



Climate Resilience and Urban Opportunity Initiative Grantee Convening  
September 25-27, 2018 | San Diego, CA  
Bahia Resort Hotel

Participant Biographies



**Zelalem Adefris**

Climate Resilience Director, Catalyst Miami

Zelalem Adefris is the Resilience Director at Catalyst Miami. She holds an MPH in Global Environmental Health from Emory University and a Bachelor’s degree in Community Health from Brown University. Her previous work experiences include environmental justice organizing at the Environmental Justice League of Rhode Island and conducting emergency preparedness research at the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. At Catalyst Miami, Zelalem works to educate Miami-Dade County residents on climate threats, build climate leadership in Miami-Dade County’s low- and middle-income communities, implement programs that strengthen community resilience, and advocate for equitable climate policies.



**Paloma Aguirre**

Coastal and Marine Director, WILD Coast

Paloma Aguirre has 12 years of experience working to address the San Diego-Tijuana border region’s environmental issues. As Coastal and Marine Director, Paloma oversees WILD Coast’s projects to conserve coastal ecosystems along the United States-Mexico Border as well as state and national ocean policy issues. Paloma spent 2016 in Washington D.C. working for U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) assisting in the development of ocean and environmental legislation. Paloma has a M.A.S. in Marine Biodiversity and Conservation, Scripps Institution of Oceanography; certificate in Non-Profit Management from Brandman University; B.A. in Psychology, University of San Diego



**Anthony Alexander**

Researcher, Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy

Anthony is a Research and Policy Analyst on LAANE’s RePower LA campaign. He holds a J.D. from Northeastern University School of Law and received his undergraduate degree in American Studies with a Sociology concentration from Ursinus College. Anthony was born and raised in metro Atlanta. He enjoys trying new restaurants and exploring LA in his free time.



## Oscar Arana

Director of Community Development, Native American Youth & Family Center (NAYA)

Oscar Arana has over 12 years of experience working in Portland's premier, culturally specific organizations including the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization, the Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber, and the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA). Oscar is the Director of Community Development at NAYA where he oversees multiple city, county, and state contracts that support Native community members achieve financial prosperity, find housing, purchase a home, and build community wealth. He has also held the roles of Development and Communications Director and Education Manager at NAYA. Oscar previously worked for Oregon's Senior US Senator Ron Wyden as his Multnomah County Field Director, and as the President of the Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber. He is a graduate of the University of Oregon's Executive MBA program and Journalism School. He is a member of the Bridge Meadows board of directors - an intergenerational housing community focused on finding permanent families for foster youth - and was appointed by Oregon's Governor to serve on the Oregon Health Policy Board. As the Director of Community Development, Oscar oversees small business technical assistance, community engagement and advocacy, leadership development, affordable housing development, and other community asset building programs.



## Kristin Baja

Climate Resilience Officer, USDN

Kristin Baja is the Climate Resilience Officer for the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN). In this role she is responsible for helping cities identify strategic ways to advance climate resilience planning and implementation and building their capacity to take action. The majority of her time is spent directly supporting cities and facilitating deeper relationships between local governments and other stakeholders. Prior to USDN, she served as the Climate and Resilience Planner with the City of Baltimore's Office of Sustainability where she led the city's climate adaptation and equity work. She holds a Masters of Urban Planning and a Masters of Science from the University of Michigan. In 2016, she was recognized by the Obama Administration as a Champion of Change for her work on climate and equity and in 2018, she was selected as an Aspen Global Climate Center Fellow.



## Debolina Banerjee

Climate Justice Policy Analyst, Puget Sound Sage

Debolina is the Climate Justice Policy Analyst at Puget Sound Sage. Her responsibilities include research-based analysis of climate policies, campaign support on climate justice issues, and building power within Sage's local and statewide climate coalitions. She has research experience in transit-oriented development, the environmental impacts of unorganized industries and project management for real estate development. In addition, Debolina has extensive experience working with grassroots activists and marginalized communities in India organizing for social justice around food, sustainable agriculture, clean environment, community development and women's empowerment. Before joining Puget Sound Sage, Debolina was with InterIm CDA researching the impact of the receding affordable housing stock and increasing risk of displacement faced by the immigrant and refugee communities of Seattle's International District. She holds a Master's degree in Applied Environmental Studies in Planning from the University of Waterloo and a Master's Degree in City Planning from the Indian Institute of Technology.



## **Eddie Bautista**

Executive Director, New York City Environmental Justice Alliance

Eddie Bautista is the Executive Director of the NYC Environmental Justice Alliance (NYC-EJA), a network of community-based organizations of color advocating for the empowerment of environmentally overburdened neighborhoods. Eddie's accomplishments include: helping pass a NYS law protecting EJ communities from increased emissions from power plant sitings; launching the Waterfront Justice Project, NYC's first citywide community resiliency campaign; co-convening the Sandy Regional Assembly, which prepared the first grassroots Sandy resiliency plan; and co-facilitating the Host Committee for the 2014 People's Climate March – the largest climate march in history. Previously, Eddie served as Director of the NYC Mayor's Office of City Legislative Affairs, where he spearheaded passage of several landmark laws, and Director of Community Planning for NY Lawyers for the Public Interest, where he organized coalitions blocking the siting of polluting infrastructure while advancing sustainable environmental policies. An award winning urban planner and community organizer interviewed by local and national media, several books feature Eddie's work, including *The Battle for Gotham: New York in the Shadow of Robert Moses and Jane Jacobs*, (2010); and *Noxious New York: The Racial Politics of Urban Health and Environmental Justice*, (2006). Eddie is a Visiting Professor at Pratt Institute's Graduate Programs for Sustainable Planning and Development. (For more about NYC-EJA, visit [www.NYC-EJA.org](http://www.NYC-EJA.org).)



## **Victoria Benson**

Community Climate Solutions Program Manager, Movement Strategy Center

Victoria brings a decade of experience in nonprofit and movement building work. She has worked to build awareness, empathy, and positive social change across axes of inequality, especially for low-income communities of color, and is excited to bring her energy to the Community Climate Solutions team. Outside of her work, Victoria also leads a participatory evaluation of Healthy Bayview, a youth-focused urban agriculture effort in Bayview Hunters Point in San Francisco led by Hunters Point Family. Previously, Victoria worked at the Prevention Institute, a public health nonprofit in Oakland, advocating for violence prevention and health reform, and supporting community organizing to promote active living and healthy eating environments. She has also worked with Causa Justa :: Just Cause; Mission Economic Development Agency on Mission Promise Neighborhood – a cradle to career-focused initiative; California Newsreel, a social justice film and media organization; and, in 2015, collaborated with community-based advocacy groups in Lagos, Nigeria to collect research on a Human Rights to Water project sponsored by UC Berkeley. She built her expertise in facilitation, consensus building, and collaboration as a CORO Fellow in Public Affairs in San Francisco (2010-2011), as a Center for Health Leadership Fellow (2013-15), and student organizing while earning her master's degrees in Public Health and City Planning from University of California, Berkeley (2013-2016). Victoria is inspired by community-driven, multi-sectoral, and targeted universalism approaches to movement building. She also believes that symptoms of social and environmental inequities show up in communities most prominently through inequitable health outcomes; and thus, she sees social justice efforts as acts to restore and build healthy communities.



## **Shamar Bibbins**

Senior Program Officer, The Kresge Foundation

Shamar Bibbins serves as a senior program officer for Environment at The Kresge Foundation. Shamar manages the Environment Program's Climate Resilience and Urban Opportunity Initiative. That initiative supports community-based nonprofit organizations seeking to influence local and regional climate resilience planning, policy development and implementation while reflecting the priorities and needs of low-income people. Shamar's grantmaking also supports climate adaptation field building efforts in the U.S. and initiatives that advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the environmental field. Shamar joined Kresge in 2014, bringing a history of engagement in environmental efforts in the non-profit sector and a strong commitment to action on climate change. Shamar earned a bachelor's degree in science, technology and society from Vassar College and received a Fulbright Fellowship to Fukushima University in Japan.



## **Jessica Boehland**

Senior Program Officer, The Kresge Foundation

Jessica Boehland works as a Senior Program Officer at The Kresge Foundation, which is committed to expanding opportunities in America's cities. Kresge's Environment Program seeks to help cities build their resilience in the face of climate change, with work focused on climate change mitigation, preparedness for the effects of climate change, and social equity. Jessica leads the team's grantmaking and other activities related to energy efficiency, renewable energy, and energy resilience. Prior to joining Kresge in 2008, Jessica served as Managing Editor of Environmental Building News and Editor of GreenSource magazine. Her writing has appeared in these and numerous other publications. In 2017, Jessica was named among Midwest Energy News' 40 Under 40, recognizing young leaders helping to drive America's transition to clean energy. She serves on the boards of the Environmental Grantmakers Association and the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities. Jessica holds a bachelor's degree from Oberlin College and a master's degree from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.



## **Lauren Boles**

State Director, New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance

Lauren Boles is the Director of the New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance, whose mission is to promote equity in the implementation of statewide environmental policies. Under her leadership the Alliance, and its partners on the Newark Climate Resiliency Action Plan, won the 2016 Resource Efficiency Award from PlanSmart New Jersey. At the national level, Lauren co-created the Environmental Justice Act, contributing language that requires improved access to infrastructure, responsible use of natural resources, and the utilization of citizen science. And as a member of the EJ and Science Initiative, she is participating in an equity study of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative to strengthen the evidence base for equitable climate resilience. Ms. Boles' background also includes more than 25 years of sustainable community development experience as a civil engineer and environmental planner at the City of Philadelphia. During her tenure, she directed the design, implementation, operation, and maintenance phases of the city's inaugural Storm Water Management Program, including nomination of the program for an Environmental Protection Agency Excellence Award.

Lauren's academic experience includes teaching positions at the University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, and Cheyney University. Her commitment to community was recognized by an American Legion Martin Luther King Service Award.



## **Gabriela Boscio Santos**

Climate Program Manager, Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH)

Gabriela Boscio was born and raised in Puerto Rico, and is bilingual in English and Spanish. She is the Climate Program Manager at NOAH (Neighborhood of Affordable Housing) in East Boston and prior to that was the Communications and Education Manager at Second Nature, a nonprofit that works with higher education on climate commitments. She's got a M.Sc. in Strategic Leadership toward Sustainability from Blekinge Institute of technology in Sweden and holds a B.Sc. in Environmental Studies from Northland College in WI. Her main areas of interest are sustainability, resilience, environmental/climate justice, and sustainable food systems. She has found renewed drive in her work after witnessing the effects of Hurricane María on her homeland.



