

Ending the HIV Epidemic Steering Committee in Los Angeles County

Biographical Sketches



Astrid Reina, Ph.D.

Dr. Reina is a bilingual/bicultural Clinical Health Psychologist specializing in women's health (lifespan), maternal/perinatal/postpartum mental health, HIV/AIDS/STD risk reduction and prevention, physician/provider wellbeing, health disparities, and poverty medicine. Dr. Reina has extensive experience in the integration of mental health and physical conditions within various medical specialties. She directs the HIV Mental Health Service programs for the Department of Mental Health under support of a federal contract with the Department of Public Health and serves as a key collaborator to the Department of Health Services' Office of the Director of Women's Health and Innovations. Dr. Reina's research interests focus on gynecologic cancer health disparities in Latina women, complex pregnancy, and depression and anxiety disorders in primary and specialty care. Training interests include development of specialization in Clinical Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine, Spanish-language and other culturally congruent skills sets, ethics, and professional development.



Barbara L. Roberts

Barbara L. Roberts is a Prevention Program Specialist at the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Substance Abuse Prevention and Control since 2016. She has long been interested in community education, outreach and engagement, and purposeful in addressing race and gender health disparities and their relation to and/or intersection with social equity and access.



Bridget Rogala, MPH, MCHES

As a Master Certified Health Education Specialist with an MPH in Health Science, Community Health Education, I am passionate about closing the gap on health disparities, with particular focus on Substance Use Disorder, HIV risk reduction, and trauma informed systems of care. My tenure as Project Director of federally funded substance abuse treatment programs and substantial work with minority and under-resources populations in the areas of HIV, STDs, co-occurring mental health disorders, and trauma, has equipped me with a broad skill set and deep understanding of health disparities and risk. Additionally, I advocate for the utilization of best practices and implementation of evidence-based mentoring strategies of minority students in the biomedical sciences to promote a diverse workforce. As a faculty member in the Departments of Health Science and Health Care Administration at CSULB, my passion and focus are to provide students with impactful learning experiences driven by diverse perspectives, social justice, and equity.



Charles Robbins, MBA

Charles is an accomplished C-suite executive who has been transforming communities for the past three decades. His extensive community-based organization career spans health care, child welfare, homelessness, behavioral health, suicide prevention, and substance use disorder, with a forte in HIV and LGBTQ+ populations. He is a consultant with Health Management Associates. Prior, Charles held leadership positions at APLA Health, The Village Family Services, The Trevor Project, National LGBT Task Force, GLAAD, AIDS Medicine & Miracles, and Project Angel Heart. He holds an MBS in healthcare management from Western Governors University.

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Devan Rose

Devan has been doing HIV outreach work with Translatin@ Coalition, getting trans/nonbinary folks to not only know their status and keep safe, but to be more engaged as well.



Erin Jackson-Ward, MPH

Erin is the Director of the Community Benefit Giving Office (CBGO) at Cedars-Sinai, overseeing all outbound philanthropy on behalf of the health system. Erin directed the strategic redesign of the CBGO's funding priority areas, which include Access to Care, Social Determinants of Health and Civic Engagement. Previously, Erin oversaw implementation of Cedars-Sinai's expanding presence in new communities. Prior to Cedars-Sinai, Erin was involved with nonprofits working primarily on the sociomedical needs of pediatric HIV, homeless, and formerly incarcerated populations. Erin is a current DrPH candidate in Health Leadership at Johns Hopkins, holds an MPH from Columbia, and a BA in Psychology from UCLA.



JavonTae Wilson

JavonTae Wilson, is a 29 year old Community activist, who has dedicated his life to addressing the issues that disproportionately impact Young Adults and Black Gay Men in Los Angeles County. JavonTae currently functions as Lead HIV Tester and Linkage Navigator at In The Meantime Men's Group, Inc, a 22 year old 501C3 Community Service Organization dedicated to addressing the holistic wellness of Black gay, same gender loving and bisexual men. JavonTae participates in the Los Angeles County Commission on HIV, the Department of Mental Health LGBTQ+ Taskforce and the Black/ African American Community Taskforce that primarily focused on the Black/ African American Community and HIV. He is also responsible for the HIV Testing and STI Screening component of In The Meantime's BoiRevolution Initiative, an innovative, multi-layered intervention targeting young Black gay men in Los Angeles County.



Jerry P. Abraham, MD, MPH, CMQ

Dr. Jerry P. Abraham, MD MPH CMQ, is a Family & Community Medicine Physician & Global Injury Epidemiologist working in South Los Angeles at Kedren Acute Psychiatric Hospital. He is Secretary of the Los Angeles County Medical Association, Trustee of the California Medical Association, and Delegate to the American Medical Association. He teaches Medical Students and Psychiatry & Family Medicine Resident Physicians as Clinical Instructor at Charles Drew University School of Medicine, a Historically Black Institution in Los Angeles. He is a regular Health Policy and Health Care Contributor and Commentator on Spectrum News 1 among other media outlets as well as for governmental & non-profit organizations. He continues to advise on COVID-19 Emergency Preparedness, Infection Control, and Disease Prevention.



