

Equity Advisory Committee on Aging and Disability (EACAD) Committee Membership 2024-2025

Stakeholder Committee Membership

Cheryl Brown, *Small Business Owner*

Cheryl Brown is a former member of the California State Assembly and a family-owned small business owner. While in the Legislature, she represented California's 47th District, located in the heart of San Bernardino County. Brown chaired the Assembly Aging and Long-Term Care Committee and authored a concurrent resolution establishing the California Task Force on Family Caregiving. She also served on the San Bernardino County and City Planning Commission for 17 years. Brown is a broadcast journalist who served as a television talk show host for 12 years. Cheryl attended San Bernardino Valley College and earned her bachelor's degree in geography from California State University, San Bernardino.

Betsy Butler, *Advocate*

Betsy Butler has been fighting for equality and justice throughout her career. Betsy served in the California State Assembly representing the 53rd District and as the Executive Director of the California Women's Law Center. She has held leadership positions at the California League of Conservation Voters (now California Environmental Voters), the Environmental Defense Fund and the Consumer Attorneys of California. She began her career in public service with Lt. Governor Leo McCarthy and was an appointee of President Bill Clinton in the International Trade Administration at the U.S. Department of Commerce in Washington, D.C. Betsy is a former appointed member of the California Commission on Aging (2015–2021) and served as the Chair of the Commission in 2019 and 2020. Betsy graduated from San Diego State University and from the Executive Program in Management at UCLA and is presently seeking her Master of Legal Studies at UCLA.

Elvira Castillo, *Advocate*

Elvira Castillo has served in a variety of senior roles in city, county, and state level government, and in the non-profit sector, for more than 35 years. Most of these experiences involved oversight, analysis or implementation of programs authorized by the Older Americans Act and other support programs for older adults. As a first-generation Latina with a rural farmworker background, she has a heightened sense of awareness of how legislative and policy proposals can affect historically underserved

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communities. Today, Elvira continues her lifelong commitment to advocacy as a policy adviser with AARP. Elvira holds master's degrees in Public Administration and Gerontology from the University of Southern California and is a graduate of Pomona College.

Denny Chan, *Justice in Aging*

Denny Chan serves as the Managing Director of Justice in Aging's Equity Advocacy team. In this role, he is responsible for developing and leading Justice in Aging's Strategic Initiative on Advancing Equity, with a primary focus on race equity for older adults of color, and he also coordinates the organization's equity team. He joined Justice in Aging as an attorney on the health team in 2014 and is based in Sacramento, CA. The son of working-class Chinese immigrant parents, Denny has worked significantly on non-discrimination, language access, and healthcare delivery reform issues for low-income older adults and brings all of these experiences to his advocacy. He previously served as a rotating law clerk for the US District Court in Los Angeles and participated in the Fulbright English Teaching Program as a fellow in Macau, China. Denny is a graduate of the University of California, Irvine School of Law. He received his BA from the University of Michigan.

Dr. Le Ondra Clark Harvey, *California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies*

Dr. Le Ondra Clark Harvey is a psychologist and the Chief Executive Officer of the California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies, a statewide advocacy organization representing mental health and substance use disorder non-profit agencies that collectively serve over 800 thousand Californians annually. She is also the Executive Director of the California Access Coalition, a group of advocacy organizations and pharmaceutical industry companies that advocates for patient access to behavioral health treatment. Dr. Clark Harvey has previously served as Chief Consultant to the California State Assembly Committee on Business and Professions, Principal Consultant to the Senate Committee on Business, Professions and Economic Development, and a health policy consultant to the office of former Senator Curren D. Price, Jr. Le Ondra has a history of service on several national and local boards including the American Psychological Association (APA) and has held prior positions on the Association of Black Psychologists, Sacramento County Public Health Advisory Board and the Sacramento County Children's Coalition. Dr. Clark Harvey was appointed by California Governor Gavin Newsom to his Master Plan on Aging Advisory Committee and the Behavioral Health Task Force in 2020. In 2021, she was appointed by California Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis to the California Institute for Regenerative

Medicine Board. Dr. Clark Harvey completed her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She completed her pre-doctoral fellowship at the University of Southern California Children's Hospital Los Angeles and a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of California, Los Angeles Mattel Children's Hospital.