## **Bianca Butts**

Manager of Climate Resiliency & Sustainability, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress

Bianca Butts is the Manager of Climate Resiliency & Sustainability for Cleveland Neighborhood Progress. Bianca leads the organization's efforts to improve climate resiliency and sustainability in 4 Cleveland communities: Central Kinsman, Detroit Shoreway, Glenville, and Slavic Village. In this role, Bianca works with community development corporations, a team of Neighborhood Climate Ambassadors, and various other stakeholders around the city to improve neighborhood emergency preparedness, knowledge about energy consumption, home weatherization efforts, and other initiatives that can lead to more sustainable and vibrant communities.

Bianca holds a Bachelor of Business Administration majoring in Finance from Ohio University and a Master of Business Administration from Cleveland State University. Prior to joining Cleveland Neighborhood Progress she worked for at East End Neighborhood House in as the Director of Marketing & Outcomes. In this role she developed a unique perspective on how institutions should approach awareness and engage with residents and grassroots leaders. Her previous experiences in corporate finance and neighborhood based work led her to community development and a desire to cultivate better stewards of the places and spaces we occupy. A native Clevelander, Bianca lives in the Greater Buckeye neighborhood and feels very fortunate to live and work in the same community.



## **Omar Carrillo Tinajero**

Associate Director of Programs--Connect Capital, Center for Community Investment

Omar Carrillo Tinajero is the Assistant Director of Programs—Connect Capital at the Center for Community Investment. He manages Connect Capital, an initiative of six cross-sector teams from communities across the country working to attract and deploy capital at a scale necessary to improve the lives of their residents and increase access to opportunity. He previously worked in housing, health, and community development policy in Oregon. As the Housing Policy Manager at Neighborhood Partnerships, he collaborated with leaders in the private and public sectors to change state housing policies and elevate affordable housing as a state budget priority. During this time, he also helped develop approaches to engage diverse community members in various planning initiatives across several cities in Oregon as an Associate at Cogan Owens Greene, LLC. Omar has a Master in Urban Planning from the Harvard Graduate School of Design and an AB from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University.



## Ana Castro Reynoso

Policy Advocate, Transportation Justice, Environmental Health Coalition

Ana Castro Reynoso joined EHC in 2017. As a bilingual Afro-Latina child of immigrants, Ana grew up in the Caribbean and spent a large portion of her life in New York, where she earned the honor of being a “40 under 40 Rising Star” by the Hispanic Coalition of New York. She graduated from Hamilton College with a B.A. in Environmental Studies with a focus in Africana Studies.

Ana often expresses her excitement to work with an organization that allows her to discuss and engage with her standpoint as a queer black femme. She believes the power and history of her ancestors survive and inform her environmental praxis. She loves mangos, lives in Chula Vista and looks forward to exploring the region further by bike.



## Sydney Céspedes

Planner, Pratt Center for Community Development

Sydney Céspedes is a planner at Pratt Center for Community Development where she provides research, policy development and technical assistance for community-based organizations and local partners. Sydney supports the Turning the Tide (T3) collaborative led by Fifth Avenue Committee (FAC), that engages and empowers South Brooklyn public housing residents to ensure public investments advance equity and address climate change and resiliency. Sydney has ten years of advocacy and community engagement experience, working with low-income and racially and linguistically diverse communities on issues such as housing, transportation and health. She is dedicated to participatory practices that engage environmental justice communities to address the legacy of top-down, racist urban planning that continue to negatively impact communities of color. Sydney has a master’s degree in City Planning from the University of California, Berkeley and a bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Hunter College of the City University of New York.



## Matt Chadsey

Executive Director, Earth Economics

A systems thinker by nature, Matt has spent much of his career navigating the interface between critical environmental issues, a balanced economy, and resilient communities. He has extensive experience working on water and wastewater challenges in California and Washington State by engaging a broad range of stakeholders in the process of developing solutions that are innovative, effective, and perhaps most importantly - doable. Since joining Earth Economics in 2014, Matt has worked with numerous partners and communities to demonstrate the ways in which holistic analysis can identify and quantify the critical, but often ignored, benefits that nature provides to communities and the economy.



## Nandini Chaturvedula

Associate, Ross Strategic

Nandini is an Associate at Ross Strategic. She works on a range of projects for philanthropy, universities, and non-profits that address strategic planning, program development, and evaluation for climate change, energy, and environmental initiatives. She recently completed an evaluation of urban mobility investments in Brazil for the Children’s Investment Fund Foundation and the Instituto Clima e Sociedade. She has also worked on an evaluation of unbranded climate communications initiatives in India and Brazil for the ClimateWorks Foundation, an evaluation of the Kresge Foundation’s Climate Resilience and Urban Opportunity initiative, and strategy support to the Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation on clean energy issues. Prior to working at Ross Strategic, Nandini was an academic researcher focused on corruption and transparency. She is fluent in Portuguese, proficient in Spanish, and has lived in India and Portugal.



## **Naomi Cole**

Vice President of Programs, EcoDistricts

Naomi leads EcoDistricts' programs team to build a marketplace for exemplary sustainable neighborhood projects and practitioners. She helped launch the precursor to the EcoDistricts Protocol, at the Portland Sustainability Institute, where she developed and piloted an ecodistricts approach in Portland and began to expand it to other cities.

She brings over a decade of experience in urban sustainability including roles at ZGF Architects and CLEARresult. Naomi studied architecture, environmental studies and urban studies at the University of Pennsylvania and Real Estate at Portland State University. As a native Portlander, Naomi returned to her hometown after college, determined to invest her life and career in the place that was formative to her own development. She lives in a nearly net zero energy home in which she makes jewelry, bakes cakes, and speaks to her toddler in Italian.



## **Cecil Corbin-Mark**

Deputy Director, WE ACT for Environmental Justice

Cecil Corbin-Mark is WE ACT for Environmental Justice's (WE ACT) Deputy Director and Director of Policy Initiatives. He holds a BA from Hunter College in Political Science and a M. Phil. in International Relations from Oxford University in England. Prior to joining WE ACT, Cecil worked for the following: the Bronx County District Attorney, NYS Justice Hon. W. T. Martin, the Mellon Minority Scholars Program and the NY Public Library. He currently serves on the following boards: Center for Environmental Health, Clean and Healthy New York, the Louis E. Burnham Fund, the West Harlem Development Corporation, and Friends of the Earth USA. He was the recipient of the 2010 Earth Day New York Award. Cecil is a father, a pilot and lives in the Hamilton Heights section of West Harlem in NYC, his family's home for almost 90 years. He comes from a family that was actively engaged in the Civil Rights movement. His great uncle and aunt Louis E., and Dorothy Burnham moved from Harlem to Birmingham, AL to launch the Southern Negro Youth Congress and his cousin represented professor and Civil Rights activist, Angela Y. Davis, in her trial for kidnapping, murder and conspiracy.



## **Mayra Cruz**

Climate Resilience Coordinator, Catalyst Miami

Mayra joined Catalyst in January 2018 after graduating from Columbia University with a Master's in Public Health in Environmental Health Sciences with a Certificate in Climate and Health. She is utilizing her knowledge of climate change and its impacts to coordinate the CLEAR (Community Leadership on the Environment, Advocacy, and the Environment) program and build upon existing climate resilience work. Thus far she has worked on community disaster preparedness initiatives and overseen the Spring, Summer, and Fall sessions of CLEAR.



## **Anna Cruz Reyes**

Strategic Learning and Evaluation Officer, The Kresge Foundation

Anna Cruz is the Strategic Learning and Evaluation Officer at The Kresge Foundation. She supports the foundation's emerging Learning and Evaluation practice and works with internal program and practice teams to develop evaluative approaches for their work. Prior to joining Kresge she served as a research consultant working with foundations and other social-sector clients to evaluate the impact of their efforts and develop strategic community change efforts.



## **Drew Curtis**

Senior Equitable Development Manager, Ironbound Community Corporation

Drew Curtis has served at Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC) for the past eight years in multiple roles, working on community organizing, public policy advocacy, neighborhood planning & revitalization, urban agriculture, economic empowerment & development, and affordable housing initiatives. All of this work is grounded in principles of justice and equity. He comes to ICC from the Bergen County Division of Community Development, where he coordinated economic development projects and oversaw compliance with federal regulations in the areas of fair housing, labor standards, and the environment. Before then, Drew worked for several youth development and community-based nonprofits in New York City and Paterson, NJ. Drew holds a Master of Science in Urban Policy Analysis and Management from Milano School of International Affairs, Management, and Urban Policy at the New School University. He also sits on the board of the Essex Community Land Trust, which has the mission of keeping housing perpetually affordable.



## **Michelle De la Uz**

Executive Director, Fifth Avenue Committee

Michelle de la Uz is the Executive Director of Fifth Avenue Committee, Inc. (FAC) and has over 25 years of experience in public and community service. Michelle oversees the organization's mission and comprehensive programs serving more than 5,500 low- and moderate-income people; a budget nearly of \$7 million and several non-housing affiliate corporations with annual budgets of over \$6 million, real estate assets over \$100 million, and a housing development pipeline of over 1,300 units, representing more than \$500 million in total development costs. Under her leadership, FAC became a NeighborWorks America member. Prior to FAC, Michelle was Program Director for the Center for Urban Community Services in Washington Heights and Harlem and was Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez' first Director of Constituent Services and directed her South Brooklyn District Office. She was active in advancing transportation, environmental justice, immigration reform, and employment policy initiatives. Michelle is the first in her working-class immigrant family to graduate from college, is a product of bi-lingual education, a former trustee of Connecticut College, and recipient of the Ford Foundation's Leadership for a Changing World award.

Michelle serves on the National Board of Directors of the Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC), the New York Housing Conference, and the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development, among many others. Additionally, since 2012 Michelle was appointed to serve on the New York City City Planning Commission. Michelle is an alumna of Connecticut College, Columbia University and of Harvard Kennedy School's Executive Education Program. She lives in Brooklyn with her husband and daughter.



## **Lois DeBacker**

Managing Director, The Kresge Foundation

Lois DeBacker is a Managing Director at The Kresge Foundation where she leads the Foundation's Environment Program, which is focused on helping communities build their resilience in the face of climate change. Lois joined Kresge in February 2008.

Lois' prior experience includes more than 16 years at the C. S. Mott Foundation in a series of Program Department positions of progressive responsibility. Before joining Mott, Lois worked for ten years in Michigan state government in policy development and program management capacities.

Lois received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of Michigan and a Master of Public Affairs degree from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs.



## **Beto DeLeon**

Environmental Justice Coordinator, Southwest Workers Union

Beto Davila De León is a Xicano/Ndé organizer, originally from the rural Texas Gulf Coast and currently based in San Antonio, TX for the past 10 years. They are the Environmental Justice Coordinator for Southwest Worker's Union – Centro por la Justicia. They carry almost 20 years of volunteering and community organizing focused on healthy relationships to water and land. They serve on the Water & Natural Resources Working Group for the City of San Antonio's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan and recently completed the 2018 Indigenous Sustainable Communities Design Course in Tesuque Pueblo, NM. Their work shares a focus on the intersections of environment, migration, spiritual activism, gender justice and LGBTQ issues. They can be reached by email at [betosw@swunion.org](mailto:betosw@swunion.org).



