Gina Burkhardt
Executive Vice President and Director, Education Program

Gina Burkhardt is an executive vice president of AIR. As director of AIR’s Education program, Burkhardt is responsible for 500 employees and a $100 million annual budget. Burkhardt’s expertise includes leadership development, organizational development and systems change, district and school improvement, and the application of research to policy and practice efforts.

As CEO, she led the transformation of the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, a single federally funded contract, to Learning Point Associates, a highly successful nonprofit education research and consulting organization serving states, districts, foundations, corporations, and the federal government. Learning Point Associates merged with AIR in August 2010.

A lifelong educator, Burkhardt began her career as a middle school mathematics and science teacher in upstate New York. Since then, she has held positions in higher education, managed school reform projects at the regional educational laboratories, and consulted nationally and internationally on education policy and practice as well as education systems design. Burkhardt completed her doctoral coursework in educational psychology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and completed coursework in the Executive Education Program at University of Chicago Booth School of Business. She has authored publications, including a book on organizational change, and has given multiple presentations on 21st century learning environments, data-driven decision making, organization change, and the application of effective research and development in education. She currently holds and has held several professional appointments, including serving as a board member for the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, the Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago, Editorial Projects in Education, which publishes Education Week, Knowledge Alliance, and the Center for Labor & Community Research.

Ron Elving
Senior Washington Editor, NPR

Ron Elving is the NPR News’ Senior Washington Editor directing coverage of the nation’s capital and national politics and providing on-air political analysis for many NPR programs.

Elving can regularly be heard on “Talk of the Nation” providing analysis of the latest in politics. He is also heard on the “It’s All Politics” weekly podcast along with NPR’s Ken Rudin.

Under Elving’s leadership, NPR has been awarded the industry’s top honors for political coverage including the Edward R. Murrow Award from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a 2002 duPont-Columbia University Silver Baton for excellence in broadcast journalism, the Merriman Smith Award for White House reporting from the White House Correspondents Association and the Barone Award from the Radio and Television Correspondents Association.

Before joining NPR, Elving served as political editor for USA Today and for Congressional Quarterly. He came to Washington as a Congressional Fellow with the American Political Science Association and worked as a staff member in the House and Senate. Previously, Elving served as a reporter and state capital bureau chief for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. He was a media fellow at Stanford University and the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Over his career, Elving has written articles published by the Washington Post, the Brookings Institution, Columbia Journalism Review, Media Studies Journal, and the American Political Science Association. He was a contributor and editor for Congressional Quarterly Books. His book, Conflict and Compromise: How Congress Makes the Law, was published in 1995. Recently, Elving contributed a chapter to James Thurber’s Obama in Office: The First Two Years.

Elving teaches public policy at George Mason University and has also taught at Georgetown University, American University and Manquet University.

With a bachelor’s degree from Stanford, Elving went on to earn master’s degrees from the University of Chicago and the University of California-Berkeley.

Susan Muenchow
AIR Principal Research Scientist, Co-author of Time Off With Baby

Susan Muenchow is a Principal Research Scientist at AIR in San Mateo. She served as the Principal Investigator for a multi-disciplinary team supported by the Smith Richardson Foundation to review and interpret existing research, analyze legislative history on parental leave at the federal and state level, collect data on parental leave in California, enact paid family leave in the U.S., and interview key experts on the tradeoffs involved in establishing a paid parental leave policy.

In her 11 years at AIR, Muenchow has served as the Principal Investigator for numerous child development and social policy analyses. Recent projects include synthesizing research on the condition of children birth to age five and the status of early childhood services for the California Department of Education’s Comprehensive Early Learning Plan; and co-authoring the Dream BIG for Our Youngest Children, the California Early Learning Quality Improvement System (CAEL QIS) Advisory Committee’s Final Report to the governor and legislature. This work involved analyzing access to early learning and care programs, standards for program quality, affordability of services, current issues and strengths in early learning and care staff education, and the status of the state’s early learning and care subsidy policies.

With support from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, she served as Project Director for a supply and demand assessment of early learning and care services for children birth to five in California. The project has developed a Data Web Browser, featured on AIR’s earlylearningsystems.org website, that allows early learning and care planners to create customized reports by county. On behalf of First 5 California, she conceived, developed, and served as the lead author of the First 5 California Preschool for All: Step by Step Toolkit, a guide specifically designed to focus on county leadership in preschool planning.

Prior to joining AIR in 2001, Muenchow was executive director of the Florida Partnership for School Readiness and executive director of the Florida Children’s Forum, where she helped develop one of the nation’s first tiered reimbursement systems for child care. The Gold Seal Child Care legislation was designed to provide incentives for child care facilities and family child care homes to obtain national accreditation. In its first three
Christopher J. Ruhm

UVA Professor of Public Policy and Economics, Co-author of Time On With Baby
Christopher J. Ruhm is Professor of Public Policy and Economics at the University of Virginia. He received his doctorate in economics from the University of California at Berkeley. Prior to joining UVA in 2010, he held faculty positions at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and Boston University, and was a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Brandeis University. During the 1996-97 academic year he served as Senior Economist on President Clinton’s Council of Economic Advisers, where his main responsibilities were in the areas of health policy, aging and labor market issues. He is currently a Research Associate in the Health Economics, Health Care Policy, and Children’s Programs of the National Bureau of Economic Research and a Research Fellow at the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) in Germany.

Professor Ruhm’s recent research has focused on examining how various aspects of health are produced – including the rise in obesity and relationship between macroeconomic conditions and health – and on the role of government policies in helping parents with young children balance the competing needs of work and family. His most recent research includes studies of the determinants of health and risky behaviors, effects of job displacements and mandated employment benefits, transition into retirement, and the causes and consequences of alcohol and illegal drug policies. He is co-author of Time On With Baby: The Case for Paid Parental Leave (ZERO TO THREE), which argues for a national paid family leave program.

