Pool Party Facilitators

**Constance Clark (Pink Pool Party)** is a 3rd year doctoral student the Politics and Education program at Teachers College. With a passion for conducting research that leads to positive change in education, Constance works for The Pubic Good with Professor Amy Stuart Wells. Before arriving at Teachers College, Constance has worked for various think tanks in Washington, DC. She holds an MA in Government from the University of Texas – Austin, and a BA in Public Policy from The College of William and Mary. Her research interests include school choice, race, and demographic change as it relates to schooling.

**Diana Cordova-Cobo (Green Pool Party)**is a doctoral student in the Sociology and Education program at Teachers College, Columbia University where she is also a research assistant for the Center for Understanding Race and Education (CURE) and for the Public Good, a non-profit public school support organization for racially and ethnically diverse schools. Her work under these organizations has explored culturally relevant curriculum in higher education, sustaining racially diverse public schools, and the impact of gentrification on New York City public schools. Her scholarly interests center on the housing-school nexus. She is specifically interested in exploring how gentrification and residential segregation impact public school students in neighborhoods that are predominantly Latinx. Prior to starting the doctoral program at Teachers College, she was a middle school social studies teacher in the Washington Heights neighborhood of New York City.

**Matt Gonzales (Orange Pool Party)** holds a master’s degree in education policy from the department of Education Policy and Social Analysis (EPSA) at Teachers College (TC). He is co-founder of Students for Quality Education (SQE), a student advocacy group at Teachers College committed to engaging students, faculty, and administrators in discussions around racial and economic diversity at TC. He has written extensively about school integration/segregation, and recently co-authored a commentary in Education Week on diverse charter schools, a chapter in an upcoming book Policy Goes to School, and a journal article (pending publication). He is a former special education middle school teacher for the Los Angeles Unified School District. He was recently hired as the School Diversity Project Director for New York Appleseed, a non-profit advocacy organization that supports policy and practice related to school integration in New York City.

**Ian Levy (Purple Pool Party)** is a Hip Hop Artist, School Counselor, and Doctoral Candidate at Teachers College, Columbia University. In 2013, Ian Levy was honored with the delivery of a TEDx Talk on Hip Hop and Spoken Word Therapy: A path of Self-Discovery and Emotional Stability which has been acclaimed. Ian aims to utilize the constructs of Hip Hop and Spoken Word Therapy to re-frame mental health services in public schools. He runs a hip hop therapy program as a school counselor in the South Bronx. At the beginning of 2016, Ian's work integrating hip hop therapy as a school counseling framework was featured in the NY Times, XXL Magazine, Complex Magazine, on Fox5 NY, and News 12 the Bronx.

**Brian Mooney (Blue Pool Party)** is an educator, scholar, author, and doctoral student at Teachers College, Columbia University. He teaches high school English in New Jersey. In June 2015, Brian's work caught the attention of Grammy-award winning hip hop artist Kendrick Lamar and resulted in a school visit by the rapper. His work has been featured by The New York Times, NBC, NPR, Rolling Stone, MTV, SiriusXM and others. Brian's first book, Breakbeat Pedagogy: Hip Hop and Spoken Word Beyond the Classroom Walls, will be published by Peter Lang Publishing.

**Yasmin Nunez (Purple Pool Party)** is of Dominican background and is a Harlem native. She recently received her Master's degree in Sociology and Education at Teachers College (TC). During her time at TC she focused her work on teacher-student relationships in New York City public schools. What excited her the most and still excites her today is the bridge that educators are building in an effort to validate the voices of students from marginalized communities and how they are reshaping the voices that have always been present in the conversation.

**Susanie Rampersad (Blue Pool Party)** is currently a Master’s student in the Sociology and Education program at Teachers College. Initially, when she began her undergraduate studies, she intended to become an English teacher, but certain events altered this path. She had the opportunity to create a club called the Multicultural Student Organization, which promoted understanding different cultures in an effort to bring people together on campus. Serving as the president of this organization led her to realize how important diversity is in higher education as well as in the K-12 education system. Her interests include urban education, race and education, and equity in education.

**Erin Swen (Green Pool Party)** is a recent graduate of the Sociology and Education M.A. Program at Teachers College. She taught high school social studies in Cambridge, MA from 2010-2014 and now works as a research assistant for the Public Good Project, a collaboration between Teachers College and New York Appleseed. She has also worked for the NYC Department of Education and interned with the Center for Public Research and Leadership at Columbia Law School.

**Dominic Walker** **(Pink Pool Party)** is recent Education Policy and Social Analysis graduate and an incoming Sociology and Education doctoral student at Teachers College. His research interests focus on the ways in which students of color navigate academic spaces and the prospect of education as a means to racial progress.

**Juontel White (Orange Pool Party)** is a Ph.D. candidate at Columbia University Teachers' College, where she is a researcher with the Center for Understanding Race and Education. She is an educational strategist who works with organizations globally to foster racial equity and inclusion in schools.

In several major U.S. cities, Juontel has worked with districts and policymakers to make education more inclusive for racial/ethnic minorities. In West Africa and the Caribbean, she has worked with organizations (including the United Nations and Ministries of Education) to improve curricular diversity and family/community engagement. Juontel is a graduate of Harvard University (Ed.M.) and the University of Southern California.