



Seeing Educators Emerge Conference: The Mirror in the Classroom

March 18, 2026

John A. Logan College

Welcome

Welcome to the SEE Conference! We are excited to have you join us for a day of learning, collaboration, and inspiration.

Conference Webpage



Schedule at a Glance

8:30–9:15 AM

Registration & Check-In

Continental Breakfast Available (Donuts, assorted muffins, breakfast breads, croissants, yogurt and granola, fruit platter, Coffee, orange juice, water)

9:15–10:00 AM (Ivey & Tarvin)

Keynote Address

Speaker: Silvestre Arcos

Title: In Lak'ech: Identity, Representation, and the Teachers Our Students Deserve

10:10–11:00 AM

Breakout Session 1

Choose from:

- **Session A:** The Counselor in the Mirror: Representation, Trust, and the Power of Seeing Yourself in School, Jamie D. Hogue — Batteau
- **Session B:** Longevity in Education: Staying Grounded, Motivated, and Effective Across Decades of Teaching, Ray Krolewicz — Crisp
- **Session C:** Unit Plan Presentations — Ivey & Tarvin

11:10 AM–12:00 PM

Breakout Session 2

Choose from:

- **Session A:** Do Not Miss Your Mirror Moment!, Dr. Kenneth Griffin — Batteau
- **Session B:** From IEP Student to Educator: Empathy-Driven Teaching, Zane Kramer— Crisp
- **Session C:** Diverse Male Teacher Initiative, Jerry Hinds, Kenny Smith, Lafiet McDade — Ivey & Tarvin

12:00–1:00 PM (Ivey & Tarvin)

Lunch (Italian Beef, Italian Chicken, Mac & Cheese, Potato Chips, Signature salad, Caesar Salad, Assorted Cookies and Brownies with Powdered Sugar)

12:30–1:00 PM

Lunch Keynote

Speaker: Victor Gomez, 2025 Illinois Teacher of the Year

Title: The Journey of la Mariposa Monarca

1:10–2:00 PM

Breakout Session 3

Choose from:

- **Session A:** Rookie Teacher Panel, Kate Crombar, Karly Williard, Phen Grant, Jay Anderson, Alex Baughman — Batteau
- **Session B:** From Calling to Career: How to Thrive in Education, Dr. Tom Webb — Crisp

2:10–2:30 PM (Ivey & Tarvin)

Award ceremony for the bulletin board, unit plan, and t-shirt competitions

Notes & Reminders

- Wi-Fi Network: JALC-Guests
- Event Hashtag: #SEECConference
- For assistance, visit the Registration Desk.

Breakout Session Descriptions

The Counselor in the Mirror: Representation, Trust, and the Power of Seeing Yourself in School

Jamie D. Hogue, M.S. Ed.

This session explores how male educators—especially those from diverse backgrounds—shape students’ sense of identity, belonging, and motivation. Drawing from 15 years as a Black male school counselor, the presenter shares how representation and authentic relationships build trust and emotional safety. Participants will leave with practical strategies for fostering connection and creating learning environments where all students feel seen.

Longevity in Education: Staying Grounded, Motivated, and Effective Across Decades of Teaching

Ray Krolewicz

Ray Krolewicz reflects on 50 years in diverse educational settings to highlight what helps educators build meaningful, lasting careers. The session examines evolving motivations, professional relationships, and the balance between system demands and personal joy. Participants will leave with insights into the often-overlooked rewards that sustain teachers over time.

Do Not Miss Your Mirror Moment!

Dr. Kenneth Griffin

Rooted in a powerful personal story of identity, homelessness, and representation, this session explores the transformative impact of “mirror moments” in education. Dr. Kenneth Griffin shares how two influential educators helped him see new possibilities for his future and invites participants to reflect on their own identities while learning practical strategies to mentor and redirect students who may be silently struggling.

From IEP Student to Educator: Empathy-Driven Teaching

Zane Kramer

With insight shaped by his own experience as a student with an IEP, middle-grades social studies teacher Zane Kramer shares how his educational journey influences his teaching. Now in his fourth year of teaching 6th grade, he brings both empathy and high expectations to his classroom. This session highlights ways educators can shift mindsets, build student confidence, and create flexible, strength-based learning environments through practical strategies and authentic experiences.

Diverse Male Teacher Initiative

Jerry Hinds, Kenny Smith, Lafiet McDade

Representatives from the Diverse Male Teacher Initiative (DMTI) will provide an overview of the program’s mission to recruit, support, and retain men of color in the teaching profession. Presenters will explain eligibility requirements, available mentoring and financial supports, and how the initiative helps future educators navigate their pathway into the classroom.

Rookie Teacher Panel

Moderator: Ray Krolewicz; Panelists: Kate Crombar, Phen Grant, Karly Williard, Jay Anderson, Alex Baughman

In this interactive panel, early-career teachers share their real experiences transitioning from preparation programs into full-time classrooms—their successes, challenges, and what they wish they had known. Participants will gain practical insights, submit questions, and engage in a live Q&A designed to give future educators a realistic and inspiring look at the first years of teaching.

From Calling to Career: How to Thrive in Education

Dr. Tom Webb

Teaching begins with passion, but passion alone won't sustain you. In this story-driven session, Dr. Tom Webb shares practical insights from the classroom and principal's office on how to build a meaningful, sustainable career in education.