## **Kim Dempsey**

Deputy Director, Social Investments, The Kresge Foundation

Kim Dempsey is deputy director of the Social Investment Practice at The Kresge Foundation. In this role, Kim works with Kresge program teams and external borrowers, financial intermediaries, banks and policy makers to identify areas where lack of capital is a barrier to helping vulnerable people improve their life circumstances. She structures social investments using debt, equity and guarantees and helps monitor those commitments. Prior to joining Kresge in 2014, Kim worked at Capital Impact Partners (CIP), a national non-profit community development financial institution. Most recently, Kim was CIP's senior director of lending. Kim graduated Phi Beta Kappa with bachelor of arts degrees in community studies and sociology from the University of California, Santa Cruz. She received a master's degree in public policy from Harvard Kennedy School.



## **Chris Durazo**

Housing, Land & Development Co-Director, Causa Justa: Just Cause

Chris Durazo is a Land Use Organizer and Cultural Worker. She has over 20 years of experience fighting for housing justice, including working as an affordable housing developer, a grassroots community planner, anti-displacement policy advocate and tenant organizer. Chris has previously worked at the South of Market Community Action Network (SOMCAN), Asian Neighborhood Design (AND), Veterans Equity Center, Japantown Task Force, and Chinatown Community Development Center.

She is Japanese and Mexican, and has lived in Oakland for the past 15 years.



## **Saneta deVuono-powell**

Program Director, ChangeLab Solutions

Saneta is a program director, senior staff attorney, and planner at ChangeLab Solutions, where she co-leads the program focused on expanding access to safe, stable, affordable housing and healthy neighborhoods. This work aims to address the harms of discrimination and build the capacity of local governments, institutions, and resident groups to create healthy and inclusive communities. Saneta has over a decade of experience working on issues of racial justice and conducting participatory research, with a focus on criminal justice and housing rights. Prior to joining ChangeLab Solutions, she worked as a consultant on affordable housing and reentry issues for the formerly incarcerated. Saneta was the Racial Justice fellow at the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California and a Fulbright scholar in Spain. She received her bachelor's degree from Sarah Lawrence College and both her law degree and her master's degree in city planning from UC Berkeley.



## **Christopher Erikson Jr**

Business Representative, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 3

Christopher Erikson Jr. is a 5th generation member of Local Union #3 IBEW. The great-grandson of Harry Van Arsdale Jr., he was born in Electchester, Local #3's housing cooperative. He attended Chaminade HS and NY Institute of Technology, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Architectural Technology & Construction Management. He started his career in the ADM division of Local 3 before beginning his apprenticeship in August 2007. During his apprenticeship he graduated with a B.S. in Labor Studies from the Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies at SUNY Empire State.

Christopher served on Local 3's Executive Board before being appointed a Business Representative in 2015. He represents the Administrative and Expeditior Divisions, the electricians employed at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, full-time Apprentice Instructors at the Electrical Industry Training Center, and the Joint Industry Board maintenance workers. Christopher is a trustee of the Joint Industry Board and several benefit plans of the Electrical Industry. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Memorial Association and as a Delegate to the NYC Central Labor Council.



## **Denise Fairchild**

President/CEO, Emerald Cities Collaborative

Denise Fairchild is the inaugural President and CEO of Emerald Cities Collaborative (ECC), a national non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C. with affiliates in major urban centers across the United States. She is charged with advancing ECC's "high road" mission to green our cities, build resilient local economies and ensure equity inclusion in both the process and the outcomes of a new green and healthy economy. Dr. Fairchild focuses on building community-led partnerships to increase energy efficiency, clean energy, sustainable foods and clean water with a focus on low-income and communities of color.

Denise is nationally recognized and respected for her 40-year successful track record and innovative programs in sustainable and community economic development. In 1995 she founded and directed the Community and Economic Development (CED) Department at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, as well as an affiliated non-profit community development research and technical assistance organization, CDTech.

Denise received her B.A from Fisk in 1972, a masters in City Planning from the University of Pennsylvania and doctorate in urban planning from UCLA. Her recent publication by Island Press is an anthology on Energy Democracy. Dr. Fairchild is a member of the California Water Council and the American Council for an Energy Efficient Council (ACEEE) and the NAACP Environmental/Climate Justice Committee. She has lived, worked and educated her sons in South Los Angeles since 1977.



## **Caroline Farrell**

Executive Director, Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment

Caroline Farrell is the Executive Director of the Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment (CRPE) and is based in Delano, CA. Since 1999, Caroline has represented income communities and communities of color in the San Joaquin Valley on land use issues related to dairy development, hazardous waste facilities, ethanol plant siting, and long-range community planning. She sits on the Board of Directors for Communities for a Better Environment, the Planning and Conservation League, and Act for Women and Girls. She co-authored with Luke Cole Structural Racism, Structural Pollution and the Need for a New Paradigm for the Washington University Journal of Law & Policy and authored, SB 115: California's Response to Environmental Justice- Process over Substance, for the Golden Gate Environmental Law Journal, A Just Transition: Lessons Learned from the Environmental Justice Movement for the Duke Forum for Law & Social Change, and Markets Alone Can't Produce Social Justice for the Environmental Law Institute's Debate on the Morality of Market Mechanisms. Caroline graduated from Golden Gate University School of Law with Highest Honors. She received her B.A. in Political Science from Bates College in Lewiston, Maine.



## **Juan Flores Castillo**

Community Organizer, Center for Race, Poverty, and the Environment

Juan Flores is a Community Organizer for the Center for Race, Poverty, and the Environment (CRPE). Juan was born in Colima, Mexico and raised in Mexicali, Mexico. He is the proud son of parents who are farm workers in the Central Valley. In 1999 Juan received his permanent residency and, with his parents and siblings, immigrated to Delano, California. At the age of 14, Mr. Flores worked as a farm laborer in the grape fields during the summer months of vacation from Delano High School. Prior to joining CRPE, Juan was a Family Advocate in Delano where he was a childcare advocate for low income families. As an organizer, he has worked on the Climate Justice Campaign in the Central Valley where he has fight against fracking and extreme oil extraction methods. Juan's primary role at CRPE is to advocate on behalf of communities that are disproportionately affected by air and water pollution in Kern county. Juan possesses an A.S degree in Medical Assisting.



## **Deborah Gaddy**

Environmental Justice Organizer, Clean Water Action

Kim Gaddy is the Environmental Justice Organizer for Clean Water Action of New Jersey. She has been advocating for communities impacted by industrial pollution and the goods movement system in Newark and across the country for 17 years.

Kim develops and implements the NJ Clean Water Action/Clean Water Fund's grassroots environmental justice campaigns and coalition building efforts. She is a Newark School Board Member, New York/New Jersey Regional Representative for the Moving Forward Network, Port Commissioner for the City of Newark, Appointed by Governor Phil Murphy to serve as Vice-Chair of the NJDEP's Environmental Justice Advisory Council, former Chair of both the Newark Environmental Commission and the Essex County Environmental Commission, a founding member of the New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance and New Jersey President of the International Black Women's Congress. Previously, she worked in Municipal government in Newark for 12 years and served as the first female Chief of Staff, for Councilwoman Mildred Crump. Kim was recognized for her Community Service in the 2018 Newark Women from Suffragettes to the Statehouse, 2017 selected as 100 People of Newark, Women on the Move Award recipient and a 2007 recipient of the Environmental Protection Agency Region 2 Environmental Community award.



## **Phil Giffie**

Executive Director, Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH)

Phil Giffie has been NOAH's Executive Director since it was begun in 1987 and has directed NOAH's growth from a small two-person start-up to a \$4.5 million operation. He is responsible for overseeing all departments, as well as ensuring the achievement of strategic goals and program objectives, all of which have been achieved at 95% or more over the last decade. NOAH has created investments of \$438M in the regional economy. Phil leads the ClimateCARE environmental sustainability initiative. In the 1970's, Phil co-founded Heading Home (formerly Shelter Inc.), now a leading homeless shelter and advocacy organization with sites in the Cambridge and Greater Boston areas. Phil is on the Boston Committee. He served on the CHAPA 40B Task Force to help preserve the state's premier affordable housing statute; and also served on the Board of the Massachusetts Association of CDCs. Formerly a resident of East Boston, he, his wife, Nancy and son, Justin, reside in Framingham. He also co-chaired the Framingham Housing Partnership. Phil has been active in civic, social justice and political affairs throughout his career. Phil graduated from Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio.



## **Noah Ginsburg**

Director, Here Comes Solar, Solar One

Noah joined Solar One in 2016, where he directs the Here Comes Solar program that seeks to spur the adoption of solar within NYC's under-served market segments. From 2009-2011 Noah was a Solar Ombudsman at the City University of New York, working with the City to identify and address barriers to solar in NYC. In 2011 Noah moved to California to work as data analyst and technologist with leading solar startups including Sungevity, Sunrun and most recently OnGrid. While in California Noah volunteered as a Team Leader on more than 40 solar installations with GRID Alternatives, a non-profit solar installer that serves low-income homeowners, and earned his NABCEP PV installation certification in 2014. Noah is passionate about clean energy and the equitable distribution of its benefits within our society. Originally from Michigan, Noah moved to NYC in 2006 to complete a year of Americorps service, working as a mentor and tutor at a middle school in East Harlem. He completed his undergraduate degree in Renewable Energy at Hunter College and currently lives with his family in Washington Heights.



## **Rosa Gonzalez**

Associate, Movement Strategy Center

Rosa González is the founder of Facilitating Power, a consultancy designed to cultivate the practice & pedagogy of a living democracy. She works with organizations, foundations, and collaborative initiatives to build the capacity for culturally rooted, collaborative leadership and to advance whole systems solutions to close equity gaps through fundamental shifts towards health & balance at all levels from the personal to the structural. She wrote the Framework on Community-Driven Climate Resilience Planning, in collaboration with climate justice leaders from around the country, and is working to deepen collaboration between the public and private sectors at the local level through multiple city-based initiatives.

Rosa has a Masters degree in Education from the University of San Francisco, and a Masters degree in Latin American Studies from Stanford University. She is currently working on her first book, in collaboration with NationBuilder titled: SEED, HARVEST, WEAVE Facilitative Leadership for a Living Democracy.



## **Kyra R. Green, Ph.D.**

Executive Director, Center on Policy Initiatives

Kyra Greene, PhD is the Executive Director at the Center on Policy Initiatives. CPI is a research and advocacy institute dedicated to fighting for good jobs, vibrant communities and a strong, equitable public sector for the benefit of families throughout San Diego County. Dr. Greene has previously held positions at CPI as a research and policy analyst focusing on municipal budgets and public infrastructure projects and as Deputy Director of Policy and Programs. Dr. Greene earned her M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology from Stanford University. She also holds a B.A. in Social Sciences from Bard College at Simon's Rock. Kyra's past research has focused on social movement messaging/framing, legislative processes, and public policies affecting the lives of people of color and people with disabilities.



