful outcomes.

First Name Mary

Last Name Bell

Organization NCWIT

Position Workforce Alliance Relationship Manager Consultant

Willow Peluso

Willow Peluso (she/her) is the Project Coordinator for NCWIT Counselors for Computing. She is dedicated to advocating for Women & LGBTQ+ inclusivity and creating diverse career development opportunities for young individuals. Willow has gained professional experience in workforce development, higher education, and youth programming in various roles. Willow holds

a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Masters of Education degree in School Counseling, both from Millersville University of Pennsylvania. During her free time, she enjoys traveling, rock climbing, and playing board games with friends.

First Name Willow

Last Name Peluso

Organization NCWIT Counselors for Computing

Position Project Coordinator

Sarah Blithe, Ph.D.

Dr. Sarah Blithe is a Research Scientist with the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) at the University of Colorado Boulder. Her research is in in organizational communication, with specific attention to intersectional feminism, inclusivity, occupational identity, work-life balance, policy inequalities, and management learning. Her research is applied and practical; oriented toward implementing positive changes for workers and organizations.

Before joining NCWIT, Dr. Blithe was an Associate Professor of Communication Studies at the University of Nevada, Reno. She is the author of *Gender Equality and Work-Life Balance: Glass Handcuffs and Working Men in the U.S.* and *Sex and Stigma: Stories of Everyday Life in Nevada's Legal Brothels*. She is also the co-editor of *Badass Feminist Politics: Exploring Radical Edges of Feminist Theory, Communication, and Activism*. She has published widely in national and international journals,

including *Human Relations*, *Management Communication Quarterly*, the *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *Culture and Organization*, the *Journal of Gender Studies*, *Management Learning*, and the *Journal of Communication*. Dr. Blithe is the recipient of multiple research and teaching awards, including seven book of the year awards and the 2019 Thornton Peace Prize for her social justice advocacy.

First Name Sarah

Last Name Blithe

Organization University of Colorado

Position Research Scientist

MaKenzie Johnson

MaKenzie currently serves as the Curriculum Developer for NCWIT's Counselors for Computer (C4C). MaKenzie was formerly a school counselor for 12 years working with students in grades 6-12. Along with her work at C4C she is also a Senior Lecturer at the University of Wisconsin- Superior in the Counselor Education Program and works in a small private practice as a Licensed Professional Counselor. In 2019, she attended a CS for All Summit in Pennsylvania after first being exposed to CS at the MN School Counselors Association Conference. Since that time she has become a consultant for Counselors for Computing, a program developed by NCWIT, to help counselors join the front line of the computing conversation. She is passionate about CS

and the opportunities it has for all students and the community in which she lives. She hopes to help educate other counselors and teachers on their role in exposing students to CS. She spends her time hiking the vast trails in Duluth, Minnesota with her husband and two daughters and being around the magic of Lake Superior.

First Name MaKenzie

Last Name Johnson

Organization NCWIT

Position Curriculum Developer for Counselors for Computer (C4C)

Jill Vollmers

Jill Vollmers is the Community Manager for C4C. She has been a school counselor for 13 years and is currently a high school counselor at St. Mary's Central High School, Bismarck, ND.

In the summer of 2019, Jill attended the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) K-12 CS Alignment in Dallas, TX where she was exposed to C4C and had the opportunity to listen to the programming that C4C offers. As a result of this exposure Jill became a consultant for C4C – Counselors for Computing a subsidiary of NCWIT – National Center for Women in Technology helping to encourage the next computer scientists.

Jill was the recipient of North Dakota State University's 2013 Distinguished Education Professional, she also serves as a Board

Member and Treasurer for Project Armchair, an organization that reads to children in crisis in the Bismarck area.

She stays busy chasing after her family, enjoys reading, binging Netflix, cooking/baking and radiating positivity.

First Name Jill

Last Name Vollmers

Organization NCWIT

Position Community Manager for C4C