

Opening General Session Speaker

Michele Knight-Manuel

Michelle Knight-Manuel is Dean and Professor of the Morgridge College of Education (MCE) at the University of Denver. She is a distinguished scholar and leader, having dedicated her career to supporting educational access and opportunities for historically underserved communities. Prior to joining MCE in 2022, she served as the Associate Dean of Teachers College, Columbia University and Professor of Curriculum and Teaching. During that time, she also served as the Director of Culturally Relevant College and Career Readiness for the New York City Department of Education's Expanded Success Initiative and as a Senior Research Fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of College and Career Readiness at Boston University. A former public-school teacher of English as Second Language/French and a college advisor, she earned her doctorate in education from University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

Her research includes three distinct yet complementary strands of inquiry: culturally relevant teacher preparation and professional development, college readiness and access, and immigrant youth's civic strengths. She has published in such journals as the *American Educational Research Journal*, *Teachers College Record*, *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, *Review of Research in Education*, and the *Journal of Educational Policy*. Her two books, co-authored with Joanne Marciano, are *Classroom Cultures: Equitable Schooling for Racially Diverse Youth* and *College Ready: Preparing Black and Latino Youth for Higher Education through a Culturally Relevant Lens*. She is the former executive editor of *Teachers College Record*.

Since coming to the Morgridge College of Education, she has been working with faculty to address education and mental health inequities. She has received over 3.5 million dollars to support teachers through the Colorado Department of Higher Education, Removing Barriers to Educator Preparation. Additionally, she is collaborating with members of the Dean's Team and the faculty on such projects as ensuring equity across a lifetime of educational transitions, preparing principals, superintendents, teachers, school counselors, school psychologists and policy makers to serve rural communities, facilitating an international partnership in India, and creating a Grow-Your-Own (GYO) Teacher Initiative. Given the changing times, she is also looking forward to exploring the intersections of AI, education and serving the public good. Together, these projects will position the Morgridge College of Education as a force for positive change locally, nationally and internationally.