## **Jessica Grannis**

Adaptation Program Director, Georgetown Climate Center

Jessica Grannis is the Adaptation Program Manager for the Georgetown Climate Center and is a staff attorney and adjunct professor at the Harrison Institute for Public Law, at Georgetown University Law Center. Ms. Grannis oversees staff and student research and analysis of federal, state and local adaptation efforts. Her recent publications include *Rebuilding with Resilience: Lessons from the Rebuild by Design Competition After Hurricane Sandy* (2016); an *Adaptation Tool Kit for Sea Level Rise* (2012) and a book chapter on *Coastal Retreat in the Law of Climate Change: U.S. and International Aspects* (2012, with Peter Byrne). Prior to coming to Georgetown, she was staff counsel for the California State Coastal Conservancy and the Ocean Protection Council. She holds a B.A. in history from the University of Chicago; a J.D., Cum Laude, from University of California Hastings College of the Law; and a LL.M, with honors, from Georgetown Law.



## **Matthew Gray**

Chief of Sustainability, City of Cleveland

Matt Gray serves as Chief of Sustainability for the City of Cleveland. Working on all things urban sustainability, Matt leads the Sustainable Cleveland 2019 initiative to create a thriving green city on a blue lake. He is responsible for advising the City on policies related to sustainability and leading implementation of the Cleveland Climate Action Plan. This position follows completion of a U.S. Fulbright Fellowship in Mauritius, where Matt researched climate change impacts and governance. Prior to receiving this grant, he served four years with the US Department of Energy's (DOE) Federal Energy Management Program. Matt worked largely on green building and climate change, serving as Chair of the Interagency Sustainability Working Group to make green building standard practice throughout the Federal government.



## **Rebecca Guerriero**

Climate Change Fellow, The Kresge Foundation

Rebecca Guerriero is the Climate Change and Urban Sustainability Fellow for the Environment Program at the Kresge Foundation. Rebecca's work focuses on urban climate adaptation and climate finances. Previously, she worked in urban disaster risk reduction and sustainable supply chain management. She completed her Master's at the University of Oxford in Environmental Change and Management and holds a BA in Environmental Science from the University of Michigan.



## **Lara Hansen**

Chief Scientist and Executive Director, EcoAdapt

Lara thinks climate change is everybody's problem and she wishes someone would bother to do something about it. Her desire for action led her to co---create EcoAdapt with a team of similarly inclined folks in 2008. She is co---author of two books on climate change adaptation (*Buying Time: A User's Manual for Building Resistance and Resilience to Climate Change in Natural Systems* and *Climate Savvy: Adapting Conservation and Resource Management to a Changing World*); co-created an engaged stakeholder process to help individuals, organizations and communities create adaptation strategies applicable to their work; and the Climate Adaptation Knowledge Exchange (CAKEx.org). She served on the unfairly maligned, vitally important Nobel Prize---winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, is a Switzer Environmental Fellow and a United States Environmental Protection Agency Bronze Medalist. Prior to creating EcoAdapt, she was the chief climate change scientist for the World Wildlife Fund and a Research Ecologist with the Environmental Protection Agency. She earned her Ph.D. at the University of California, Davis in Ecology and her B.A. in Biology at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Because she's an optimist she assumes we'll get our acts together on climate change-----who would want the alternative.



## **Lawrence Haseley**

Member, WE ACT for Environmental Justice

Lawrence has been an active member of WE ACT for Environmental Justice since the Summer of 2014. After completing the Environmental Health and Justice Leadership Training Program at WE ACT, Lawrence became more engaged in climate justice campaigns by attending meetings, workshops, and events. He later served as a planning membership committee member from August 2016 - August 2018, where he helped other WE ACT members learn more and engage in campaigns and activities. Lawrence's experiences and knowledge gained in WE ACT led him to pursue a Master's of Science in Urban Planning with the intent to think critically of how communities predominately made up of people of color have autonomy over the resources of their built and natural environment.



## **Nicola Hedge**

Director, Environment Initiatives, The San Diego Foundation

Nicola works with donors, nonprofits, business and government partners to lead implementation of The Foundation's environmental initiatives, Opening the Outdoors and Climate, aimed at protecting, connecting and increasing access to the outdoors, as well as catalyzing regional solutions to climate change. She also serves in leadership roles in the community, including on the Board of Cleantech San Diego, Steering Committee of the San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative, and on the Port of San Diego's Environmental Advisory Committee. Prior to joining The Foundation, Nicola held roles managing a field office for a World Bank research project in rural Malawi and with the production team of a public affairs show on public radio. Nicola earned her master's degree from UC San Diego's School of Global Policy & Strategy, her bachelor's degree in International Business from Hawaii Pacific University, and became a LEED Green Associate in 2010. For the work she and colleagues have accomplished through the Climate Initiative, the Foundation was awarded the inaugural HUD-Council on Foundations Secretary's Award for public-private partnerships by community foundations in 2012. She also received special recognition through the 2018 California Regional Adaptation Leadership Awards for sustained work catalyzing regional resilience to climate change.



## **Annel Hernandez**

Associate Director, New York City Environmental Justice Alliance

Annel Hernandez is the Associate Director of the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance. Annel works on city and statewide climate policy issues, focusing on local advocacy and research that further equitable investments in coastal resiliency, green infrastructure, and renewable energy. She also works on various coalition campaigns to push for more aggressive climate legislation – with equity as a central focus. Previously, Annel worked with the NYC Mayor’s Office of Economic Opportunity and the Urban Climate Change Research Network at the Earth Institute. She received an MPA in Energy and Environment from Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs, and her BA in Political Science and Latino Studies from Fordham University.



## **Cynthia Herrera**

Environmental Policy & Advocacy Coordinator, WE ACT for Environmental Justice

As Environmental Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, Cynthia is tasked with advancing policy goals that align with WE ACT’s Northern Manhattan Climate Action (NMCA) project, which seeks to increase community participation, within and outside of the government and build neighborhood capacity in response to climate change. Prior to working at WE ACT, Cynthia served as a NASA Climate Change Research Fellow, using new technology to enhance understanding of urban climates and better inform policy makers. Cynthia is a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer and holds an M.S. in Sustainability Management from Columbia University.



## **Michael Higgins Jr.**

Community Organizer, Fifth Avenue Committee

Michael Higgins Jr. is a member turned organizer at FUREE and a native of the Fort Greene area of Brooklyn. Michael first joined the Accountable Development campaign, before engaging more deeply in work around public housing. He now does organizing within FUREE members around environmental justice, civic participation and further inclusion of public housing in the greater housing justice movement in New York City.

Michael’s interests include housing rights, from tenant rights to rezoning and development issues, and city governance over areas such as education and public housing.



## Taj James

Co-Founder and Co-Director, Movement Strategy Center

Taj James is the founder, Co-Director, and a Board Member of Movement Strategy Center. Taj launched MSC in 2001, putting forth the question “How do we weave together the strands of the progressive community into a progressive movement capable of winning lasting policy and social change?” For over a decade, Taj and MSC have served as a consistent source of social change innovation and leadership. In his decade of leadership with MSC, Taj has been proud to help launch and support new alliances such as Strong Families and the Climate Justice Alliance. Taj has also played a key role in building new funding collaboratives and strategies to increase investment in grassroots organizing and alliance building. These initiatives include California Fund for Youth Organizing, Move to End Violence Initiative, California Alliance for Boys and Men of Color, and Building Healthy Communities.

Before launching MSC, Taj served as the Director of Youth Policy and Development at Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth, where he organized youth and community members around issues facing children, youth and families. Taj’s network and leadership building experience began in his role as the Western Regional Field Organizer for the Black Student Leadership Network (BSLN), a project of the Children’s Defense Fund. Taj has provided board leadership for many non-profit organizations and philanthropic institutions and has written extensively on the topics of movement building, organizational change, and on the role of young people in social change.



## Jill Johnson

Program Team Assistant, The Kresge Foundation

Jill A. Johnson is a program team assistant at Kresge where she works with the Environment Program.

In that role, she coordinates meetings and travel, and communication with the team’s many partners. It’s all about getting people where they need to be with the resources they need, she says. Jill also fields queries from Kresge-funded organizations and handles logistics with other units within the foundation.

Jill joined Kresge in 2009 after 19 years at an auto industry company where she worked with human resources, communications and engineering.

A native of Michigan, she is an outdoor enthusiast who snowshoes, waterskis and enjoys paddleboarding.



## Cathleen Kelly

Senior Fellow, Center for American Progress

Cathleen Kelly is a senior fellow for Energy and Environment at the Center for American Progress. Kelly partners with local groups to develop inclusive and equitable climate change policies to cut pollution, lower energy bills and reduce flooding and extreme weather threats in low-income areas and communities of color. She specializes in U.S. climate mitigation, preparedness, resilience, and sustainable development policy. Kelly served in the Obama administration at the White House Council on Environmental Quality, where she led a 20-plus-agency task force to develop a national climate resilience strategy. This strategy helped form the basis of the climate-preparedness pillar of President Barack Obama’s Climate Action Plan. Kelly also helped formulate the Obama administration’s positions on international sustainable development and climate policy issues.



## **Ife Kilimanjaro**

Senior Network Engagement Director, Center for American Progress

Ife Kilimanjaro's experiences as a director, author, connector, researcher, administrator, teacher, activist and healer both inform and are informed by her deep commitment to justice and a better world. Prior to joining USCAN staff as Senior Director of Network Engagement, Ife worked for and volunteered with many environmental, climate and social justice initiatives and organizations, providing leadership in planning and evaluation, grant writing and management, curricular design and implementation, organizational development, relationship-building, healing and more. More recently she co-founded Wind and Warrior, a spirit-movement workspace to further the integration of activism with healing and spiritual practice for greater impact in our communities. Ife received a Ph.D. in Sociology from Howard University with a dual focus in Research Methods and Race, Class and Gender and a minor in Philosophy.



## **Joyce Lane**

Co-Chair, Public Policy Team (Volunteer), SanDiego350

After retiring from my work in the City of San Diego as the Assistant City Clerk, I wanted to find meaningful activity and to use my skills. IN my mind there seemed to be nothing more important than the issue of climate change. So I got involved with SanDiego350, in inclusive volunteer organization devoted to inspiring a movement to prevent the worst impacts of climate change and climate injustice. We're working to create a future that supports a livable planet and just a society through education and outreach, public policy advocacy and mobilizing people to take action.

I have been involved with SanDiego350 since 2015 and have been the Co-Chair of the Public Policy Team off and on for the past two years. We work in partnership with the Environmental Health Coalition.



