

## **Stakeholder Co-Chairs**

### **Eric Harris**

Eric Harris was born in Berkeley, California and grew up in Sacramento. He attended the University of Arizona on a wheelchair basketball scholarship. Mr. Harris was selected as a member of the Under 20 USA Wheelchair Basketball Team that played in Brisbane, Australia. His team won the international championship, and he was selected as an all-tournament team member.

While in college, Mr. Harris focused on public policy and worked for United States Representative Barbara Lee (CA). While in Washington, he worked on policies relating to athletes with disabilities in school. After his experience in Washington, Mr. Harris attended the University of Oregon School of Law. In 2012, Mr. Harris worked at the Democratic National Committee and worked on general policy for the western region and disability policy throughout the country. He spoke to the college democrats at the Democratic National Committee in Charlotte, North Carolina about issues impacting students with disabilities. The next year, he interned at the American Association for People with Disabilities in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Harris returned to California and worked as a campaign staffer for U.S. Representative Barbara Lee in Oakland and as a staffer for Sacramento City Councilmember Allen Warren. He then worked for the California State NAACP as their only legislative advocate working at the state level. He started to work at Disability Rights California in 2019 as a legislative advocate. He worked in the Strategic Partnerships and Community Engagement Unit as a Special Advisor with Tho Vinh Banh from October 2020 to February 2021.

Mr. Harris has done community work with disability leaders, community members and elected officials throughout the country. He is a proud member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. and attends Bayside Midtown Church in Sacramento, California. Mr. Harris is a member of the State Independent Living Council as a Governor Newsom appointee, and a board member of the Resources for Independent Living in Sacramento.

### **Claire Ramsey**

Claire Ramsey joined Justice in Aging's Health Care team in June 2016 and is based in Oakland, California. Claire formerly worked as a staff attorney at the Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County where she represented seniors on issues involving health care, public benefits, and elder abuse. Prior to Legal Aid, Claire worked at Child Care Law Center, first as an Equal Justice Works fellow and then as a staff attorney. She received her law degree from UC Hastings College of the Law in 2006 with a concentration on Public Interest Law. Claire received her B.A. in English from UC Berkeley and her M.A. in Drama from San Francisco State University.

## **State Chair**

### **Kim McCoy Wade**

Kim McCoy Wade is the Director of the California Department of Aging. She most recently served at the California Department of Social Services as the CalFresh & Nutrition Branch Chief, where she led the expansion of CalFresh food benefits to older adults and people with disabilities, as well as several data and technology initiatives, including the GetCalFresh mobile application. She previously served as a consultant to multiple health and human services non-profits and as Executive Director of the California Association of Food Banks. Earlier in her career, she worked in Washington, DC for the Children's Defense Fund, Bread for the World, and Alliance for Justice. She is an alumna of NYU School of Law, Carleton College, and the Jesuit Volunteer Corps.

## **Stakeholder Committee Membership**

### **Valerie Agostino, Mercy Housing**

*(bio coming soon)*

### **Patricia Blaisdell, California Hospital Association**

Patricia Blaisdell is Vice President, Continuum of Care for the California Hospital Association. Ms. Blaisdell provides membership support and advocacy for hospital-based post-acute care and case management services, including policy analysis and interpretation, communication with regulatory bodies and third-party payers, and planning and implementation of educational programs.

Ms. Blaisdell has over 25 years of experience in hospital and health care management in acute and post-acute settings. She has expertise in clinical operations and reimbursement across the post-acute continuum of care.

Ms. Blaisdell began her career as a speech/language pathologist: her work was recognized with the Outstanding Clinical Achievement Award from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation. Ms. Blaisdell, who is Fellow with the American College of Health Care Executives, has also been recognized with the ACHE Regent's Award, and the Rural Champion in community leadership award from the California Rural Health Care Association.

### **Mareva Brown, Senate Pro Temp's Office**

Mareva Brown is the Human Services policy consultant for Senate President pro Tempore Toni G. Atkins. In that role, she advises the Pro Tem on issues including Aging and Long-Term Care Services and Supports, Social Services programs such as Community Care Licensing, Developmental Services, the Department of Rehabilitation

and other issues. Prior to joining the Pro Tem's staff, she was Chief Consultant for the Senate Committee on Human Services, and had worked at the Senate Office of Research, focusing on policy and fiscal issues related to social services, developmental disabilities, mental health and others.

**Michelle Cabrera**, County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California

Michelle Doty Cabrera joined CBHDA as Executive Director in May 2019. Ms. Cabrera has a wealth of experience on state budget and policy as an advocate and staff for the California legislature. Prior to joining CBHDA she served as the Healthcare Director for the California State Council of the Services Employees International Union (SEIU California), where she advocated on behalf of healthcare workers and consumers, including SEIU California's county behavioral health workforce. She served as a Senior Consultant for the Assembly Human Services Committee, where she specialized in child welfare issues and staffed legislation which extended foster care in California to age 21.

