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Member Spotlight: Doré R. LaForett, Ph.D.

AUTHOR

Doré R. LaForett, Ph.D.

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Bio:

Doré R. LaForett, Ph.D. is a Research Scholar at Child Trends. She received her B.A. from the University of Denver (Psychology, Spanish), her M.A. from the University of South Carolina (Clinical-Community Psychology), and her Ph.D. from Temple University (Clinical Psychology). She completed her pre-doctoral clinical internship at Duke University Medical Center, and clinical and research post-docs at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Developmental Disabilities, Early Education Sciences). Dr. LaForett is an early childhood mixed methods researcher focused on early childhood development, early care and education settings, and education systems serving children ages birth to age 8. Her research specializes in the educational experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse young children and families, particularly Latino and Spanish-speaking populations. Her lines of work include dual language learners and dual language programming, child and family mental health, and family engagement. She has conducted

descriptive studies, intervention development and testing, measure development, and program evaluations. Dr. LaForett has worked in both academic and non-academic settings, and her research has been funded by federal and state agencies, as well as private foundations. Dr. LaForett is the Past-Chair and a founding member of the SRCD Latinx Caucus, and is an Associate Editor for the Journal of Early Intervention. She is a licensed psychologist in North Carolina, and served as an early childhood mental health consultant in Head Start classrooms for over 10 years.

Have you recently or do you currently serve on any SRCD Committees, Councils, or task forces?

I currently serve as the Past-Chair of the SRCD Latinx Caucus, and am on the SRCD Nominations and the Ethnic & Racial Issues committees.

Do you have a mentor or mentors who have been instrumental to your career and, if so, who and how?

I have been so fortunate to have great mentors at every stage of my training and career, starting with Drs. Bernie Spilka and Danny McIntosh at the University of Denver who got me started in developing solid research skills – and most importantly, strongly encouraging me to pursue a Ph.D. in psychology. Dr. Julia Mendez has been a through-line of support starting as my graduate advisor and now close collaborator and colleague in doing strengths-based research with young children, their families, and early childhood educators. I also have been fortunate to take my grant-writing skills to a new level under the mentorship of Dr. Desiree Murray and advance my skills doing policy-forward early childhood research with Drs. Diane Early and Kelly Maxwell beginning early in my career and through today.

Why did you join the Latinx Caucus and how does it facilitate connection among members all year long?

I was invited to join the SRCD Latinx Caucus as a founding member in 2004 when I was a graduate student, and have held many roles within the Caucus – most recently as Chair, with my tenure concluding at the 2025 Biennial Meeting where we celebrated our 20th anniversary. It is so amazing to me to see how the Caucus has grown in its 20 years, and all the relationships I have now thanks to the Caucus. I am so grateful for my SRCD Latinx Caucus familia – the way we support each other, inspire each other, and have fun with each other, too. The Caucus has many opportunities – with more forthcoming – to facilitate connection, support, and growth among our members. We are always looking for folks to get involved and also to share ideas on Caucus programming.

Hobbies?

I really enjoy trail running, which is great exercise and so good for clearing your mind while enjoying nature. I am also a huge hockey fan.