Get to know our faculty and community educators

DR. PATRICIA EDWARDS
Professor of teacher education at MSU, Dr. Edwards was the first African American president of the Literacy Research Association, and was the President of the International Reading Association. She has developed two nationally acclaimed family literacy programs, and conducts her research on issues essential to children and families. She focuses her research on the broader question: How Does the World Read?

DR. RUBÉN MARTINEZ
Dr. Martinez is professor of sociology and director of the Julian Samora Research Institute at MSU. His research interests include institutional and societal change, neoliberalism and Latinos, education and ethnic minorities, diversity leadership in higher education, youth development, Latino entrepreneurship, and environmental justice issues.

JOAN NELSON
Ms. Nelson has been director of the Allen Neighborhood Center since 1999. The center provides various services including the Allen Farmer’s Market, Urban Growing Initiatives, Entrepreneurship Support, Mortgage Assistance, Assistance with health coverage, Food Pantries, Youth Programs, and Senior Groups and more.

KARIKA PARKER
Now working at the Center for Health Equity Practice of the Michigan Public Health Institute, Ms. Parker has also led the “Power of We” Consortium, which draws on the collective social capital and diversity of over 250 human services, nonprofit, governmental, faith-based, and business sector stakeholders in the Greater Lansing area to promote systems reform.

DR. MICHAEL ROESSLER
Michael Roessler taught Social Studies for 39 years mostly at the Portland Middle School in Portland, Michigan. He holds degrees from U of M, Stanford, and MSU, including a Ph.D. in Education from MSU. He has been a volunteer and a Core Member for the Homeless Angels for 4 years.

DR. DAVE WEATHERSPOON
Professor and Researcher in the Food and Resource Economics Department, teaching Food Industry Management, Dr. Weatherspoon has worked in over 30 countries on food supply chain, with “The Food SCENE Dialogues: Supply Chain Enhancements for the New Economy,” and does domestic and international work to revolutionize the food supply chain.