Ms. Cabrera also served as a Program Officer for the California Healthcare Foundation, working as a liaison on state health policy in Sacramento. Ms. Cabrera serves as a member on the National Quality Forum's Standing Committee on Disparities and on the Board of Directors of the California Pan-Ethnic Health Network

**Erika Castile**, California Commission on Aging

With more than 20 years in the long-term care profession, Erika brings energy, passion and expertise to her work, having achieved a BA and Master's degree in Gerontology from San Diego State University.

As the Executive Director of Brookdale Carmel Valley, a CCRC located in San Diego, she leads her team successfully to be recognized as one of the U.S. Best and highest in customer satisfaction by J.D Powers.

Erika served as the former president of the CAHF Kern County Chapter and presently serves as the vice chair of the CAHF San Diego Chapter and was recently nominated to serve as the President of the San Diego Chapter. She is a recent graduate of the CAHF Nursing Home Leader Academy of Excellence and the prestigious AHCA/NCAL National Leadership program. The California Association of Long-Term Care Medicine (CALTCM) recently recognized Erika for developing one of the top five best practices in California – The Pain Management in Short Term Patients project.

**Blanca Castro**, AARP California

Blanca Castro, Advocacy Director and Sacramento Metro Manager for AARP California, is responsible for leading federal, state, and local advocacy efforts and coordinating grassroots activities in support of AARP's legislative priorities. She is responsible for the strategic development of statewide policy priorities for California, which include Age Friendly Communities, Caregiving/Long Term Care, Financial Resiliency, and Technology. Ms. Castro leads a team of staff and volunteers in the Sacramento metro

region on livable communities' issues such as housing and transportation, working with local jurisdictions as they enroll in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, and on local advocacy issues that impact older adults 50 plus and their families.

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With nearly 38 million members and offices in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and advocate for what matters most to families with a focus on health security, financial stability, and personal fulfillment. AARP represents 3.3 million members in California.

Ms. Castro represents AARP on the California Disability and Aging Community Living Advisory Committee, formerly known as the California Olmstead Advisory Committee. In addition, she was appointed to the Long-Term Care Insurance Taskforce by Governor Newsom in March 2021.

Ms. Castro was born in Mexico City and immigrated to the United States. She grew up in the San Gabriel Valley, graduated from University of California, Berkeley in 1981. She was a Coro Fellow in Los Angeles in 1993.

### **Jessica Cruz** MPA/HS, National Alliance for Mental Illness California

Jessica Cruz is the current Chief Executive Officer for the National Alliance on Mental Illness, California and has served in this role for over ten years. Working with legislators, community members and government officials; she uses her passion to advocate for change in mental health legislations and systems across the state. Her desire to further NAMI California's mission stems from lived experience of being a family member of someone with a mental illness.

Jessica received her Masters of Public Administration with an emphasis in Health Services from the University of San Francisco, where she focused her studies on policies in health care. Her undergraduate studies in Mass Communication from California State University of Sacramento gave her the institutional knowledge to enhance her career in the public sector. She continues her works in higher education as a guest professor at her alma mater, CSU Sacramento in the Communications Department.

She is the Co-Chair of the Behavioral Health Action Coalition, has served as Governor Appointee to the Behavioral Health Task Force, the Council on Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health (CCJBH), the California Disability and Aging Community Living Advisory Committee, , amongst other councils and committees. Jessica is a graduate of the USC Leadership Institute of Public Policy and the University of San Francisco Leadership Institute. Most recently, Jessica was awarded one of Sacramento's 40 Under 40 Award.

### **Susan DeMarois**, Alzheimer's Association

Susan DeMarois has directed state government affairs for the national Alzheimer's Association since 2013.

As a registered lobbyist in Sacramento, she advocates for legislative, budget and regulatory changes at the state capitol on behalf of the 2.3 million Californians directly impacted by Alzheimer's disease.

At the state level, the Alzheimer's Association has secured key legislative victories in dementia training, physician education and Alzheimer's research, raising more than \$26 million to date through the voluntary tax check-off fund. This year, the organization led the effort to implement the Healthy Brain Initiative in California, resulting in a \$5 million investment in the state's public health infrastructure.

The Alzheimer's Association led development of California's State Plan for Alzheimer's Disease: An Action Plan for 2011 – 2021 and actively participates in the California Aging and Disability Alliance (CADA) and the California Collaborative for Long-term Services and Supports.

