

# SYMPOSIUM AND WORKSHOP TOYS & SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

EMPOWERING SOCIAL INNOVATORS \ ENGAGING COMMUNITIES



**Date:** Wednesday, March 22, 2017

**Time:** 4:00–6:30 pm

**Place:** Strome Entrepreneurial Center  
(1006 Visual Arts Building, Old Dominion University,  
across from the Football Stadium on 49th Street)

**This event is free and open to the public**

Play is a fundamental way children learn about themselves and others. Too often, play culture has “taught” kids normative - and even disparaging - ideas about gender, race, family, society, and has worked to limit rather than empower their self-esteem, sense of possibility, and desire to respectfully collaborate with those different than themselves. Thankfully, there have always been social innovators looking to introduce progressive toys and games that challenge these limitations. This symposium brings together four such social entrepreneurs.

Each of our panelists will discuss how their ideas for play interventions took shape, their efforts to work with educators to align their creations

with curricular and extracurricular needs, and the challenges they have faced in breaking dominant conceptions of what toys “do” held by many parents, consumers, and retailers.

In the workshop, each of our social entrepreneurs will offer advice and feedback on how to bring new educational toys and games to market. They will also brainstorm new ways to intervene in children’s play culture.

We will be raffling off samples of our panelists’ products throughout the event. Raffle tickets are free. One ticket per attendee. You must be present to claim your winnings.

## Panel Participants

**EZ Karpf**, Founder of My Family Builders  
<http://www.myfamilybuilders.com>

**Yelitsa Jean Charles**, Founder of Healthy Roots Dolls  
<http://healthyrootsdolls.com>

**Ilana Ben Ari**, Founder of Twenty-One Toys,  
creator of the “empathy toy”  
<http://twentyonetoys.com>

**Lyssa Neel**, Founder of Linkitz  
<http://www.linkitz.com>

**Moderator: Dr. Jennifer Kidd**, Department of Teaching & Learning

This event is organized by the Institute for the Humanities at ODU and co-hosted with the Department of Communications, The Interdisciplinary Studies Teacher Preparation Program, the Department of Sociology & **Criminal Justice**, the Department of Teaching & Learning, the Department of Women’s Studies, the Honors College, The Strome College of Business, the Office of Intercultural Relations, the Women’s Center, Student Engagement & Enrollment Services, the Strome Entrepreneurial Center, and the ENACTUS Social Entrepreneurship student organization.

For more information, please contact the ODU Institute for the Humanities at (757) 683-3821 or [humanities@odu.edu](mailto:humanities@odu.edu).



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