

October 30, 2023

Letter from Susan P. Curnan

Welcome to Our New Executive Director: Dr. Sangeeta Tyagi

Dear Friends, Colleagues, Partners, and Students, of the Center for Youth and Communities,

I am delighted to write to you today with good news about the new leadership and mission expansion of the Center for Youth and Communities at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University.

Before jumping into this exciting news, I want to personally THANK YOU for supporting the Center's work during my tenure over the past four decades.

As I step down as Director of this great place I am mindful of, and grateful for, your support as thought partners and learning partners, community engaged leaders and scholars, determined practitioners, and philanthropists, government officials, and all of our friends over the years who have helped sustain and grow our social justice mission prioritizing equity in access, opportunity and outcomes for young people and their communities, especially those policies and programs focused on meaningful work and excellent education.

Thanks to all of you the portfolio of evaluation, research, and capacity building projects is active and growing, and past projects are archived and available on our website, <https://heller.brandeis.edu/cyc/index.html>.

Now, happy news about the Center's future as a university-based social impact partner for you going forward:



Sangeeta Tyagi, Ph.D., has been named Director of the Center for Youth and Communities,

<https://heller.brandeis.edu/cyc/people/tyagi.html>

Sangeeta's mission-centered leadership and community-engaged scholarship over the past several years at the Center, and before that in the non-profit sector, is legendary and likely well known to readers of this announcement. Before joining the Center, Sangeeta held various leadership positions at YouthBuild USA, ending her 14 years there as President of the organization. Since then, she has worked on youth and adult workforce development and education issues across the US and globally. A Senior Scientist at the Center for the past 4 years and Chair of the Women, Gender, and Sexuality concentration at Heller, Sangeeta is a cherished colleague and highly respected teacher of graduate students and practitioners alike.

As announced earlier this summer, the Center has merged with the Institute for Economic and Racial Equity, <https://heller.brandeis.edu/iere/>. This merger builds a stronger research enterprise at Heller and for our partners focused on the equity gaps in education and workforce domains. Formalizing these synergies and interests is timely as we look at the persistent challenges of growing inequities in access, opportunity, and outcomes in education, work, and civil society more broadly.

I hope you will reach out to Sangeeta in the coming weeks and I am sure she will be seeking your guidance as she leads the Center into the next decade. She may be reached at tyagi@brandeis.edu.

As “outgoing”, I could not be happier about these transitions and am confident the world will be a better place for our young people as a result.

Meantime, I am returning to the Research Faculty at Brandeis and can always be reached at curnan@brandeis.edu.

Susan P. Curnan

Prof. Susan P. Curnan

“Making Knowledge Productive for 40 Years”, at The Heller School, Brandeis University