Ms. DeMarois currently serves on the California Health and Human Services Agency Secretary's Alzheimer's Disease Advisory Committee as well as the state's Olmstead Advisory Committee. Prior to joining the Alzheimer's Association, she led government and community relations for the University of California health and clinical affairs, supporting the work of academic medical centers, schools of medicine/nursing and physician groups.

A graduate of CSU Chico, Susan started her career working for the U.S. Congress and the California State Assembly. Susan resides in Sacramento, CA and draws inspiration for her work from her own family's experience with dementia.

### **Eric Dowdy, LeadingAge of California**

Eric Dowdy has worked for the LeadingAge California for more than 23 years in various capacities. He is currently the Chief Government Affairs Officer and responsible for the oversight of the association's public relations, policy development and advocacy efforts.

Eric advocates on an array of aging- and disability-related policy issues, including assisted living, housing, healthcare and home-based care. Today, his chief responsibilities include insuring that LeadingAge California's policy priorities are clearly articulated to all relevant stakeholders, including the California State Legislature, regulatory agencies and the general public.

Eric is the current Board Chair of the California Collaborative for Long-Term Services and Supports. He also serves on the Boards of a nonprofit retirement community in Woodland, CA and a start-up nonprofit which develops employment opportunities for disabled adults. Prior to joining LeadingAge California, Eric worked for CIPA, a nonprofit trade association and the American Red Cross.

Eric is a founding member of the University of California, Sacramento Center's capitol scholar program where he interned in the California State Senate. He holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of California, Davis and a Master's Degree in Public Policy & Administration from the California State University, Sacramento.

**Sheri Farinha, NorCal Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

Sheri A. Farinha, received her BA and MA degree in Special Education/Deaf Ed focus from Cal State University at Northridge. Since 1993, Sheri is the CEO, for NorCal Service for Deaf and Hard of Hearing serving 24 Northwestern counties. Nationally well-known as a strong Civil Rights Leader and Advocate, who has received numerous awards in recognition of her contribution's relater to leadership, and legislative actions that benefit Deaf, late-Deaf and hard of hearing, and Def-Blind Individuals. Ms. Farinha expertise also includes training on leadership, legislative systematic changes, and management in the nonprofit sector.

**Elizabeth Fuller, Assembly Committee on Aging and Long-Term Care**

Liz has twenty years in the Capitol, with 13 learning on the job as Consultant to the Legislative Women's Caucus. Her policy knowledge has grown in all areas impacting women and children, with emphasis in inclusion and equity, lactation accommodation, early care and education, military families and women in the military, harassment and sexual violence, economic and reproductive justice, application of Title IX, maternal mental health and women's health and wellness. In the fall of 2019, she transferred her policy knowledge and passion for caregiving to the position of Chief Consultant to the Assembly Aging and Long-Term Care Committee, a policy area with endless opportunities for collaboration and growth. She is a proud mama bear, wife, sister, caregiver, and friend. She tries to live each day with her whole heart.

**Lisa Gonzales, Deaf Plus Adult Community; Regional Center of the East Bay Provider**

Lisa Gonzales Executive Director with Deaf Plus Adult Community strives to make the world a better place for deaf and deafblind adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. A born activist having worked for the Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness, and the Los Angeles County Superior Court working with the deaf community is her passion. She received the Lou Fant Distinguished Service of the Year award in 2009 from Southern California Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and was the National Hispanic Community Advocate of the Year in 2008.

**Gabe Griffith, California Council of the Blind**

Gabe came to the organization over 20 years ago as a college student. He lost his vision in Kindergarten and then grew up as the only blind student in hi school district so never spent any significant time around other people who were blind or had low vision.

As President of CCB I hope to reach more Californians who are blind or have low vision to connect them with their peers, resources, and to success. Gabe shares his hope with many chapters and special interest affiliates across the state that are comprised of incredible people doing incredible work. Gabe believes that Together we will continue

the mission that our organization was founded on, succeeding in our grass roots advocacy efforts, building lifelong relationships, and having a whole lot of fun doing it.

### **Gail Gronert, Assembly Speaker's Office**

Gail Gronert is Special Assistant to Speaker Anthony Rendon, staffing the policy area of safety net services for children, families and individuals with disabilities and those who are aging. During the past year, the Assembly has helped champion the safety net for vulnerable Californians including the Golden State Stimulus including support for those who participate with SSI. Ms. Gronert has staffed both policy and budget issues for the last 20 years.

Ms. Gronert worked with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services from 1998 to 2000 on the heels of welfare reform passage and creation of California's safety net for immigrants in California. She returned to the Assembly Speaker's Office of Policy in 2000, working on issues including the successful enactment of AB 12. Her work also included establishment of the CalFood program, providing state support for California-grown fresh food at food banks. From 2017 to 2019, Ms. Gronert helped staff the Assembly Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC) on Early Care and Education (ECE), involving the grassroots voices of parents and providers, culminating in a framework for better family access and support for providers.