Ruhm has received external research funding from a diverse set of organizations including the U.S. Department of Labor, National Science Foundation, several of the National Institutes of Health, the Russell Sage Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. He is currently associate editor of the Southern Economic Journal, Journal of Population Economics and International Journal of Information Security and Privacy, on the editorial board of Economics Letters and the Journal of Labor Research, on the Board of Directors of the American Society of Health Economists and a steering committee member of the Southeastern Health Economics Study Group. From 2009-2011, he served as Vice President of the Southern Economic Association.

Rosa DeLauro
U.S. Representative, Connecticut
Rosa DeLauro represents Connecticut’s Third District. She serves in the Democratic leadership as co-chair of the Steering and Policy Committee, and she is the ranking member on the Labor, Health, Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee, where she oversees our country’s investments in education, health, and employment. She also serves on the subcommittee responsible for FDA and agriculture, where she oversees drug and food safety.

For Rosa, her work has been and will always be about helping people. She believes our first priority must be to strengthen our economy and middle class families. She supports tax cuts for working and middle class families, fought to expand the Child Tax Credit to provide tax relief to millions of families, and introduced legislation to help grow our economy by making smart innovative investments in our infrastructure and helping manufacturing businesses to succeed.

As the ranking member dealing with appropriations for Labor, Health, Human Services, and Education, Rosa is determined to increase support for education and innovation, to fully implement the new health care reform law, to protect the rights of employees and unions, and raise living standards. Rosa has led the fight in Congress to achieve full pay equity for women and to ensure that all employees have access to paid sick days.

Rosa supports a transformation in how the Department of Veterans Affairs is funded, including advanced appropriations for health services, to ensure its fiscal soundness; and she successfully championed legislation to guarantee that troops deploying to combat theaters get the mental health screening that benefit infants, toddlers, and their families. Bringing together the perspectives of many fields and specialties and cutting-edge research about the importance of early experiences, Mr. Melmed is committed to translating what we know into what we do for very young children and their families.

Since 1995 he has guided the growth of the organization’s activities to help expand early social emotional development through promotion, prevention and treatment strategies in both public and private systems and programs. Under his leadership ZERO TO THREE launched a number of major initiatives including: The Early Head Start National Resource Center; The Center for Training Services; The ZERO TO THREE Press; Coming Together Around Military Families; Safe Babies Court Teams; The ZERO To Three research project; and The ZERO TO THREE Leaders for the 21st Century Fellowship.

In addition, Mr. Melmed has initiated national parental awareness campaigns and forged strong partnerships with corporate and nonprofit partners. Under his leadership, the organization has flourished and ZERO TO THREE’s budget has grown to more than $25 million. It was selected in 2001 by Worth Magazine as one of “America’s 100 Best Charities.” Mr. Melmed was awarded the Sonya Bemporad Award by the World Association of Infant Mental Health. This award was given in recognition of significant contributions to the advancement of social and public policies that benefit infants, toddlers, and their families.

Matthew Melmed
Executive Director, ZERO TO THREE
As Executive Director of ZERO TO THREE, Matthew Melmed is an internationally recognized leader and tireless advocate devoted to promoting the health and development of infants and toddlers.

Bringing together the perspectives of many fields and specialties and cutting-edge research about the importance of early experiences, Mr. Melmed is committed to translating what we know into what we do for very young children and their families.

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Prior, Mr. Melmed served for 13 years as Executive Director of the Connecticut Association for Human Services. He began his career as a staff attorney for Connecticut Legal Services in 1978. Mr. Melmed is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Harvard College, where he graduated with highest honors. He received his J.D. from the Faculty of Law and Jurisprudence at S.U.N.Y. Buffalo.

Mr. Melmed served as the first elected Chair of the Children’s Leadership Council, a coalition of 50 leading national policy and advocacy organizations working together to improve the health, education and well-being of children and youth. Mr. Melmed is the immediate past Chair of the Board of the Food Research and Action Center, the nation’s leading domestic anti-hunger policy organization and serves as Vice-Chair on the Board of Generations United. In addition, he is a Trustee of the Tudor Fund of New Jersey, has been a Director on such boards as the I Am Your Child Foundation, and is the recipient of several community, state, and national honors.

Vicki Shabo
Director of work and family programs, National Partnership for Women & Families
Vicki Shabo is the director of work and family programs at the National Partnership for Women & Families. She joined the organization in January 2010. Shabo is responsible for the strategic direction of the National Partnership for Women & Families’ work on paid sick days, family leave, and workplace flexibility. She serves as the organization’s primary contact on work-family policy issues for key national allies, researchers, businesses, and state and local advocates.

Shabo brings a unique background in law and politics to her work: Prior to joining the National Partnership, she practiced law in the litigation department in the Washington, DC office of WilmerHale, a large international law firm, before embarking on a legal career, she worked with both Celinda Lake and Harrison Hickman, serving as a pollster and political strategist to progressive political candidates, ballot campaigns, advoca
cy organizations, and media outlets. Through this work, she developed research and communications expertise on issues of particular concern to women. Shabo’s earlier professional expe
rience includes a stint with the U.S. House of Representatives’ Judiciary Committee.

Shabo graduated summa cum laude with a B.A. in Politics and American Studies from Pomona College in Claremont, Calif., and holds a M.A. in Political Science from the University of Michigan. She earned her law degree with high honors from the University of North Carolina, where she served as Editor in Chief of the North Carolina Law Review. After law school, she clerked for the Honorable Michael R. Murphy on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit in Salt Lake City. She lives in Washington, DC with her husband, their young son, and two spoiled cats.