

MACAC Conference Keynotes

Thursday, March 10th – 1:30PM



Dr. Angel B. Pérez, CEO of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC)

Dr. Angel B. Pérez represents more than 25,000 admission and counseling professionals worldwide committed to postsecondary access and success. He is the primary voice of the association to government, media, and global partners. Pérez is recognized as a national thought leader and is a sought-after speaker on issues of educational equity, access, and success in American education.

Throughout the course of his career, Dr. Pérez has worked to realize his belief that diversity and academic excellence go hand-in-hand, and that every young person who aspires to higher education should have the opportunity to achieve. His work echoes his own story. Growing up poor in Puerto Rico and the South Bronx, he was the first in his family to graduate from college, and went on to become a leader in higher education. Recognized nationally on issues of equity and access in American education, Dr. Pérez is a tireless champion for underrepresented communities and a creative advocate for reform. Named by a *Forbes* article in 2019 as the most influential voice in college admission, he strives to build an educational ecosystem that better represents today's society.

Seismic Shifts: Navigating Challenge and Change in Our Profession

During his keynote, Dr. Angel Perez, NACAC CEO, will discuss the factors contributing to the shifting landscape within the college admissions profession. Dr. Perez will continue the conversation around the challenges and changes in our profession with Michigan leaders from college admissions, college access, and the educational workforce in a fireside chat format. Joining Dr. Perez on stage will be John Ambrose, Executive Director of Admissions, Michigan State University, Jamie Jacobs, Deputy Director, MCAN, and Nicola Soares, President, Kelly Education. MACAC Annual Conference Planning Committee member and Wayne State University Admissions Counselor, Vanessa Reynolds will moderate the immersive conversation.

Friday, March 11th – 9:00AM



Anna S. Mueller, PhD, Luther Dana Waterman Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at Indiana University

Anna S. Mueller, PhD, is the Luther Dana Waterman Associate Professor in the [Department of Sociology](#) at [Indiana University](#). She is the Principal Investigator of the [Social Worlds & Youth Well-being Study](#) which is a project that aims to identify new, effective, and sustainable strategies to prevent suicide in collaboration with schools and their communities. In 2020, she was recognized as one of Science News's [Top 10 Early Career Scientists to Watch](#) and with the [Edwin S. Shneidman Early Career Award](#) for her contributions to understanding youth suicide and suicide clusters. Her research has received numerous awards for its contribution to knowledge, from the American Sociological Association, the American Pediatrics Association, the Society for Science & the Public, among others. She is passionate about helping schools, families, and communities find better ways to prevent suicide and to heal after suicide losses.

Improving Suicide Prevention in Schools and Communities: How can we build systems that support school counselors?

Schools are widely recognized as a critical place for suicide prevention, and yet, despite years of research many of our school-based suicide prevention strategies are hard for schools to sustain, particularly when resources (time, money, staff) are limited. This situation is becoming increasingly critical as rates of youth suicide and reports of school-centered suicide clusters climb in the U.S. Drawing on data from a collaborative (community-engaged) project with a Colorado school district and four high schools, this study offers insights into how to improve school suicide prevention strategies by leveraging existing strengths and systems that are already in place in schools. By the end of this presentation, school counselors, administrators, and other school staff will have increased information about (1) youth suicide and (2) how to prevent suicide in their

schools, including actionable strategies that counselors can take back to their communities to begin conversations for change.