Ms. Gronert grew up in Minnesota and graduated from Stanford University, completing dual degrees in English and French. She also graduated from the University of California, Davis, King Hall School of Law, entering the California Bar. During law school, Ms. Gronert's internships included three months with DNA Legal Services on the Navajo Nation, an internship at Legal Services of Northern California, the Western Center on Law & Poverty, and the California State Senate, Office of the Pro Tempore.

### **Barbara Hanna, California Association for Health Services at Home**

In 1979, Barbara Hanna, agency President, started to provide temporary nursing staff for hospitals in Northern California. A short time later, she began to receive calls from community members asking her for assistance in caring for their loved ones at home. Understanding that people preferred to be at home while recuperating, rather than in the hospital, she founded Home Health Care Management, Inc.

Ms. Hanna graduated from California State University, Chico in 1975 with a Bachelor's degree in Nursing. She has worked in a variety of health care settings, including acute care hospitals, adult day health care centers and home health. She has also taught nursing and allied health at Butte Community College.

She is a nationally certified case manager and has a lifetime teaching credential. In 2002, she was selected by the Centers for Disease Control to be a CDC/ASPH Institute Scholar for HIV Prevention Leadership in Atlanta, GA. She has worked on a statewide advisory panel for UCSF and the "California Twenty-First Century Workforce Project" as well as the Olmstead Advisory Group for the State of California. Ms. Hanna enjoys

working collaboratively with other agencies and organizations. She is skilled at partnering with diverse groups and organizations with varying purposes and roles to enhance and expand services in the community.

Ms. Hanna has a Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing Science and Health-Care Leadership from the University of California, Davis.

**Susan Henderson, Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund**

Susan Henderson has been with DREDF since 1997. In 2004, she started DREDF's Foster Youth Resources for Education (FYRE) project to heighten awareness and protect the rights of children with disabilities in the child welfare system. She started DREDF's Disability and Media Alliance Project (D-MAP) to address the misinformed disability coverage that undermines public policy and legal advances to coverage that raises public awareness and helps to end disability discrimination. She has worked internationally with other disability-led organizations to conduct workshops on disability and human rights in Bahrain, Columbia, Guam, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Tanzania and Uganda.

Susan worked for 13 years as part of the team that planned, designed and constructed the Ed Roberts Campus, a universally-designed building in Berkeley, CA. She currently serves on its board. She has worked in non-profit and law firm management and finance for over 25 years and has an MBA and a BA in Anthropology.

**Michael Humphrey, Sonoma County IHSS Public Authority**

Mike Humphrey is a recognized community leader and an accomplished executive manager, devoting the past 30 years to leading and administering not-for-profit and government social service programs.

In 2002, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors appointed Mike to his current position as the Manager of the Sonoma County In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Public Authority. He previously served a 13-year tenure as the Executive Director of Community Resources for Independence (CRI), a not-for-profit organization providing advocacy and services to persons with disabilities in four northern California counties.

During his executive management career, Mike was responsible for developing innovative and creative programs, including emergency preparedness training for persons with disabilities and seniors, critical training opportunities for personal care assistants/home health aides, urgent substitute personal assistant services, home access modifications for persons with disabilities, outreach to Native Americans and other underserved populations, and others. He developed and managed multi-million-dollar budgets, administered the implementation of employer/labor agreements, oversaw the eligibility and enrollment of health benefits for over 500 employees, developed and managed contracts for providing program services and training opportunities, and provided staff leadership and support to a ten-member community advisory committee.

Due to his expert knowledge and lifelong passion of advocating and supporting programs and services that advance the rights and opportunities of persons with disabilities, Mike has been appointed to several prestigious statewide and local committees. His current service to the greater community includes appointments to the California's Olmstead Advisory Committee and the California Dept. of Health Care Services, Stakeholder Advisory Committee. His local leadership includes serving as Chair of the Sonoma County Access and Functional Needs Committee and Chair of the Vulnerable Populations Committee for the Sonoma County Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD).

In addition to receiving a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from Sonoma State University in 1983, Mike earned three management-training certificates from Cornell University and one from the Texas Institute on Rehabilitation Research.