Vincent Crisostomo, *Advocate*

Vincent Crisostomo has been an HIV/AIDS activist for more than 35 years in the U.S. and abroad, serving as an organizer, peer advocate, outreach, education and training provider, researcher and executive. Diagnosed with AIDS in 1995, Crisostomo brings a unique personal perspective to the challenges faced by medically disadvantaged populations and deep connections within the BIPOC and LGBTQ communities. He has been a caretaker to many friends and loved ones affected or lost to the AIDS epidemic as well as a caretaker to his own parents. Vincent is a current member of the San Francisco Mayor's Long Term Care Coordinating Care Council, has chaired the city's HIV & Aging Work Group, served on the SF Dignity Fund Steering Committee and currently co-chairs the SF Dignity Fund Oversight Committee. He is currently the Director of Aging Services at the San Francisco AIDS Foundation and was appointed by the Mayor London Breed to the San Francisco Human Rights Committee's LGBTQI+ Advisory Committee.

Michelle Fonseca, *Mental Health Clinician, Instituto Familiar de la Raza*

Michelle Fonseca, a trailblazing second-generation Nicaragüense dedicated to transforming lives through social work. With a passion deeply rooted in the rich tapestry of Central American and Latinx cultures, Michelle stands as a proud advocate and beacon of change in the vibrant Mission San Francisco district. Michelle is armed with a Master's in Social Work from Stanislaus State, and has seamlessly woven together a profound understanding of Sociology and Psychology from UC Merced. As a diligent pursuer of excellence, Michelle is on a steadfast journey toward becoming a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, poised to make a lasting impact on mental health within the community. Michelle is currently serving as a dedicated mental health clinician at Instituto Familiar de la Raza, Inc, an institution steeped in over 45 years of commitment to the Mission SF area. Michelle, exemplifies the essence of compassion and healing. Specializing in providing support to the Latinx youth population and brings a unique blend of personal experience and professional expertise to the forefront.

Lynn Fritz, *Licensed Marriage Family Therapist*

Lynn Fritz is a Licensed Marriage Family Therapist in private practice. She is a consultant and expert witness in Indian Child Welfare. Lynn is bicultural, her mother is Swedish, and her father is Native American. She has lineage with the Hoopa people
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and is an enrolled tribal descendent of the Karuk Tribe, Happy Camp, CA. In clinical practices, Lynn's work is focused on working with grief, trauma, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, depression, anxiety, relational issues, life transitions, aging, death and dying, multicultural issues, LGBTQ+, spiritual/religious issues, sobriety, mindfulness, and healthy living. She is an educator, public speaker and has served for 13 years as a caregiver for her parents and second mother, commencing such service in 2011. After completing her master's degree in counseling psychology, the educational requirement for applying to be a Licensed Marriage Family Therapist, Lynn completed her practicum and the first few years of her internship working with Redding Rancheria Tribal Health in Redding, CA. Since then, she has continued and expanded her relationships with Native American people and communities.

Ephraim Getahun, *Advocate*

Ephraim Getahun has dedicated over 15 years to the field of aging healthcare, embodying the role of a lifelong caregiver through a diverse career path that includes experience in residential care facilities as care staff, hospice nurse, and Memory Care Director, and notably, as the Director of Strategic Partnerships and Training at Openhouse LGBTQ+ Senior Center. At Openhouse, they played a pivotal role in operationalizing the first LGBTQ+ Adult Day Program in the nation and developed key cultural humility trainings to improve healthcare for 2SLGBTQ+ older adults. After leaving Openhouse in January 2024, Ephraim has continued their passion for fostering equity in healthcare, traveling across the country delivering equity trainings aimed at healthcare providers. Their workshops and seminars are designed to refine care practices, ensuring that they are inclusive and sensitive to the unique needs of diverse aging populations. As an Ethiopian-American, Ephraim's commitment to caring for elders is deeply rooted in their cultural heritage, complemented by insights from their upbringing in rural Pennsylvania.