## **Diana Lopez**

Executive Director, Southwest Workers Union

Diana Lopez is a Xicana born and raised in San Antonio, TX. Her work with Southwest Workers Union involves linking issues around environmental justice, living wage and accountable governance. SWU works to re-frame public policy to protect the community and include the voices of local residents. It has led to successful strategic campaigns targeting wages, environmental clean-up, economic revitalization, healthcare and energy policy. As a representative for SWU, Lopez has brought local struggles to 5 United Nations Conventions on Climate Change. She also sits on coordinating committees of the Grassroots Global Justice, and South by Southwest Experiment. Lopez is the Executive Director of Southwest Workers Union and is currently working towards framing a strong equity component on the San Antonio's Climate Action & Adaptation Plan.



## Jose Lopez

Organizing Director, Make the Road New York

Jose Luis Lopez is the Co-Organizing Director at Make the Road New York; a membership led organization with over 22,000 members working to build the power of Latino and working class communities to achieve dignity and justice through organizing, policy innovation, transformative education, and survival services.

Jose has been with Make the Road New York for over 18 years organizing immigrant communities to advance public policy in New York State. At Make the Road New York, Jose helped to create and manage the Youth Power Project, the youth organizing arm of Make the Road which works to elevate the role of high school aged young people in the arenas of education reform and police reform. Jose now provides organizing and technical support to BASTA! and Trabajadores Unidos en Accion, the housing/environmental rights and workers' rights committees focused on protecting people's homes and wages.



## Jill Mangaliman

Executive Director, Got Green

Jill is a queer Filipino-American community organizer, born and raised in Seattle. Thanks to Federal Pell Grants, Jill graduated from the UW as a student of Human Geography. For 6 years they organized in local and national campaigns involving health care equity, immigrant rights and protecting social services. In 2009 they joined Got Green as part of the City Weatherization program. Here, they stepped into leadership, from founding board member to lead organizer, and played an instrumental role in the formation and strategy of the Food Access Team. They became the Executive Director in 2014 after a 2-year leadership transition. In their spare time, they enjoy singing karaoke, cooking, and making things.



## Allison Mannos

Repower LA Campaign Director, Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy

Allison Mannos is the Director of the RePower LA campaign at LAANE. She previously worked for the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition, where she co-founded and managed the award winning City of Lights Program that organized Latina/o, low-income cyclists (now Multicultural Communities for Mobility). She graduated from UCLA in 2010 with a B.A. in Asian-American Studies and Urban Planning and also was a co-founding member of CicLAvia. An LA native, Allison is a proud hapa queer woman, reads fiction, takes transit, and is a vegetarian foodie.



## Emily Marte

Membership, Organizing, & Outreach Intern, WE ACT for Environmental Justice

My career in health initiated with a Bachelor of Science in Toxicology from St. John's University. This degree has rooted my interests in environmental, human, and minority health among the spectrum of public health topics. Currently, I am pursuing a Master of Public Health degree at the George Washington University with a concentration in global and environmental health.

Participating in the Master's program has made me feel more in-sync and passionate about safeguarding and connecting population health and environmental health locally and globally. Through We Act for Environmental Justice I have been able to stand up for my community and to work towards just environmental conditions in Washington Heights, NYC.



## **Carolina Martinez**

Associate Director of Policy, Environmental Health Coalition

Carolina Martinez, Associate Director of Policy at Environmental Health Coalition (EHC). Martinez' work with EHC's in the Climate Justice Campaign focuses on the San Diego region. She is responsible for working together with residents in low-income communities of color to advocate for climate policies that respect their priorities, improve health, and are consistent with environmental justice principles. Currently, she is working on the equitable implementation of San Diego's Climate Action Plan.

Carolina is a proud Colombian immigrant who enjoys working at the intersection of liberation, race, culture, gender, civic engagement, environmental issues, health, and city planning in the struggle for environmental justice. Carolina has M.A.s in Urban Planning and Latin American Studies; and spends her free time learning to play Son Jarocho and dance Puerto Rican Bomba.



## **Cecelia Martinez**

Executive Director, Center for Earth, Energy and Democracy

Dr. Cecilia Martinez is the co-founder and Executive Director at the Center for Earth, Energy and Democracy (CEED). Dr. Martinez previously held positions as Associate Research Professor in the College of Earth, Ocean and Environment at the University of Delaware, and Research Director at the American Indian Policy Center. She has led a variety of projects to address sustainable development at the local and international levels. Her research is focused on the development of energy and environmental strategies that promote equitable and sustainable policies. Dr. Martinez has also worked with a range of organizations from local grassroots groups to international organizations engaging in the promotion of sound environmental policy and environmental justice through education, training and policy analysis. She is the author of several publications and is currently working on a book manuscript on climate justice.



## **Caitlin Matthews**

Researcher, Spark Policy Institute

Caitlin Matthews is a researcher at Spark Policy Institute. She brings experience as a bilingual (Spanish and English) policy researcher and evaluator with domestic and international experience using quantitative, qualitative, and spatial analysis methods to model complex systems, analyze disparities, and inform policy formation and implementation. Caitlin has collaborated across public, nonprofit, and academic sectors, employing critical listening and communication skills to engage diverse stakeholders. Prior to joining the Spark team, Caitlin worked as a Spanish Immersion teacher in Portland Public Schools in Oregon, where she piloted Spanish programs at two middle schools. Additionally, Caitlin has worked in the non-profit sector to increase food access, promote sustainable agriculture, and support microenterprise development with low income Latina women and families. Caitlin holds a Master of Science in Agriculture, Food & Environment from the Friedman School of Nutrition Science & Policy at Tufts University and a Master of Arts in Urban & Environmental Policy & Planning also from Tufts University. Caitlin also holds a Master of Arts in Teaching for secondary level Spanish from Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education & Counseling and a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies with a focus in Conservation Biology from Middlebury College.



## Laurie Mazur

Urban Resilience Editor, Island Press

As Island Press' Urban Resilience Editor, Laurie focuses on the intersection of climate adaptation, sustainability and social justice. She works with Kresge grantees and others to co-create articles, blog posts and op-eds—and to place that content in appropriate news outlets. (A compilation of that published work is available [here](#).) Laurie is the author/editor of three books; her writing has appeared in The New York Times, The Nation, The Los Angeles Times, The Guardian and many other publications. Laurie lives just outside Washington, DC with her husband and teenage sons.



## Hugh McDiarmid

Communications Officer/Environment, The Kresge Foundation

Hugh C. McDiarmid Jr. is a communications officer at The Kresge Foundation where he supports internal and external communications efforts for the Environment Program among other key Kresge initiatives.

He worked as a Michigan journalist for 22 years including a decade at the Detroit Free Press, reporting extensively on environmental issues. He directed communications efforts for the nonprofit Michigan Environmental Council for eight years, and oversaw outreach for the Great Lakes (Windsor) Office of the International Joint Commission, which provides guidance to the U.S. and Canadian governments on boundary-waters issues.

Hugh has earned numerous journalism awards, including the John B. Oakes Award for Distinguished Environmental Journalism in 2004 for a collaborative series on childhood lead poisoning in Michigan.

He lives in Farmington with his wife, Karen. He graduated from Albion College with a bachelor's degree in English.



## Jeanette Mitchell

Climate Organizer, Clean Water Action

Jeanette Mitchell is a Climate Organizer with Clean Water Action/Clean Water Fund (CWA/CWF). In this role Ms. Mitchell is responsible for community organizing, educating residents about climate resilience and developing working relationships with city stakeholders. As a big believer in social justice, Ms. Mitchell is a qualified organizer who has grown within the CWA/CWF organization starting as a student of the Urban Environmental Institute in 2008. Since then Ms. Mitchell has worked with several community groups, two city government administrations and has done countless canvassing and community centered projects. Ms. Mitchell holds a bachelor of arts degree in International Relations from the City of New York.



## Sona Mohnot

Program Manager and Policy Analyst, Greenlining Institute

Sona Mohnot is a Program Manager and Policy Analyst at the Greenlining Institute. Sona spent most of her life in New Orleans and moved to the Bay Area in 2016 to join Greenlining as a legal fellow. She became interested in environmental equity after witnessing the disproportionate environmental burdens that low-income communities of color face in New Orleans, especially after Hurricane Katrina and the B.P. oil spill. Sona graduated from Tulane Law in 2014 and received an LL.M in Environmental Law and Natural Resources from Lewis and Clark Law School in 2015. After interning at several environmental nonprofits throughout law school, she realized she wanted to pursue a career in environmental equity policy. As the Environmental Equity Manager, she focuses on climate adaptation and resilience policy in California, specifically looking for ways to build community resilience in low-income communities of color, which are hit first and worst by climate change impacts. In her spare time, Sona volunteers for Chilis on Wheels and enjoys running, cooking delicious vegan food and playing with her cat.



## **Darryl Molina Sarmiento**

Executive Director, Communities for a Better Environment

Darryl Molina Sarmiento is the Executive Director of Communities for a Better Environment (CBE)- a 40-year-old environmental justice organization with a Triad Model of community organizing, research, and legal support in its campaigns for environmental justice. CBE builds local power in Wilmington, South East Los Angeles, East Oakland, and Richmond and amplifies the priorities and voices of communities within local, regional, statewide, and national EJ efforts. CBE works with its members to not only prevent increased pollution in already overburdened communities, but to envision and enact a Just Transition towards clean energy and healthy, empowered communities. In 2005, she joined CBE as the Youth Program Coordinator where she organized youth to defeat the Vernon Power Plant. In 2011, Darryl transitioned into the role of CBE's Southern California Program Director where she was at the helm of successful community-based campaigns against the fossil fuel industry and toxic polluters and was instrumental in leading the passage of a City of Los Angeles ordinance—Clean Up Green Up—one of the first Environmental Justice Green Zone Policies in the nation.



## **Seth Mullendore**

Vice President, Clean Energy Group

Seth Mullendore is vice president and project director for Clean Energy Group, where he serves as manager, analyst, and technical adviser for power systems, solar PV applications, and battery storage projects. Seth works with policymakers and project developers on outreach and coordination of energy storage project development, and he provides research and reporting of energy storage technologies, policies, and supporting market structures. Prior to joining Clean Energy Group, Seth served as a Sustainable Energy Fellow with Union of Concerned Scientists and worked with Maine Clean Communities to help advance clean transportation initiatives in Maine. He has participated in a number of academic research projects directly related to renewable energy, energy storage, and energy equity. Seth holds a M.S. in Civil & Environmental Engineering from Stanford University, and a B.S. in Geosciences from the University of Southern Maine.