### **Corinne Jones, Multipurpose Senior Services Program**

Corinne works as Site Director and Supervising Care Manager for the Multipurpose Senior Services Program at Community Care Management Corporation, which serves Lake and Mendocino Counties. She previously worked for AT&T as a sales and customer service specialist, retiring after more than thirty years. She has extensive experience as a volunteer for older adults having worked with AARP as a District Liaison, Westside Pacific Villages as an "age-in-place" intern, and the Center for Healthcare Rights as a State Certified HICAP Counselor. At Iona Senior Services in Washington, D.C. she worked as an intern doing research on policy issues relative to "No Wrong Door" as well as, Age Friendly D.C. Her other volunteer work has been with veterans through the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign War Auxiliaries.

While a Gerontology student at the University of Southern California, she trained as part of a "Wicked Problems Practicum" on the development of Age Friendly Los Angeles, which morphed into the first ever "Age Friendly University". As a Champion for older adults, Corinne has been a featured speaker at the Los Angeles 9th City Council Districts "Senior's Celebrating Life" event and has presented at various other older adult events convened to encourage life enrichment for the elderly. Corinne currently serves as a member of the California Department of Aging's, Aging and Disability Resource Connection Advisory Committee and is an appointed member on behalf of Older Adults, to the City of Ukiah Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Committee. Connie is committed to having a role in providing programs and services to ensure the best quality of life for older adults throughout California; using advocacy, community engagement, training and other resources, to insure their opportunity for independence and dignity.

Corinne holds a masters' degree in Gerontology from the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology at the University of Southern California, and a bachelor's degree in Political Science from Loyola Marymount University.

**Kathy Kelly, Family Caregiver Alliance**

Kathleen Kelly is Executive Director of Family Caregiver Alliance, a national nonprofit organization that provides direct caregiver support services, public policy development, research, and public awareness regarding family caregivers. As director, she oversees programs of the Bay Area Caregiver Resource Center, California policy collaborations, and the National Center on Caregiving. During her tenure, the organization has grown from a grassroots program to a national organization that provides leadership on supporting family caregivers with best practice interventions, public policy, state system development, and leading-edge research.

**Eileen Kunz, On-Lok Lifeways**

Eileen is the Chief of Government Affairs and Compliance for On Lok. In this role, she is responsible for policy, government and community affairs and regulatory affairs and compliance for On Lok. Eileen joined On Lok in 1986 as On Lok Replication Project Coordinator and was involved with the strategic direction of On Lok's national replication of the Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) model since its inception and provided technical assistance to the initial PACE replication sites. She worked with federal and state policymakers to advance the model, culminating with the passage of The Balanced Budget Act of 1997, making PACE a permanent provider type under Medicare and a state option under Medicaid. She was instrumental in the formation of the National PACE Association and served as Deputy Director for NPA until 1998. During her tenure, she led the PACE Regulatory Integration Project to streamline the regulatory oversight of PACE in California, secured clinic and adult day health care center licenses from the California Department of Public Health and managed successful approval of PACE service area expansion applications and waiver requests from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and State Medicaid for BIPA waiver requests including one of the first waivers to use community-based primary care physicians.

Eileen serves on the National PACE Association Public Policy Committee and on board of directors for the California PACE Association, or CalPACE. In 2009, Eileen received the Judy Baskins Volunteer Leadership award for her service to the National PACE Association in advancing the PACE model of care. She also serves on a number of state and local advisory committees related to improving services for seniors and persons with disabilities including the California Olmstead Advisory Committee and the San Francisco Long-Term Care Coordinating Council. She received her undergraduate degree in Social Welfare for the University of California at Berkeley and went on to receive her master's degree from the UC Berkeley School of Public Health in health policy and administration.

**Sunny Maden, Family Member and Advocate**

Sunny Maden, of San Gabriel Valley, is mother to Marc, who is responsible for her involvement with other families whose loved ones have developmental and intellectual

disabilities, including wanting to be a part of the policy making that has affected Marc and others. Marc became a Lanterman Developmental Center resident in 1972. Sunny has been attending legislative hearings and has seized opportunities to become involved with local and statewide parent/family groups.

Sunny and her husband, Charlie, owned their own escrow company for many years. Charlie developed Alzheimer's Disease and over the last 13 years Sunny has been his primary caregiver.

Sunny is a board member for the Valley Fund Corporation. This fund partially supports the San Gabriel Valley Training Center/The Roland Center. The Center provides residential services for 38 people and employment opportunities for over 200 participants. Sunny also serves on the board of the CSHPCR, a family statewide group.

**Christina Mills**, California Foundation for Independent Living Centers

Christina Mills has served as the Executive Director of the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC) since 2017, and she has over 20 years of disability rights and independent living center services experience.

As Executive Director of CFILC, Christina is responsible for seamlessly implementing six statewide programs while also building the capacity of her Independent Living Center members. Earlier this year, Christina launched California's first cross-disability not-for-profit Disability Disaster Access & Resources (DDAR) program. The DDAR pilot program is a partnership between CFILC and Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) that provides people with disabilities services and resources before, during, and after a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS).