Sherri Harris-Pruitt, *Sistahs Aging with Grace & Elegance (SAGE)*

Sherri Harris-Pruitt (aka Kiara) is Co-Founder of Sistahs Aging with Grace & Elegance (SAGE), a California non-profit with a mission to empower and support African American women with tools and resources to enhance their quality of life into their senior years. She draws from 30 years of experience in public agency communication including cause marketing, media relations, community outreach and engagement. Raised in Prince George's County, Maryland, she attended Hampton University where she received her BA in Mass Media Arts. She earned her master's degree in Public Administration from California State University, East Bay.

David “Jax” Kelly, *Advocate*

David “Jax” Kelly is a tireless advocate for people aging with HIV. Diagnosed with HIV in 2006, Jax is President of Let’s Kick ASS Palm Springs (AIDS Survivor Syndrome), a 501(c)3 non-profit reducing isolation and loneliness for witnesses to the AIDS plague years, HIV long-term survivors and people aging with HIV. Besides serving on the board on of the Mizell Center in Palm Springs, Jax works with the California Planning Group, an advisory board for the CA Department of Public Health’s Office of AIDS. Nationally, he serves on the steering committee of The Reunion Project, the nationwide alliance of long-term survivors of HIV. He is often called to speak on issues concerning aging with HIV. In 2023, Jax completed his assignment as a member of the third cohort of the HIV and Aging Scholars Program of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care where he made a presentation on an a new program “Barbershop: A Black Men’s Space for Honest Talk about Sexual Health” which is funded by a grant from BEAM. And he served on a CDA advisory committee for the creation of California’s first survey of LGBTQ+ older adults. He is grateful for numerous awards and recognition, especially the 2022 Spirit of Stonewall Volunteer of the Year from Greater Palm Springs Pride. He earned his undergraduate degree from Yale University and most recently completed his MPH in Health Services and Policy at the University of Southern California. He also has degrees in business and law with an MBA from New York University and a JD from Fordham University.

Marielle Kriesel, *California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC)*

Marielle Kriesel was formerly a panelist of the Master Plan for Aging Equity Workgroup. Her focus is improving public policy and decision making by applying a disability lens to research and analysis of healthcare equity, human value and belonging, and human rights, transforming findings into action to create public policy supporting complex embodiment and human variation, deconstructing widespread national socioeconomic disparities attributed to disability. Marielle is a woman with a congenital spinal cord injury compelling the use of a wheelchair for mobility. Marielle currently serves as the Director of Contracts and Grants for the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC). CFILC builds the capacity of Independent Living Centers across California to serve residents with disabilities throughout their lifespan by increasing access to equal opportunity and equity. In this role, Marielle has oversight of acquisition, development and implementation of strategic grants and contracts, including building key partnerships. Her prior professional experience includes serving the public interest both as Deputy Director of the Disability Community Resource Center (DCRC) in Los Angeles between 2022-2024 and as a paralegal in civil rights law practice between 2013-2018. She served as a Commissioner on the Santa Monica Disabilities 2024-2025 EACAD Membership

Commission between 2014-2021. Marielle received her B.A. in Honors English from CSU, Northridge and her paralegal training at UCLA.

Dr. Marty Lynch, *LifeLong Medical Care (retired)*

Dr. Marty Lynch was the Director of LifeLong Medical Care and the Over 60 Health Center for 38 years and a non-profit administrator for more than 30 years. Dr. Lynch co-founded the Elderly Sub-Committee of the National Association of Community Health Centers and is past Chair of the California Primary Care Association. He recently served on the state task force to examine policy changes necessary for the integration of primary care and mental health services and worked to develop a California plan for Alzheimer's disease. Dr. Lynch received his Ph.D. in Social and Behavioral Sciences from the University of California, San Francisco, and an MPA from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard.

