

Award winners of the 2014 Patrice L. Engle Dissertation Grant in Early Child Development: Laurent G. Ndjuye and Ana Marie Nieto



Laurent Gabriel Ndjuye is an ambitious young man working towards his Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Education at the University of Hong Kong. His supervisors are Professor Nirmala Rao and Dr Liz Jackson. His research project will be conducted in Tanzania and is titled “Achieving Social Justice in Pre-primary Educational Policy and Practice: Observations from Newly Arrived Refugees in Rural Tanzania”. Laurent attended the University of Dodoma- Tanzania where he graduated summa cum laude in 2010 and was offered a scholarship to pursue M.Ed at the same University. He wrote a dissertation entitled: Strategies for the development of conflict resolution skills among pre-schoolers: Observations from rural and urban districts in Tanzania. Before joining the University of Dodoma for his undergraduate studies, Laurent worked as a licensed teacher and head-teacher at pre-primary, primary and secondary school levels; and as zonal academic secretary for Ahadi Institute which is committed to delivering distance education for the refugees or former refugees. In this capacity, he had to coordinate all academic-related activities in four countries; Tanzania, Democratic of Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi. His future plans includes to fully immerse himself in research related to social justice in policy and practice, especially in the area of early childhood education for less advantaged groups in sub-Saharan Africa. Also, he intends to be part of an organization where he can integrate his knowledge to practically give a new and more promising chance to children from disadvantaged background in the third world.



Ana María Nieto is currently working towards a Doctor in Education (Ed.D) degree at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE), United States. Her advisors are Professor Hirokazu Yoshikawa, Professor Paola Uccelli and Professor Karen Mapp. Her project will be conducted in Guatemala and is entitled, “Supporting indigenous children’s early literacy through family and community engagement: A theory-based process evaluation of the community-based component of Save the Children’s *Leer Juntos, Aprender Juntos* intervention in the Quiché region of Guatemala.” Before moving to the United States for her Master’s degree in education at HGSE, Ana María obtained two bachelor’s degrees from Los Andes University in Colombia in Psychology and Anthropology and worked at the Early Childhood Division of the National Ministry of Education. Ana María hopes that her dissertation work will inform the implementation of this particular program in Guatemala and in other Latin American countries, as well as advance our understanding of how to design educational interventions that involve families and communities as partners to support children’s early learning in multicultural and multilingual contexts.