Christina recently served as an appointee of the California Master Plan for Aging (MPA), Stakeholder Advisory Committee that was charged with developing a ten-year plan focused on creating a California for All. Christina is a current council member of the California Utility Access & Functional Needs Advisory Committee, is a Commissioner of the Advisory Commission on Special Education appointed by the Board of Education, a Board Member of Disability Rights Education Defense Fund (DREDF), and co-chair of the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), International Committee.

In 2019, Christina was honored by the California Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A) for her commitment to bridging the gap between the disability and older adult communities.

**Sunny Maden**, Family Member and Advocate

*(bio coming soon)*

**Shireen McSpadden**, San Francisco Human Services Agency

Shireen has more than 25 years of experience developing policies and services to help ensure San Franciscans thrive as they age. Shireen served as the Director of the San Francisco Department of Disability and Aging Services from 2016 to 2021 and will begin her new role as the Director of the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing as of May 1, 2021.

She is a board member of the California Association of Area Agencies on Aging and is an alternate board member, representing California, for the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging.

Shireen earned her Master's Degree in Nonprofit Administration from the University of San Francisco.

### **Peter Mendoza**, Consumer Advocate

Peter Mendoza brings to the California State Independent Living Council four decades of disability advocacy experience. His work in advocacy began at the age of 17, when he testified in front of the California State Legislative Subcommittee on the need for services and supports for people with disabilities for the Regional Center System. Peter became a tireless advocate for accessible transportation, housing, In Home Support Services, and employment for people with disabilities. His advocacy was recognized by President George H. W. Bush, who invited Peter to witness the historic signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

In 2001, Peter was appointed by California Governor Gray Davis to the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, and was subsequently reappointed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. Peter served as both Vice Chair and Chair of the Council during his tenure. Since leaving the Council, Peter served on the Tarjan Center Community Advisory Committee, the California State Rehabilitation Appeals Board, the City of Berkeley Commission on Disability, and on the Board of Directors for Easy Does It Emergency Services in Berkeley. Peter is still very active, currently serving as Chair of the Golden Gate Regional Center Self Determination Community Advisory Committee, Consumer Advocate for the California Olmstead Advisory Committee, member of the California State Independent Living Council as appointed by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr., in addition to working at Marin Center for Independent Living as their Director of Advocacy and Special Projects.

Peter lives in Elk Grove with his wife, Jennifer, and their dog, Latte. His phone rings frequently, with calls from people with disabilities and their families, requesting his advocacy expertise and policy advice.

### **Kim Mills**, A Better Life Together, Inc.; San Diego Regional Center Provider

Kimberly Mills has over 30 year of experience providing social services to youth, adults and their families. Kim is the founder and CEO of A Better Life Together, Inc.(ABLT) to supports individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to realize their dreams. Kim is the proud mother of 3 amazing sons Antoine, Naeem, and Jalen.

Naeem passed away unexpectedly in 2016 at the age of 22 due to a seizure. Naeem's death reignited Kim's passion to continue advocate for the rights of everyone. Kim believes everyone has a purpose in life and it is our responsibility to help individuals find their purpose and fulfill it. Kim has been working to close the disparity gap amongst people with intellectual and developmental disabilities of color who are underserved. Kim originally from Ohio and holds a Master's degree in Community Counseling from Kent State University.

**Lydia Missaelides**, Executive Director of the Alliance for Leadership and Education

Lydia has enjoyed a 35 year career in public policy and program development in aging, mental health, and disabilities. Lydia earned her Master's degree in Health Administration from the University of Southern California.

After serving 30 years as Executive Director for the California Association for Adult Day Services, concurrently with serving as the Executive Director of the Alliance for Leadership and Education since 2003, Lydia retired from CAADS to devote her time to ALE, the public benefit and research arm of CAADS.

Lydia was appointed in November 2019 to serve as a member of Governor Newsom's Long Term Services and Supports Subcommittee for a Master Plan for Aging and an appointed charter member of the California Health and Human Service Agency's Olmstead Advisory Committee. She also serves as Secretary of the Board for the California Aging and Disability Alliance, a non-profit seeking to create a broad-based public long term services and supports insurance program for the middle class and serves on the Steering Committee for the California Collaborative for Long Term Services and Supports.

Under her leadership, the ALE has raised more than \$4.6 million in philanthropic funding and donations over the past decade to support the mission of advancing innovations such as the Community Based Health Home model and best practices and development of quality ADS programs.