## **Marcus Mundy**

Executive Director, Coalition of Communities of Color

Prior to joining the CCC, Mr. Mundy was Principal at Mundy Consulting LLC, an Oregon state certified minority small business. His practice assisted clients in various disciplines including but not limited to: achieving equity, diversity and inclusion in personnel, contracting, supplier diversity, development and administrative areas; and achieving compliance with respect to applicable laws, regulations and accreditation standards for healthcare businesses and others. Prior to his role at Mundy Consulting, Mr. Mundy served as the President and CEO of the Urban League of Portland, was the Vice President and Regional Compliance Officer for Kaiser Permanente Northwest, and has held a host of other leadership positions. Mr. Mundy attended Howard University in Washington, DC, receiving his Bachelor (BBA) in Business Administration, and attended Howard University's Graduate School of Business. He received his Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree from the University of Oregon's Executive MBA program. Mr. Mundy has served the community through his participation on numerous boards and community advisory positions, including the OHSU Foundation Board, the State Labor Commissioner's Oregon Council on Civil Rights, the Oregon Community Foundation's Regional Advisory Initiative, the Coalition for a Livable Future, EcoDistricts (formerly Portland Sustainability Institute) and, currently, Upstream Public Health. He is also a Senior Fellow in Oregon's chapter of the American Leadership Forum, our state's premier leadership training group for over two decades. His proudest achievement, however, and forever, is as a father to his four children.



## **Kaeti Namba**

Program Support Specialist, Native American Youth & Family Center (NAYA)

Umbrellas? Never heard of them! Growing up in Portland, Oregon, Kaeti loves all things wet, green, and white. The born and raised, University of Portland graduate, knows a thing or two about rainy days and refuses to acknowledge (and use) an umbrella. What has been useful throughout Kaeti's career is the way in which she has grounded her values. A lens framed by her grandparent's Japanese-American internment and voluntary Army experience during WWII, inspired Kaeti to pursue a graduate degree and career advocating for social injustices in communities of color and marginalized communities. Working at the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA), and volunteering for Building Blocks 2 Success, and City of Portland's Public Involvement Advisory Council, Kaeti is on the frontline providing equity and access to programs and services through successful grant funding, project management, program development, and marketing and communications that uplift youth, adults, and Elders of color to opportunities of prosperity and success.

The appreciation of snowcapped mountains, lush evergreen trees, and the thrashing sounds from river to ocean has allowed Kaeti to successfully align, climate justice advocacy with priorities for Portland's Native American community. Kaeti intends to further the intersections of climate justice work with health, wellness, and urban resiliency and what this means to Portland's communities of color and marginalized communities. As with the notion of not using an umbrella, Kaeti's (sometimes stubborn) commitment to drive innovative ideas to proven outcomes will not be deterred by a little rain.



## **Aidil Oscariz**

Vice President of Policy and Advocacy, Catalyst Miami

Aidil is the Vice President of Policy and Advocacy at Catalyst Miami. Aidil joined the organization in 2016 after working with various nonprofit organizations. She has represented and advocated on behalf of immigrants, including unaccompanied immigrant children, protected civil rights, advocated for equitable policies, and worked to increase minority and underrepresented groups' civic and economic participation. Aidil also teaches sociology at Miami-Dade College and is involved with a variety of local and national community groups and organizations to advance social justice, serving on several boards. She earned a law degree from Fordham University and a Masters degree in Comparative Sociology from Florida International University.



## **Angela Park**

Consultant, Angela Park Consulting

Angela Park is an independent consultant, researcher, and writer dedicated to making social justice and equity hallmarks of progressive advocacy, policymaking, philanthropy, and business. She helps mission-driven organizations embed social justice and equity throughout their work, bringing three decades of experience on sustainable development policy, environmental justice, equity and diversity, and organizational and leadership development. She researched and wrote *Equity in Sustainability* (2014) and *Everybody's Movement: Environmental Justice and Climate Change* (2009) and her work has been published by *The Diversity Factor*, *Grist*, and *Yale University* and featured in *The Washington Post* and *Audubon*. Previously, Angela worked at *The White House* in both terms of the Clinton-Gore administration, managing sustainable communities policy and constituency engagement at the President's Council on Sustainable Development. She led research and recommendations to the President on wide-ranging issues from civic participation and environmental justice to sustainable economic development and smart growth. She coordinated state-level sustainable development initiatives at the Center for Policy Alternatives, focusing on legislation to promote renewable energy, public transportation, energy efficiency, and environmental justice. Angela co-founded and served as deputy director of the Environmental Leadership Program. She has testified before Congress and state legislatures and lectures at universities across the United States.



## Jacqui Patterson

Director, Environmental and Climate Justice Program, NAACP

Currently the Senior Director of the NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice, Jacqui Patterson, MSW, MPH, has worked with Peace Corps, IMA World Health, and ActionAid International, co-founded Women of Color United, and serves on the Boards of Directors for the Institute of the Black World, the National Black Workers Center, Association of Adaptation Professionals, The River Network, Fresh Coast Capital, and Center for Story Based Strategy and the Steering Committees for Interfaith Moral Action on Climate Change and Center for Earth Ethics as well as serving on the Leadership Circle for the Climate Justice Alliance.



## Danny Peralta

Executive Managing Director, The Point

Danny R. Peralta was born in the Bronx and was raised in upper Manhattan. He earned a Bachelors of Arts and Science from NYU's School of Education in 2000, and began his work as both a youth and community developer and concerned photographer. In 2002, he formally began attending black and white photography workshops at ICP @ THE POINT and was awarded the Jocelyn Benzakin Fellowship (2005) for documentary photography, the BRIO award (2007), and the Howard Chapnick Grant (2008). That year he came back to THE POINT as Director of Arts and Education to further explore the connection between community development and cultural activities. There he works with organizers, artists, and youth leaders as they revitalize the Hunts Point area of the South Bronx. He has worked to integrate POINT programs creating a holistic approach to community development. In September 2015, he became THE POINT's Executive Managing Director where he continues to connect the community with creativity, most notably via the South Bronx Community Resiliency Agenda. Currently, Danny lives in the Bronx with his wife and two sons who inspire and support his every endeavor.



## Thaler Pekar

CEO, Thaler Pekar & Partners

Thaler Pekar is a pioneer in the field of narrative, story, and persuasive communication. She and her team at Thaler Pekar & Partners work around the world guiding leaders and institutions in gathering, analyzing, and amplifying small stories and big narratives. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has institutionalized the use of their award-winning video on LGBTI refugees in South Africa, and both the BBC and the Smithsonian Institution have hailed Thaler as one of the world's leading experts on organizational storytelling.



## Lourdes Pérez-Medina

Climate Justice Programs & Policy Coordinator, UPROSE

Lourdes Pérez-Medina is the Climate Justice Policy and Programs Coordinator at UPROSE, Brooklyn's oldest Latino community-based organization. Her work involves supporting UPROSE's Sunset Park Climate Justice Center in fostering community resilience and adaptation to climate change through a Just Transitions lens. Before joining the UPROSE team, Lourdes was an ANHD|Morgan Stanley Community Development Fellow at the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition where she worked on the initial planning and development stages of a Community Land Trust in the North Bronx. Lourdes also worked for the Proyecto ENLACE del Caño Martín Peña in San Juan, Puerto Rico on the design and development of home rehabilitation, safety and sustainability guidelines for community residents among other Environmental Justice related projects. Lourdes was born and raised in San Juan, Puerto Rico. She holds an MS in City and Regional Planning from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn and a BA in Architecture from the Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico.



## **Samantha Peterson-Borins**

Senior Executive Assistant, PUSH Buffalo

Sam is a visionary systems thinker and Urban Planner who uses art and passions to support a just transition in her hometown of Buffalo NY. She most recently played a large role in the creation of Buffalo's first Community Land Trust and is now excited to be furthering the mission of PUSH Buffalo.



## **Cara Pike**

Executive Director, Climate Access

Cara Pike is the founder and director of Climate Access, a nonprofit focused on building political and public support for climate solutions through its learning network for nonprofit and government leaders, pilot projects that test new engagement approaches, and communication research and strategy consulting services. Her work includes creation of the Preparation Frame: A Guide for Understanding and Engaging Around Climate Impacts; the Ecological Roadmap, a values-based approach to building support for environmental protection; Climate Communications Behavior Change – A Guide for Practitioners, and other widely used publications and toolkits. Cara regularly advises government agencies and nonprofit organizations. Clients have included the City of Boston, Ocean Science Trust, Union of Concerned Scientists, Province of Alberta, and others.



## **Laura Pinsoneault**

Director of Evaluation, Spark Policy Institute

Laura Pinsoneault is the Director of Evaluation at Spark Policy Institute. Laura has over 20 years of experience in evaluation and strategic learning environments. She has worked with private non-profit community-based organizations and foundations using developmental approaches to respond to complex and rapidly changing environments, always with the aim of advancing their goals of producing equitable, sustainable outcomes in low-income and disadvantaged communities. Laura is currently leading the evaluation of the Climate Resilience and Urban Opportunities initiative. Her approach to evaluation and research prioritizes assets and engagement as drivers of knowledge.

Laura earned a Doctorate in Human Development and Family Studies from University of Wisconsin Madison. She currently resides in Milwaukee, WI. Laura is a member of the American Evaluation Association (AEA) and founding member of the Wisconsin AEA Affiliate and Collaborative, Empowerment, Participatory, and Multicultural evaluation group. She is also an American Express Leadership Fellow.



## **Kimberly Powe**

Deputy Director, Puget Sound Sage

Kim is the Deputy Director at Puget Sound Sage. Kim has a true love of people and is a passionate champion for justice. She knows that success is not a zero sum game and that true sustainability is not achieved when it is at the expense of others. She has a passion for working where sustainability and economic development intersect, which is often where people of color and low-wage communities converge.

Kim brings 18 years of experience in public service and grassroots developments spanning youth and adult economic development, racial equity, sustainability and climate justice, food justice, health equity, affordable housing, restorative justice and international development. Most recently, Kim served as the Director Social Equity and Inclusion for a local environmental organization and as the Director of Sustainability for Multnomah County. Kim holds a Master's in Business Administration in Sustainable Business from the Bainbridge Graduate Institute (now Presidio Graduate School) in Seattle, a Master's of Urban Studies, Community Development, from Portland State University, and two bachelor's degrees from Georgetown University. Kim has had the privilege to be Larry and Lynn Powe's daughter, live on four continents, marry a wonderful partner and have a daily teacher in her daughter.



## **Abigail Filomena Ramirez Sanchez**

Policy Advocate, Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability

Abigail Ramirez is a Policy Advocate in the San Joaquin Valley. She is from Salinas, California, born to immigrant parents from Mexico. Abigail graduated from San Francisco State University with a B.A. in Political Science and Spanish. She also obtained an M.S. in Social Policy from the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy & Practice. Her efforts before joining Leadership Counsel include immigration policy advocacy and community organizing abroad. Abigail's work currently involves community organizing and advocacy on issues of transportation equity and sustainable land use in the northern San Joaquin Valley.



## **Rip Rapson**

President, The Kresge Foundation

Rip Rapson has served as president and CEO of The Kresge Foundation since 2006, transforming it from a foundation that funded building projects to one that seeks to improve opportunities for people living in America's cities, including its hometown of Detroit. He previously served as president of the McKnight Foundation in Minneapolis, where he led early childhood development efforts, created a regional public-private-philanthropic economic development organization, and enhanced environmental protections along the Mississippi River. He earlier served as the deputy mayor of Minneapolis, with responsibility for designing a \$400 million neighborhood revitalization program, revamping the municipal budgeting process, and elevating the city's commitment to children and families.