Speaker Bios



Dr. Kenneth Griffin is an educational leader committed to transforming schools through relationships, high expectations, and a relentless focus on student success. Born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri, he is one of seven siblings and a proud first-generation college graduate and first-generation doctoral recipient. His journey through the foster care system shaped his belief that schools must serve as safe havens of opportunity, stability, and hope. With over 15 years in K–12 education, Dr. Griffin has served as a teacher, instructional leader, principal, and district administrator. He is known for building strong school cultures, strengthening staff capacity, and using data strategically to drive measurable academic growth. His leadership emphasizes

collaboration, accountability, and creating systems that support both student achievement and educator effectiveness. Dr. Griffin's work centers on equity, student engagement, and ensuring every child feels seen, valued, and capable of excellence. He has led initiatives in school improvement, MTSS, PBIS, curriculum alignment, and organizational development. A passionate advocate for children and communities, he believes sustainable progress happens when schools and stakeholders move forward together.

Dr. Griffin continues to dedicate his career to empowering students, supporting educators, and leading schools toward meaningful, lasting impact.



Mr. Jamie D. Hogue is an educator, trauma and crisis management specialist, and a leading voice in Black male mental health. As founder of BlackMenTALL, LLC, he is committed to bridging the gap between mental health practitioners and Black boys and men. His work centers on crisis intervention, trauma awareness, emotional well-being, boundaries, healthy routines, coping skills, ACEs, and building safe spaces and communities of care. A two-time graduate of Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Jamie holds a B.A. in English (Pre-professional, with a minor in Africana Studies) and an M.S. in Educational Psychology (School Counseling). He also earned an M.A. in Educational Administration & Leadership from McKendree University and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership at Concordia University Chicago. Since 2007, Jamie has served in various educational leadership roles, including school counselor, assistant principal, and school counseling department chair. He now serves in a school counseling capacity in Melrose Park, IL, advocating for student mental health, equity, and restorative practices. Beyond education, he is a certified Trauma & Crisis Management Specialist through the American School Counseling Association (ASCA). His work has earned recognition as one of the 40 Amazing Black Male Educators in the Legacy Cohort of *UpLIFT!* magazine and as an honoree at the Illinois State Board of Education's 2019 "Those Who Excel" Awards. Guided by the African proverb, "*The child who is not embraced by the village will burn it down to feel its warmth,*" Jamie's mission is to ensure Black boys and men are embraced, equipped with tools for emotional resilience, and supported in environments where they can thrive. A sought-after keynote speaker, he brings passion, expertise, and practical strategies to conferences and workshops focused on the emotional and psychological well-being of Black boys and men, inspiring transformative action across education, mental health, and leadership.



Mr. Ray Krolewicz has been teaching since 1975 and brings more than five decades of experience across public and private schools. Throughout his career, he has taught students from kindergarten through college in a wide range of content areas including mathematics, English language arts, science, social studies, and special education. He also spent three years teaching at the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice. In addition to his classroom work, Ray is an avid long-distance runner and has coached a variety of sports, including cross country, track, soccer, football, basketball, baseball, and wrestling.



Mr. Zane Kramer earned his B.S. in Middle Grades Education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in 2022. For the past four years, he has taught 6th grade social studies at the same public school, where he especially enjoys guiding students through the ancient worlds of Greece and Rome. As someone who had an IEP throughout his own K–12 and college years, Zane brings a deep sense of empathy and understanding to his work. He draws on his lived experiences to support his students' academic and personal growth, helping them recognize their strengths, realize their potential, and build confidence in themselves as learners.



Mr. Silvestre Arcos is an equity-driven educational leader and consultant with over 25 years of experience strengthening school leadership, instructional practice, and adult learning systems. With deep expertise in mathematics education, foundational literacy, multilingual learner instruction, and curriculum design, Silvestre has partnered with schools, districts, and education organizations to implement data-informed strategies that improve teaching quality and student outcomes. Committed to continuous learning and system-level impact, Silvestre holds an M.Ed. in Technology, Innovation, and Education from Harvard University and in Bilingual/Bicultural Education from Columbia University's Teachers College. He has also completed advanced degrees in bilingual and special education. He brings curiosity, humility, and a learner mindset to every collaboration, supporting schools in building instructional systems that are rigorous, inclusive, and responsive to the communities they serve.



Mr. Víctor Gómez is the 2025 Illinois Teacher of the Year and a bilingual chemistry teacher at East Leyden High School in Leyden High School District 212. A sixth-year educator and 2025 Cook County Co-Regional Teacher of the Year, Mr. Gómez is recognized statewide for his leadership in advancing bilingual education. He co-developed East Leyden's bilingual program and helped launch the school's first Bilingual Chemistry course, expanding access to rigorous STEM opportunities for multilingual learners. A dedicated advocate for English learners, Mr. Gómez ensures students receive high-quality instruction and access to pathways such as Elmhurst University's STEM Academy. His culturally responsive approach centers on belonging and identity, seen in his work with the Alianza Latina student club and the Mariachi Águilas de Leyden ensemble. Mr. Gómez also mentors aspiring bilingual educators through partnerships with Elmhurst University and the Noyce PRIDE STEM Teacher Scholars Program, helping strengthen the pipeline of future teachers who reflect Illinois' diverse student population. He is celebrated for his high expectations, innovative instructional practices, and commitment to creating equitable learning opportunities for all students.



Dr. Tom Webb is a school principal and speaker who is passionate about action leadership. He serves as principal of Carterville Intermediate School in southern Illinois, a nationally recognized Model PLC school with an Exemplary state designation. Tom is committed to helping educators build sustainable careers and return joy to the profession.