**Marty Omoto**, California Disability Community Action Network

Marty's goal is to improve the quality of life by protecting and strengthening services and supports for people, including those who are developmentally disabled, have mental health needs (with traumatic brain and other injuries), veterans with disabilities, seniors, physically disabled individuals, family members, workers, community organizations including the Asian-Pacific Islander, Latino and African-American communities, and others across California.

Marty's publication, CDCAN Disability Rights News, initiated in 1987, is now distributed electronically to over 65,000 people, as often as several times a day during the fast-moving legislative budget phase, with announcements and reports on hearings and legislative sessions.

Marty's life and passion for social justice have been deeply influenced by his family, his Japanese-American ethnicity, and providing care for his developmentally disabled sister for over twenty years. Growing up during the internment of Japanese Americans during the war and later in the midst of the California farm workers' movement in the grape fields of Salinas, Marty experienced, first-hand, the issues he advocates: fairness, justice, access and the opportunity to improve one's quality of life.

**Gabriel Rogin, North Bay Regional Center**

Gabriel Rogin has worked with people with developmental disabilities for over 25 years. He is currently the Executive Director of North Bay Regional Center, providing support for individuals and families in Napa, Solano and Sonoma Counties. Prior to that, he served as the Chief Deputy Director for the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, leading the Council's advocacy, capacity building and systemic reform efforts throughout the state. He has served as a direct support professional, case manager, and in multiple other management positions. Gabriel holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration from California State University, East Bay.

**Michelle Rousey, Consumer Advocate**

Micelle Rousey- Community Consumer Advocate, Activist, organizer for seniors and people with disabilities. Worked on Money Follows the person, Local IHSS and CA statewide IHSS advisory committees. Currently works with local transportation committees. And has been member of CA state Olmstead committee for many years. Has been community advocate about 35 years.

**Rosanna Ryan, State Council on Developmental Disabilities**

Rosanna "Rosie" Ryan was a peer instructor at the We Care A Lot Foundation from 2010 to 2016. Rosie like to keep in touch with family and friends on the Internet. Rosie enjoys watching movies during her free time, and she loves cats especially her cat, Queen Meeka.

**Katie Shinoda, PT, DPT Client Services Liaison**

Katie is a physical therapist and is currently the Client Services Liaison for Mercy's Home and Community Program for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). She has 20 years of experience working with individuals with various neurologic injuries.

**Richard Smith, Independent Living Partnership**

Richard Smith is the Chief Executive Officer of the non-profit INDEPENDENT LIVING PARTNERSHIP. Prior to his selection to be CEO of the organization in 2018, he served as Executive Director and General Manager of the rider-centered TRIP Volunteer Driver, Mileage Reimbursement (VDMR) Transportation program. The model TRIP Program for Riverside County California, funded with grants, has provided 2.4 million one-way trips and 32.7 million miles of volunteer assisted transportation for elderly, disabled, sick, isolated and low-income residents, without alternative means of transportation, at an average cost of one-way trip of \$6.10. Since 1995 he has been responsible for the on-going development and operation of ILP's TRIP Program, the design of proprietary TripTrak™ software and made it available to other organizations to assist with start-up and operation of rider-centered volunteer driver services in other California counties and communities and in other states. In 2017 ILP pioneered remote administration of a rider-centered volunteer driver service for Los Angeles County under a grant from Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services. He has an MBA from the University of California, Riverside and worked in the banking, broadcast, and advertising industries before coming to ILP.

**Sarah S. Steenhausen, MS** SCAN Foundation

Sarah Steenhausen is Senior Policy Advisor for The SCAN Foundation, directing the Foundation's state policy engagement efforts. In this capacity, Sarah develops and oversees our state leadership strategy, providing technical assistance and educating state policymakers on issues impacting California's older adults, people with disabilities, and family caregivers.

Before joining The SCAN Foundation team in 2009, Sarah was Assistant Secretary for Long-Term Care at the California Health and Human Services Agency, serving as the primary advisor on aging and long-term care legislative and budgetary measures. Her policy career began in the California Legislature, as consultant to the Senate Subcommittee on Aging and Long-Term Care. Sarah holds a Master of Science in Gerontology from the USC Davis School of Gerontology.

**Robert Taylor**, Lake County IHSS Public Authority Advisory Committee

*(bio coming soon)*

**Greg Thompson**, Personal Assistance Services Council, Los Angeles

Greg Thompson joined Personal Assistance Services Council (PASC) in 2010 as Executive Director. In this role, Greg works to enhance the IHSS Program and consumer-oriented initiatives, and ensures that PASC focuses on developing programs that prevent gaps in service. His passion for independence and community-based living for seniors and individuals living with a disability shapes and inspires his commitment to improving the quality and accessibility of services for IHSS recipients.