## **Ameer Raval**

Policy and Research Associate, Asian Pacific Environmental Network

Ameer Raval is a Policy and Research Associate at the Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN), an environmental justice organization that empowers Asian American immigrant and refugee communities across California through grassroots organizing, civic engagement, and policy advocacy. Through her role at APEN, she offers an environmental justice and health equity lens to climate and energy policy in California. She previously worked with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) on climate adaptation and air quality. Ameer graduated with a MS in Environmental Health Sciences from UC Berkeley School of Public Health.



## **Daniel Rizza**

Strategic Relations Liaison, Program on Sea Level Rise, Climate Central

Dan Rizza serves as Manager for the Program on Sea Level Rise at Climate Central in Princeton, NJ. Since 2012 Dan has been on the team that has developed Climate Central's Surging Seas, a suite of tools designed to provide coastal stakeholders with the tailored local information they need to understand and respond to the risks of sea level rise and coastal flooding in their own neighborhoods. Dan leads the program's outreach efforts and has conducted numerous sea level rise workshops across the country.

Previously, he worked at the Climate Policy Center in Washington, DC, where he managed mapping initiatives, researched public attitudes on sea level rise, and advised Congressional Committees on sea level rise and climate hearings. He is a co-author of *An Energy Future Transformed: The Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E)* and was a member of the team contracted by the Department of Energy to advise and support the start-up of ARPA-E. He earned his MA at Georgetown University's Graduate School of Foreign Service and his BA at Colby College.



## **Gabriela Rosado**

CLEAR Graduate, Catalyst Miami

Gabriela Rosado is a recent graduate of Florida International University, where she majored in Anthropology. As a graduate of Catalyst's CLEAR program, she has been given the tools to be an active citizen within greater Miami and her neighborhood of Little Havana. Her hope is to live in a city that is resilient, adaptable and sustainable.



## **Lauren Ross**

Senior Manager, American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy

Lauren Ross manages the local policy team at the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) where she focuses on the local implementation of energy efficiency. Her research concentrates on the nexus of energy efficiency, equity, and cities. She is the lead on ACEEE's work to expand policies and programs to improve energy use underserved and under-resourced communities, with an emphasis on affordable housing and communities of color. Through her work with cities, she continues to promote energy efficiency as a tool to make communities more economically vibrant, healthier, and adaptable in the face of climate change. Prior to joining ACEEE, Lauren was a fellow in the Office for International and Philanthropic Innovation at the US Department of Housing and Urban Development where she worked on identifying best practices and policies to further sustainable housing and cities throughout the United States and internationally. Lauren has a PhD in Urban Sociology from Temple University. She earned an MA in Urban Sociology from the George Washington University and Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Delaware.



## **Vivian Satterfield**

Director of Strategic Partnerships, Verde

Vivian Satterfield is second-generation Chinese American, born and raised in Chicago. Since relocating to Portland in 2008, she has worked alongside community on issues of affordable housing, transportation, procedural justice and energy democracy, rooted in movement building principles and progressive values. She is an organizer, policy shaper and is passionate about building power for every day people to have meaningful and diverse ways of shaping the policies that impact our lives.



## **Elizabeth Sawin**

Co-Director, Climate Interactive

Elizabeth Sawin is Co-Director of Climate Interactive, a think tank that applies systems analysis to issues like climate change, equity, and resilience. Beth helps people find solutions that prevent future climate change and build resilience to unavoidable climate impacts, all while improving equity. In 2016 she coined the term ‘multisolving’ for efforts that address multiple issues in an integrated fashion and her team at Climate Interactive recently completed a global research study of the factors that allow collaborations to successfully address health and climate change together. Beth is a member of the Council on the Uncertain Human Future, a continuing dialogue on issues of climate change and sustainability among a select group of humanities scholars, writers, artists and climate scientists. Her work also focuses on helping leaders achieve bigger impact. She has trained and mentored global sustainability leaders in the Donella Meadows Fellows Program, provided systems thinking training to both Ashoka and Dalai Lama Fellows. and she is currently working on a book about systems principles for social change. A biologist with a Ph.D. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Beth worked on system dynamics and sustainability at Sustainability Institute for 13 years, before co-founding Climate Interactive in 2010.



## **Marta Lynne Schantz**

Senior Vice President, Greenprint Center for Building Performance, Urban Land Institute

Marta Schantz is the Senior Vice President for the Greenprint Center for Building Performance at the Urban Land Institute. She brings deep experience in the real estate sustainability market to lead and collaborate across organizations and stakeholders to achieve program goals and successes. Marta has strengths in project management and market analysis, concentrated in both qualitative and quantitative energy and policy analysis. She has deep experience in market analysis, energy efficiency, and large-scale program management. Marta is a LEED Green Associate and a Fitwel Ambassador. She holds a B.S. in Biological Engineering with a minor in Science Policy from Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



## Phoebe Seaton

Co-director, Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability

Phoebe Seaton co-founded and co-directs Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability. Leadership Counsel, a not-for profit advocacy organization, represents lower income communities in the San Joaquin Valley and Coachella Valley on matters related to land use, natural resources, transportation and investment through local and state-wide policy advocacy, legal representation, and community organizing and education. Key areas of focus include ensuring inclusion of rural communities and rural regions in statewide land use and investment strategies aimed at mitigating and adapting to climate change; reducing the concentration of unhealthy land uses in lower income communities; promoting land use and investment decisions that secure basic services and amenities – drinking water, wastewater, transit, parks – in disadvantaged communities; protecting drinking water quality and supply; promoting affordable housing opportunities; and ensuring government accountability to lower income constituents.



## Parin Shah

Senior Strategist, APEN

Parin leads up the Asian Pacific Environmental Network's (APEN's) environmental justice policy portfolio. While at APEN, Parin has worked to advance equitable energy and climate justice policy – including SB 350, AB 197, SB 32, AB 693 and AB 1288. Prior to APEN, Parin was with Green For All where he worked with cities and counties across the US on environmental equity policies. In 2004, he founded the Urban Accords Institute, which in 2005 co-hosted the UN World Environment Day in San Francisco out of which was developed the Urban Environmental Accords – a road map for creating sustainable cities. From 2000-04 as the President of the Commission on the Environment for the City and County of San Francisco, he co-authored ground-breaking policies and programs on climate change, environmental justice, wetlands conservation and restoration, zero waste, green buildings as well as food security. Parin has also developed and managed habitat restoration projects, horticultural education and job-training programs for formerly incarcerated youth and adults in San Francisco. He began his community work in Tunisia as a Peace Corps Volunteer. Parin loves to get into the soil and garden with his nine year old daughter in Oakland, CA when he is not working.



## Sarah Shanley

Executive Director, Solutions Project

Sarah Shanley Hope is the founding Executive Director of the Solutions Project, a national organization with a vision of 100% clean energy for 100% of people and a track record of success moving that vision from the margins to the mainstream in just five years. The Solutions Project's mission is to make the clean energy movement and narrative more inclusive, collaborative and celebratory. To change these cultural conditions, we invest in community-driven solutions, inspire people with stories about everyday (s)heroes, and build strategic relationships between unlikely allies.

Sarah has held leadership roles at the Alliance for Climate Education, Green For All, Cargill and Best Buy over her 15+ years of experience at the intersection of brand strategy and social change. She has raised and deployed more than \$40 Million in support of an equity and climate agenda over her tenure in the field. Sarah graduated with an MBA from the University of Minnesota and a BA in political science from Vassar College. She grew up in Buffalo NY, now a model of community driven climate solutions, and lives with her husband and daughters in Oakland. Sarah's work has been featured in the NY Times, People Magazine, Fast Company and Upworthy. She has told her stories of change at TEDxMidAtlantic, the Social Venture Network and Bioneers.



## **Maritza Silva-Farrell**

Executive Director, ALIGN: The Alliance for a Greater New York

Maritza Silva-Farrell is the Executive Director at ALIGN. Prior to becoming Executive Director in November 2016, Maritza was ALIGN’s Deputy Director and Campaign Director. She is committed to driving transformational change in New York City by forging powerful alliances that benefit workers, immigrants, women, low-income communities of color, and the environment. Maritza has led or played a critical role in coalitions such as Real Affordability for All, Caring Across Generations – which secured \$1.2 million in funding for undocumented and low-income seniors to access home care – the Universal Pre-K campaign and the campaign that successfully halted Walmart’s plans to develop in East New York.



## **Nathaniel Smith, Jr.**

Founder & Chief Equity Officer, Partnership for Southern Equity

Nathaniel Smith serves as Founder and Chief Equity Officer of the Partnership for Southern Equity (PSE), which advances policies and institutional actions that promote racial equity and shared prosperity for all in the growth of metropolitan Atlanta and the American South. Among PSE’s notable accomplishments was the creation of the American South’s first equity mapping and framing tool, the Metro Atlanta Equity Atlas, and co-authoring numerous reports including: “Growing the Future: The Case for Economic Inclusion in Metropolitan Atlanta”, and “Employment Equity: Putting Georgia on the Path to Inclusive Prosperity”. PSE also led a coalition of diverse stakeholders to support a \$13 million transit referendum that expanded Atlanta’s metropolitan transit system into a new county for the first time in 45 years. Smith’s advocacy activities were instrumental in the ratification of a 15 percent set aside of Atlanta Beltline Tax Allocation District (TAD) dollars for the development and maintenance of affordable workforce housing within the Atlanta BeltLine Planning Area - \$250 million dollars over the 25-year lifespan of the Atlanta BeltLine TAD.

A child of Civil Rights Movement and Atlanta native, Smith holds a Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies from Morehouse College and a Master of Science from the New School.

Among many of his many accomplishments, The Huffington Post honored Nathaniel as one of the eight “Up and Coming Black Leaders in the Climate Movement” in 2017. Nathaniel was also designated one of the 100 “Most Influential Georgians” by Georgia Trend magazine and named to the Grist 50 by Grist Magazine in 2018.



## **Diane Takvorian**

Executive Director, Environmental Health Coalition

Diane Takvorian has led the struggle for social and environmental justice for over 30 years. She is the Executive Director and co-founder of Environmental Health Coalition (EHC), an environmental justice organization based in the San Diego/Tijuana region. Founded in 1980, EHC works to protect public health and the environment threatened by toxic pollution through efforts that create a just society.

EHC’s community organizing and policy advocacy work with disenfranchised communities have eliminated many health risks and enabled thousands of residents to develop into community leaders. Diane has served on international, national, state, and regional advisory boards. In 2016 California Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins appointed Diane to the California Air Resources Board. In 2009, President Obama appointed her to the Joint Public Advisory Committee for the Commission for Environmental Cooperation. In 2018 Diane was named the KPBS Community Hero for environmental justice and sustainability. Diane is also a co-founder of the California Environmental Justice Alliance.

