



EDUCATION DEANS OF GREATER MILWAUKEE

PRESENTERS:



Dr. Bill Henk has served as dean of the College of Education and professor of literacy at Marquette University since 2004. Previously he chaired the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, and for 18 years prior to that role, he worked in an array of faculty and administrative capacities in the Penn State University system.

Henk, who holds degrees in secondary education as well as reading and educational psychology, specializes in literacy and has earned a national reputation for his scholarship in that field. He has published and presented his work extensively, has served on several elite editorial review boards, and has held multiple leadership roles in professional organizations.

Bill served as an elementary school reading specialist in Corry (PA), before going on to receive his doctorate from West Virginia University in 1982. He then served as an assistant professor of reading education and director of the reading clinic at the University of Georgia.

The *Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers* recognized Bill with a distinguished service award in 2003 and with a prestigious lifetime achievement award in 2004. At Penn State he received institutional awards for both teaching and research, and he was named an outstanding alumnus of Edinboro University (PA) in 2000.

As a dean at Marquette, Dr. Henk has successfully led efforts for national accreditation and the re-designation of his academic unit as the College of Education. In addition, he co-founded the nationally-recognized *Greater Milwaukee Catholic Education Consortium (GMCEC)*, helped to establish *Teach For America* in Milwaukee, and directed the feasibility study for the new Cristo Rey Jesuit high school. His university service on governance bodies, task forces and committees has been wide-ranging. He is also active in numerous community service and outreach activities including membership on the Leadership Council of *Milwaukee Succeeds*, the *Greater Milwaukee Committee Education Committee*, the Catholic School Commission, and the boards of the GMCEC, Cristo Rey Jesuit and Catholic Memorial high schools. Bill sees his role as a co-chair of the *Education Deans of Greater Milwaukee* as a way to utilize his leadership skills for the greater good of Milwaukee's school children. He regards the EDGM as uniquely positioned to exert a significant impact on the region's educational landscape through collaboration and collective social impact.



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Dr. Freda Russell is the Dean of the College of Education and Leadership at Cardinal Stritch University, and Co-Chair of the Education Deans of Greater Milwaukee (EDGM) group, whose members consist of School of Education deans from nine institutions in Southeastern Wisconsin.

As the first African-American dean in the university's 79-year history, Dr. Russell leads advanced and innovative practices in higher education that serve the twenty-first century learner and empower the local community. Her research is concentrated in the areas of program evaluation, teacher education policy, higher education accreditation, culturally responsive practices in higher education and the development of women leaders. As a strategic visionary, and critical thinker, she energizes communities around adaptive change and shared vision. She also advocates at the state and national level for high-quality and high-impact teacher education programs that align with the needs of the PK-12 academic programming.

Most often in magazine articles, Dr. Russell is characterized as a pioneer, being one of the first African-American women to serve successfully in key leadership roles. However, she would best summarize her resilience and "never-give-up-belief" with this quote by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. which states, "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

Dr. Russell has spent her professional career in health care and higher education, working in positions of increasing administrative responsibility. She co-chaired development of the university's Self-Study Report for the Higher Learning Commission in addition to leading the College of Education and Leadership through a successful re-accreditation by state and national organizations. In 2015, she served Cardinal Stritch University as Co-Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs. She continues to add to her accomplished record success stories of fundraising, strategic partnership development and ongoing support of new programmatic growth.

Dr. Russell attributes much of her success to being raised on military bases and having to consistently adjust to different cultures and life circumstances. This led her to an understanding of her own life mission, which is, "to advocate for equity in human life and personal development."



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Karen J. Coy-Romano has served as the Manager of the Education Deans of Greater Milwaukee (EDGM) since February 2015 through a project grant from the Faye McBeath Foundation.

Coy-Romano holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in education with an emphasis on social advocacy, leadership development, academic research, urban education policy and antiracist education. In addition, she is a nationally certified fundraising and communications executive and leadership coach. Prior to retiring from the state educational system, Coy-Romano held administrative leadership positions in health and human services for 20 years and higher education for 26 years. For the last 13 years, she has been an entrepreneur serving as president of a consulting firm specializing in transformational leadership and change management in urban education programs serving high-poverty communities.

As one of the founding members of the charter and school movement 26 years ago, Coy-Romano has worked extensively with Milwaukee Public Schools previously serving on the MPS Task Force on Special Education and Supportive Services for 10 years and as a partner with the former MPS Alternative School Program. She has conducted long-term qualitative and quantitative academic research on the variables contributing to underperforming public schools, integrating socio-emotional learning with academic curriculum, and has monitored and evaluated school leadership and classroom management strategies for public, charter and choice schools. Her 1993 launch of a choice school program with former MPS students from grades 3 through 8, academically behind 3 to 4 years, and who had been suspended or expelled resulted in academic gains up to grade level in one school year by utilizing specific learning and classroom management skills of Master level educators.

Her responsibilities have included legislative advocacy and drafting and proposing new legislation to benefit urban education programs. Coy-Romano's commitment to social justice and civil rights issues throughout her career has allowed her to contribute her expertise to early childhood education programs, advancing national education/remediation models in local communities including growing 'out-of-school time' programs, student retention and graduation initiatives, and the integration of public health programs that serve vulnerable children and build healthy communities. Throughout her career, Karen has launched the development of public/private partnerships among key stakeholders to maximize collective impact for the benefit of disadvantaged students and to create access and equity.

Karen values her role with the Education Deans of Greater Milwaukee and our community partners as a catalyst to facilitate and leverage the unique cross-sector expertise in urban education from cradle to career to drive systemic change that serves the needs of all children regardless of community or socio-economic status.