The former Chief of Social Work for Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center, he continues in his role as Co-Founder and Executive Director of The Rancho

KnowBarriers Life Coaching Program, providing leadership to programs designed to teach critical life skills to people living with a disability.

He has received many awards for his work, including The California Governor's Committee on Employment of Disabled Persons, Employee of The Year and Rancho's highest honor, The Amistad Award. He is dedicated to improving the quality of life for individuals living with a disability by empowering them to return to work and full community reintegration. He is also passionate about developing programs to prevent youth violence, a leading cause of spinal cord injury.

Mr. Thompson received his BA in Therapeutic Recreation from California State University, Long Beach, and his Master's in Social Work from the University of Southern California.

**Jane Whiteford**, California In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Consumer Alliance

Thirty-Five years ago, I was in an accident resulting in an injury causing paralysis and quadriplegia. My life's focus changed somewhat. After college I was a social worker and then a teacher. After my injury I got my Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling and focused on educating and advocating for disability issues. I initially did a lot of work educating and advocating about the ADA after it was passed. I also did a lot of work counseling Persons with disabilities and Seniors at both the ILC in Santa Clara and at the local County hospital. Volunteering in organizations that have causes I am passionate about has always been important to me. Before my accident I was very involved in my children's school organizations. Forty years ago, I started an Art History and Art Appreciation Program in the local school district that exists to this day and is a model Statewide. When the Public Authorities and the Advisory Committees for IHSS began I was involved in its development in Santa Clara County. Having dealt with PCA's for many years and educating many Persons with disabilities how to hire, manage, and if necessary, fire providers, I knew how important this program was.

Once the Advisory Committees were mandated, I started, with the help of CAPA, CICA; CA IHSS Consumer Alliance. Early on we realized that AC's would need education and training to fully fulfill their mandates. CICA still exists and I am the current President. I am very much involved in the advocacy of issues affecting both Seniors and Persons with Disabilities both at the local, State, and Federal level. Being involved with other State Organizations has broadened my perspectives and opportunities.

When not busy with my volunteer work, I am involved with my very supportive Family: my husband, three married children and seven grandchildren. Life is good.

**Kate Wilber**, USC Center for Long-Term Care Integration

Dr. Wilber's research has focused on improving the quality of life of people with chronic physical and mental health conditions, by improving the formal health and long term care delivery system. Her work on collaborative relationships among providers has

examined cost effectiveness and health outcomes of different service delivery structures. This research includes outcomes research for older adults in managed care, the development and evaluation of chronic care models that link acute and long-term care, and the testing and translation of evidence-based long-term care interventions into practice settings.

In addition to health care, Dr. Wilber's research has focused on protective services including the identification and treatment of elder abuse, adult protective services, guardianship and conservatorship, and alternative supportive and surrogate decision-making approaches. She has authored over 100 articles, books, and book chapters. Dr. Wilber regularly teaches courses in public policy, administration, systems management, and long-term care.

**Sylvia Yeh**, Friends of Children with Special Needs; San Andreas Regional Center & Regional Center of the East Bay Provider

Sylvia Yeh, a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW), serves as the Executive Business Director of Friends of Children with Special Needs (FCSN). Since her employment with FCSN in 2006, she has successfully established adult day programs, living services, supported employment services, respite services and transportation services for individuals with developmental disabilities. With over 20 years of dedication in the developmental services and social work sector, Sylvia is committed to helping the underprivileged populations, providing excellence of services, advocating for racial and social justice, promoting civil engagements, and building a brighter future for them. Sylvia is the recipient of the 2010 Bernie Graf Excellence in Service Award. Under her leadership, FCSN has received many awards, such as Non-Profit of the Year (2020), Leadership in Community Services (2018), Innovation Award (2017), Distinguished Honoree Award (2014), and Service Provider of the Year (2014). Sylvia is driven by her beliefs in social justice and is constantly seeking ways to address cultural inequity and service disparity in her work. She is dedicated to empowering the individuals and families to make decisions for their lives, direct the care and services based on their preferences, live out their best through support, and be included and treated with respect in their community.

**Alona Yorkshire**, Foster Parent of High Need Child

In 2018, Alona Yorkshire founded The Sanctuary. Alona believes animals can heal those who need it most. Alona has been informally rescuing animals her whole life while in her words "a real job" and becoming a foster parent. Alona is a Behavioral Analyst and primarily works with adults with disabilities. In her current position she's witnessed the incredible healing that an animal can bring into someone's life, and she started exploring the therapies animals can bring. As a foster parent she noticed how calm her son became around animals. Through this experience she saw that formalizing a place, a sanctuary is where others could spread their healing. The mission at the Sanctuary is to provide therapeutic connections between humans and animals and plants with the goal of healing, building compassion and respect between sentient beings.