Diane holds a Master’s degree in Social Work with an emphasis on public policy and community organizing.



## **Makani Themba**

Chief Strategist, Higher Ground Change Strategies, LLC

Makani Themba is Chief Strategist at Higher Ground Change Strategies based in Jackson, Mississippi. A social justice innovator and pioneer in the fields of change communications and community-led, justice centered policy development, she has spent more than 20 years supporting organizations, coalitions and philanthropic institutions in developing high impact change initiatives. Higher Ground Change Strategies provides her an opportunity to bring her strong sense of history, organizing knowledge and deft movement facilitation skills in support of change makers working to make powerful, vision-based change.



## **Brett Thomason**

Climate Organizer, ALIGN: The Alliance for a Greater New York

Brett Thomason is the Climate Organizer at ALIGN. He recently spent two years in Portland, Oregon as a liaison between the Oregon AFL-CIO and Renew Oregon, a statewide climate campaign. In this role, he engaged labor union affiliates on policy issues in climate and energy, convened meetings and activities of the BlueGreen Alliance and did community outreach and political organizing for the Renew Oregon campaign. That campaign saw Oregon's legislature double its Renewable Portfolio Standard and become the first state to eliminate out-of-state coal power from its retail electricity mix via legislation.

Prior to his work in Oregon, Brett worked in Boston on a community/labor partnership between the Building and Construction Trades Council of the Metropolitan District and the Boston Housing Authority, on an initiative to recruit and train women and people of color into Building Trade apprenticeship programs. By coordinating a first-of-its kind Building Trades sponsored pre-apprenticeship program, Brett helped oversee the recruitment, screening and training of over 200 members of Boston's under-served communities and place them into high-paying union careers in the construction industry.



## **Angela Tovar**

Director of Community Development, The Point

Angela Tovar has worked as a community planner, advocate and non-profit manager for over 15 years. She currently serves as the Director of Community Development for The POINT CDC, a non-profit organization located in the South Bronx. In her current position, Angela oversees community partnerships, advocacy and environmental justice efforts including the development and implementation of a community-based climate resiliency plan known as The South Bronx Community Resiliency Agenda. Prior to her work at The POINT CDC, Angela spent 4 years at Sustainable South Bronx, as the Director of Policy and Research, where she managed the organization's policy and community greening programs. Angela has also worked as a Research Fellow for The Center for Community Planning and Development at Hunter College. Angela's passion for social and environmental justice stems from her experience growing up on the industrial waterfront of Lake Michigan on Chicago's South side. She holds a B.A. in Urban Studies from the College of Charleston and a Masters in Urban Planning from City University of New York - Hunter College.



## **Sarita Turner**

Director of Inclusive Communities, Institute for Sustainable Communities

Sarita Turner is ISC's Director of Inclusive Communities. where, she oversees ISC's Partnership for Resilient Communities and strengthens the equity and inclusion components of ISC's U.S.-based clean energy, resilience, and sustainability programming. She is also a key advisor to ISC on advancing equity and inclusion through all of ISC's programs and practices. Sarita has deep experience working with multi-sector collaborations to advance equitable solutions to the barriers facing many communities. Prior to coming to ISC, she spent over seven years at Oakland-based PolicyLink, where she worked nationally to advance equitable development practices. Sarita also managed the PolicyLink work with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's \$200 million Sustainable Communities Initiative. Prior to PolicyLink, Sarita served as executive director of the Minneapolis-based West Broadway Business and Area Coalition, which provides local businesses with technical assistance, business support, and capital improvement resources. Sarita also raised funds to open a community farmers' market to serve the West Broadway community, which is considered a food desert.

A nationally-recognized trainer and speaker on diversity, equity and inclusion Sarita sits on the board of Grounded Solutions Network, which advances permanently affordable housing solutions.



## **Marian Urquilla Flores**

Principal, Strategy Lift

Marian Urquilla works as a consultant in the areas of strategy development, leadership development and coaching in the social sector. In addition to her consulting work, Marian is one of the founders of the Center for Community Investment, which helps communities overcome disinvestment and improve opportunity so that everyone has a fair chance to lead a healthy and productive life. At the Center, she helps design and lead national programs, including Connect Capital and the Fulcrum Fellowship, two efforts organized to help leaders make real-time systems change. Finally, Marian is a member of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Results Count Leadership Faculty.



## **Corrine Van Hook**

Program Manager, Movement Strategy Center

Corrine is the Program Manager of the Transitions in Place team with Movement Strategy Center (MSC). She brings 15+ years of experience in the non profit sector and a deeply rooted passion for bridging disconnected and under resourced movements together for greater, sustained, and racially equitable impact.

Previously, as Co-Director of Rooted in Resilience (formerly Bay Localize), she worked to fundamentally shift how traditional top-down planning happens toward a community-driven climate resilience approach through replicable models and tools such as Community Resilient Toolkits and helping co-create MSC's Community-Driven Climate Resilience Planning Framework (CDCRP). As part of the Oakland Climate Action Coalition (OCAC) and Resilient Communities Initiative (RCI), she served on both steering committees successfully convincing the City of Oakland's Planning Commission to unanimously adopt an equity check list. She helped maintain accountability to prioritize equity and community engagement overall, particularly in the recent update of Oakland's Environmental and Climate Action Plan (ECAP), Resilient Oakland Initiative (ROI) and its Playbook launch. She currently serves on steering committees for Rooted in Resilience, California Trade Justice Coalition and the Resilient Oakland Initiative. She has a degree in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley.



## **Melinda Vega**

Community Engagement Coordinator, Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH)

Melinda Vega is a 29-year old Latina and a lifelong resident of Chelsea MA. Currently, Melinda is a mother of two, the Community Engagement Coordinator at the Neighborhood of Affordable Housing, and a student pursuing her degree in Psychology. Formerly she was an Elected School Committee Member for the City of Chelsea where she continues to be a community leader and activist. Melinda has worked in multiple organizations where she has followed her passion for Social and Environmental Justice, Youth Empowerment, and Undoing Racism. As the Community Engagement Coordinator, she coordinates the NOAH Youth Organizers (N-YO) program, empowering them to be change-makers in their community. She also works to empower East Boston community members by developing leadership skills and ensuring they are part of the decision-making process on issues affecting them, ultimately creating a better quality of life for themselves, their families, and the East Boston community as a whole.



## **Kimberly Vermeer**

President, Urban Habitat Initiatives Inc.

Kimberly Vermeer is a well-respected green building and sustainability expert. She is President of Urban Habitat Initiatives Inc., a consulting practice focused on advancing sustainability and climate resilience, especially in multifamily and affordable housing. She offers strategic and tactical consulting to multifamily housing developers to coordinate energy conservation, healthy housing and green building in their projects and to administer project certification through LEED for Homes or Enterprise Green Communities. Increasingly, she is working with clients to incorporate climate resilience into their planning and projects. Her background includes housing finance, policy and development. Ms. Vermeer is LEED AP Homes accredited. UHI is a Massachusetts-certified Woman Business Enterprise (WBE).



## **Linda Warren**

Senior Vice-President of Placemaking, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress

Linda Warren is the Senior Vice-President of Placemaking for Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP), a non-profit intermediary supporting the redevelopment of Cleveland's neighborhoods. Ms. Warren is also the President of New Village Corporation (NVC), CNP's real estate development subsidiary. As Sr. VP, Ms. Warren oversees Placemaking work which includes real estate development and lending, vacant land reclamation, climate resiliency and sustainability, public art, neighborhood marketing and community planning. Ms. Warren has a bachelor's degree in Social Work and a master's degree in Business Administration, both from Cleveland State University.

She has a certificate in real estate development finance from the National Development Council and attended Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government's Program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government as a Fannie Mae Fellow. In March 2009, she became accredited as a LEED AP. She was inducted into Cleveland State University's Monte Ahuja Business College Hall of Fame in 2011 and was the Athena Leadership Award Winner for Cleveland in 2015. Ms. Warren is a member of the City of Cleveland's Tax Incentive Review Council and a Board Member of LAND Studio, Neighborhood Housing Services, Community Partnership for Arts and Culture, McGregor Foundation and the Village Angela-St. Joseph Endowment Board.



## **Marlane Weslian**

Neighborhood Development Officer, Slavic Village Development

Marlane Weslian has been the Neighborhood Development Officer with Slavic Village Development (SVD) since 1998 and carries out neighborhood planning, real estate projects and public art projects, in the Slavic Village/Broadway community located on the southeast side of Cleveland, Ohio. Her responsibilities include developing new trails and greenspace, and brownfield redevelopment. She is a Certified Main Street Manager and Economic Development Finance Professional.



## **Jalonne White-Newsome**

Senior Program Officer, The Kresge Foundation

Dr. Jalonne L. White-Newsome is Senior Program Officer at The Kresge Foundation, responsible for the Environment Program's grant portfolio on Climate Resilient & Equitable Water Systems (CREWS), grantmaking addressing the intersection of climate change and public health, and is a member of the Kresge Operationalizing Racial Equity Team working to address institutional racism in the foundation and beyond.

Before joining Kresge in early 2016, Jalonne served as director of federal policy at West Harlem Environmental Action Inc. (WE ACT), where she was involved with leading national campaigns and a 42-member national coalition of environmental justice organizations.

Jalonne's career has spanned state government, academia, environmental and science-based advocacy organizations, non-profit and private industry, where she spent over 10 years working as a production engineer in facilities across the US.

She is an adjunct professor in the Milken Institute School of Public Health at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and continues to engage in research on climate, health and equity. She is a member of the National Academy of Sciences Board on Environmental Change and Society, and is serving as a lead author for the human health chapter for the 4th National Climate Assessment.

A native of Detroit, Jalonne earned a Ph.D. in environmental health sciences from the University of Michigan School of Public Health; a master's degree in environmental engineering from Southern Methodist University; and a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Northwestern University.



## **Miya Yoshitani**

Executive Director, Asian Pacific Environmental Network

Miya is the Executive Director of the Asian Pacific Environmental Network, APEN. She has an extensive background in community organizing, and a long history of working in the environmental justice movement. APEN has been fighting – and winning – environmental justice struggles for the past 25 years and remains one of the most unique organizations in the country explicitly developing the leadership and power of low-income Asian American and Pacific Islander immigrant and refugee communities. Through many years of leadership, Miya has supported APEN's growth and expansion from a powerful local organization in the Bay Area, to having a statewide impact through an integrated API voter engagement strategy, a statewide Asian Pacific American Climate Coalition, and winning transformational state policy for equitable climate solutions and transitioning the state to a clean energy economy for all Californians. A movement leader in many key local, state, and national alliances, APEN is helping to shift the center of gravity of what is possible when the health and economic well being of working families, immigrant and communities of color are put at the center of solutions to the economic and climate crises. Miya has been Executive Director since November 2013 and proudly supports APEN to be a leading force for climate justice for all communities.