Dani Soto, *Openhouse*

Dr. Dani Soto brings decades of dedicated experience in championing the well-being and rights of marginalized communities. They graduated Cum Laude with a B.A. in Sociology from the University of Montana, where they were a McNair Scholar. They received their Master's and Ph.D. from Bowling Green State University in Sociology, specializing in racial/ethnic disparities and disparities based on gender, sexual orientation, and sexual identity. After graduate school Dani spent four years as an Assistant Professor, where they served as an advisor/mentor for many campus and community groups serving underrepresented students. Dani transitioned to the non-profit sector, wanting to use their skills and expertise in a more applied way. Recognizing that true justice requires attention paid to the intersections of race/ethnicity, sexuality and sexual identity, sex and gender identity and expression, and socioeconomic status, they frequently examine and advocate in these areas. Their commitment to equity remains unwavering as they now serve as the Deputy Director at Openhouse, serving LGBTQ+ older adults in the San Francisco Bay Area. In this role, Dani channels their passion for participatory approaches and advocacy to cocreate a community in which older LGBTQ+ adults are seen, celebrated, and centered.

David M. Villarino, *Farmworkers Institute for Education & Leadership Development (FIELD)*

David M. Villarino, a second-generation Latino from San Diego, CA, has been the President and CEO of the Farmworkers Institute for Education & Leadership Development (FIELD), for the past 23 years. In that time, David has grown FIELD from a staff of two with a budget of \$60,000 to 225 employees today with a budget of \$17

million. David has overseen the service of 130,000 farmworkers, recent immigrants, and other underserved minorities in poor communities through FIELD's education and training programs at 20 campuses around the state. He is proud to be implementing Cesar Chavez's Vision at FIELD to gain economic prosperity through worker-owned cooperatives. At 19-years-old, Villarino began working for Chavez in the United Farm Workers (UFW) as a community organizer for \$5 a week, wanting to help bring justice to the FIELDS. He rose through the ranks of the UFW to become Cesar's chief bodyguard and traveled with him around the world in the promotion of the rights of farmworkers. By 1980 when he was 32, in just 18 months, David organized six new elections that resulted in 4,000 new farmworker members in the Fresno-Madera area. He also became the first Latino presidential state director in U.S. history when he directed four primaries for Presidential candidate Michael Dukakis including Maine, Colorado, Arizona, and a portion of California. In 1976 he married Cesar and Helen Chavez' daughter Liz. He is also the grandson of Juan de Dios Gonzalez, the farmworker organizer who won in 1931 organized farmworkers in San Diego County and led a farmworker boycott and lawsuit that became the first successful desegregation lawsuit in the United States, (*Alvarez v. School Board*, San Diego federal district court).

Julia Yarbough, *Julia Yarbough Media Group*

Julia Yarbough is a multiple Emmy Award-winning broadcast journalist with more than 25 years of media experience, including serving as anchor in several major US media markets in California, Florida and Kentucky. Yarbough has also served in the governmental sector, as Press Information Officer with the Chico Police Department and Media Ambassador for the City of Miami Beach. As family caregiver to an elderly parent, Yarbough is passionate about raising awareness and educating others to the realities facing family caregivers and improving current services. She has launched Keeping It REAL Caregiving; a website, blog, podcast and public speaking platform, to produce segments highlighting challenges faced by those caring for elders. Most recently she was selected as a 2020 Journalists in Aging Fellow with the Gerontological Society of America.

Julia currently serves as a Communications Consultant with the national media firm MAGID and leads the Julia Yarbough Media Group, providing media coaching, producing client stories and promoting socially responsible entrepreneurial ventures for select clients. She is a native of Fairfield, California, and a graduate of the University of California, Santa Barbara with a Bachelor of Science in Economics.