Lindsey P. Horvath

Mayor Lindsey P. Horvath was elected to the West Hollywood City Council on March 3, 2015. She previously served as a Councilmember for two years from 2009-2011. Mayor Horvath has a long history of civic and social justice advocacy. She has spearheaded policies to make West Hollywood an "Age-Friendly Community" to better serve residents of all ages. She is widely known for her leadership on women's issues and is a champion of LGBTQ rights.

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Louise McCarthy, MPP

Louise McCarthy is the President & CEO of the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County (CCALAC), where she represents the interests of LA area community clinics and health centers and those they serve. Prior to joining CCALAC, Ms. McCarthy was the Assistant Director of Policy for the California Primary Care Association, where she worked on statewide legislative, regulatory and administrative issues impacting California's community clinics and health centers. She has also worked for the California Bureau of State Audits, conducting performance evaluations of state agencies, and for the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, analyzing policies affecting the business community. Ms. McCarthy is the Chair of the California Primary Care Association (CPCA) and the past Board Chair of L.A. Care Health Plan. She holds a Master's in Public Policy from the UCLA School of Public Affairs.



Luis S. Garcia, Ed.D., MSW

Dr. Garcia is an experienced administrator and advocate for justice involved populations. As an expert in building cross sector collaboration, networks, and movements, Dr. Garcia has been responsible for the administration of a robust multi-million-dollar portfolio of city, county, and state publicly funded programs designed to seamlessly transition Skid Row's chronically homeless, medically fragile, seriously mentally ill, and reentry populations, to permanent housing in Los Angeles County. He began his professional career with a community-based organization addressing emerging public health issues faced by Latino and LGBTQ+ reentry populations and seriously mentally ill state parolees. He is a board member of Whittier First Day Homeless Shelter and a Street Symphony advisory board member. Dr. Garcia earned his Ed.D. in Educational Leadership for Social Justice from Loyola Marymount University, holds a Master of Social Work from the University of Southern California, a B.A. in Theology from Loyola Marymount University, and is an Associate Clinical Social Worker (#98896, California Board of Behavioral Sciences).



Mariana Marroquin

Mariana Marroquin is a Trans Wellness Center Program Manager and Asylee Guatemalan Trans woman. She is an HIV Prevention warrior, bright, creative minded, and an innovator.



Matthew Gray Brush, MPH

Matt Gray (he/him) is a man of transgender experience whose passion for public health runs deep, both shaped and informed by his own experiences with medical discrimination and transphobia. His foundational education in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Human Rights drove him towards his MPH, furthering his skills as a health educator and sexual & reproductive health specialist. Matt's experiences as an educator for both youth and adults, combined with his own passion for life-long learning and skill-building, enable him to equip both health providers and patients with essential communication and advocacy skills. Through capacity building and self-empowerment, Matt hopes to improve policies, procedures, and outcomes across all health settings for all LGBTQIA+ people.

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Raniyah Copeland, MPH

Raniyah Copeland, MPH is President and CEO of the Black AIDS Institute, the nation's only national HIV/AIDS think tank focused exclusively on Black people. Copeland previously served as Director of Programs, the organization's chief HIV prevention, treatment, training and community mobilization expert. Copeland earned a Bachelor of Arts in African American Studies and Public Health from UC Berkeley, and a Master of Public Health from Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science.



Robbie Rodriguez

Robbie Rodriguez is an experienced nonprofit director, who currently works at Equality California as their program director, overseeing all of the organization's public education and advocacy programs. Prior to joining Equality California, he worked for Dewey Square Group, which is a full-service public affairs and communications firm. As a senior associate at Dewey Square Group, Robbie specialized in nonprofit and issue-based communications and managed several multimedia projects for the firm's Social Innovation and Philanthropy practice. Robbie grew up in the heart of the Central Valley and holds a bachelor's degree in sociology from San Francisco State University. After stints in Fresno, San Francisco and Sacramento, Robbie currently lives in West Hollywood.



Tyreik Gaffney-Smith

Tyreik was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and has been living in Los Angeles for 7 years. Tyreik is a childhood cancer survivor and also does work with the American Cancer Society in addition to being an advocate for young men's health and wellness, including HIV and sexual health. Currently an employee at APLA Health in Los Angeles, Tyreik has spearheaded several city-wide campaigns including #HealthyHim and #TheLinkUp.



Zelenne L. Cárdenas

As the director of prevention services for Social Model Recovery Systems, Inc, a human services organization, Cárdenas works diligently on behalf of people who face the most devastating manifestations of poverty in the downtown Los Angeles area known as Skid Row. She has been an activist for the past 20 years, helping to build multi-ethnic coalitions and increase civic participation. Cárdenas has served as a consultant to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, as well as to several counties throughout the State of California. She received The California Wellness Foundation's (TCWF) Community Leader Fellowship to support her violence prevention work. In 2004, Cárdenas was named a Local Hero of the Year by KCET-TV and Union Bank of California during Hispanic Heritage Month and honored with California Peace Prize for her work in Skid Row by TCWF. In 2007, she was awarded La Opinión's, a leading Spanish-language daily newspaper in the U.S.), the Mujeres Destacadas/Outstanding Woman award for her leadership. In 2008, Bank of America, through its Neighborhood Excellence initiative, named her a Local Hero for work in the skid row community.

For more information and resources on Ending the HIV Epidemic in Los Angeles County
visit www.LACounty.HIV.