

Dionna Latimer-Hearn

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Dionna Latimer Hearn

Advocating for #EquityinEducation

I work at the intersection of language, literacy, education, and equity—bridging research and practice to help educators, organizations, and communities see what traditional systems often overlook.

SLP | Public Scholar | Educational Consultant

How I Can Support You

- Help organizations and systems identify and address inequities in policies, practices, assessment, and outcomes
- Strengthen equitable teaching, assessment, and literacy practices
- Translate research into practical strategies and organizational change
- Design culturally and linguistically sustaining educational and professional environments
- Develop equity-centered programs, resources, and initiatives
- Build and grow mission-driven ventures

Areas of Expertise

- African American English
- Cultural-Linguistic Diversity & Equity
- School-to-Prison Pipeline & Implicit Bias
- Disproportionality in Special Education
- Intersectional Identity
- Child Development & Early Intervention
- Creating Inclusive Classrooms
- Literacy Assessment & Instruction

DIONNA LATIMER-HEARN

*Speech-Language Pathologist, Public Scholar,
Educational Consultant*

Bio

Dionna Latimer-Hearn, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, is a nationally and internationally recognized educational consultant, scholar, and speaker whose work unapologetically centers African American English (AAE) and equity in education. With over two decades of experience across six countries, she combines linguistic expertise, lived experience, and visionary leadership to shift how educators, institutions, and systems engage with language and culture.

As the founder of REACT Initiative, Inc., administrator of the Respect the Dialect® online community, and host of the The Culture We Speak Podcast, Dr. Latimer-Hearn brings people together to unlearn deficit thinking and reimagine possibility—especially for linguistically and culturally diverse students. Her research and advocacy have earned accolades from organizations such as the World Education Research Association, American Educational Research Association, and National Black Association for Speech-Language and Hearing.

Whether facilitating a session on culturally sustaining pedagogy or amplifying community voices online, Dr. Latimer-Hearn is known for her warmth, wisdom, and commitment to creating spaces where everyone feels seen, respected, and empowered to speak their truth.

Accolades

- Northwestern University Kabiller A Life Touched, A Generation Changed Award Recipient
- Inaugural Recipient of the NBASLH Clinician of the Year
- Inaugural Spaker at NBASLH Loyola University of Maryland
- World Education Research Association World Congress Most Innovative Poster Award
- American Educational Research Association Minority Dissertation Fellowship Recipient
- Multicultural Grant Project Researcher



Advocacy Work

As an advocate for #equityineducation, I've dedicated my career to amplifying the voices of historically marginalized communities. Through my speaking engagements and consulting services, I support educators, professionals, and organizations in embracing inclusive practices and in fostering environments where everyone has an equitable opportunity to thrive.

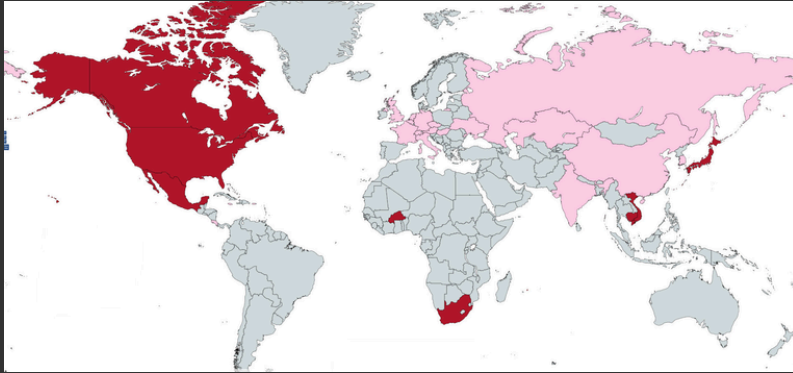
Whether through speaking engagements, nonprofit initiatives, podcast episodes, or my online communities, my mission remains the same: advocating for equity in education.

Selected Clients



Measuring Impact

A global footprint advancing equity in education.



● COUNTRIES VISITED | ● COUNTRIES REACHED THROUGH MY WORK

250K+

PROFESSIONALS
REACHED ACROSS
VENTURES GLOBALLY

28

COUNTRIES VISITED

8

COUNTRIES IN WHICH
I'VE PROVIDED
PROFESSIONAL
SERVICES

20+

YEARS OF
EXPERIENCE

6

PROFESSIONAL
AWARDS

BEYOND THE NUMBERS.

Across scholarship, consulting, professional learning, and venture-building, my work centers language, literacy, and equity while creating pathways for more culturally sustaining practice.

RESPECT THE DIALECT®



www.respectthedialect.com
fb/ig @respectthedialect

Respect the Dialect® exists to raise awareness and offer continuing education on issues pertaining to African American English (AAE) and its use in educational and professional settings. This forum offers insight and support to speech-language pathologist and educators serving AAE-speaking students.

REACT INITIATIVE, INC.



www.iREACT.org
fb/linkedin @ireactinc

REACT Initiative, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that addresses barriers impeding the educational access and success of individuals from historically marginalized populations. We identify and address unjust educational practices and structures by contributing to the continued development of professionals serving diverse populations. Our services, therefore, extend beyond schools and universities to clinics, hospitals, corporations, childcare facilities, nonprofits, religious organizations, and more.

THE CULTURE WE SPEAK PODCAST



www.theculturewespeak.com
fb @theculturewespeak

The Culture We Speak is a podcast examining the convergence of culture, language, and education. On this platform we decenter mainstream gaze and offer resources to improve educator effectiveness in serving global majority populations.

Let's Connect





"Dionna shows up as her authentic self in all spaces and is a fearless advocate for Black Language."

"Dionna doesn't just talk about equity; she builds the infrastructure for it..."

"Everything she does as a speech-language pathologist, a public scholar, a consultant, and an entrepreneur is anchored in a fierce, unwavering belief that historically marginalized and global majority communities deserve to be seen, heard, and served well."

"Dionna brings the same rigor and honesty along with humor, to a one-on-one mentoring conversation that she brings to a national keynote."

"She is a force educating others with, through, and FOR the legacy that is Black language."

"Her work has impacted how I teach and mentor my students and colleagues from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds."

"She encourages our colleagues to be intentional about how we show up, whose voices we center, and to consider whether our practices truly reflect respect for the communities we serve."

"She helped me recognize that the language patterns of African American students are not deficits or disorders, but differences that are connected to their language, culture, and community."

"What I learned from her has changed the way I look at my students, approach my work, and think about how we can better support African American children without treating their language differences as something that needs to be fixed."

"Dr. Latimer-Hearn showed care for each of us as people and encouraged us as professionals."

"Her belief in me has helped me grow into a more confident clinician and advocate, which is something I will carry with me throughout my career."

"She is not only a Black woman leader in research and academia but also a changemaker, role-model, mentor, and generous SLP who is working for the changes we need in speech-language pathology and society at large."

"She inspires me to do my very best and bring others along with me."

"Dr. Latimer-Hearn has been a major inspiration and support for me as an SLP trying to transform my function as an observer in the field to a change agent."

"She is one of a kind in her ability to lead the field in the right direction through her writing and her living example of so many things I aspire to be."

"In my humble opinion, her passion and focus create a culturally responsive Butterfly Effect with whomever she works with; which extends the reach and impact of her important work to help amplify the voices of historically marginalized communities."

"Damn she's dope."

**What
Others
Are
Saying**

