

## Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Advisory Committee - Presenter Biographies – May 4, 2023 Meeting

### Support Decision-making, Other Decision-making Tools and Capacity Considerations

#### **Wynnelena Canlas Canio, MD**

Dr. Wynnelena Canlas Canio, MD, AGSF, CMD is an experienced geriatrician and psychiatrist and Chief of Geriatric Medicine in Kaiser Permanente San Rafael. She has led several initiatives to improve care for older adults, including the implementation of a geriatric evaluation and management. She is a member of various committees and advisory groups in Kaiser Permanente San Rafael and beyond. Dr. Canio is a recognized subject matter expert in geriatric models of care and has been appointed to several state and national committees to tackle the growing dementia crisis. She completed her training at the University of Kansas Medical Center and UCLA and has received numerous awards and recognition for her work.

#### **Sally Bergman**

Sally Bergman is an elder law attorney with a passion to solve some of the many serious problems older adults and their families unfortunately face as they age. Sally's legal career spans more than four decades, all of which has been devoted to assisting those who have fewer opportunities to receive quality professional legal services than others. She earned an advanced law degree (LL.M.) in Estate Planning and Elder Law from Western New England University of Law and is accredited by the Veteran's Administration to represent Veterans. She is also an active member of National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA), ElderCounsel, WealthCounsel, ElderLaw Answers, Academy of VA Pension Planners (AVAPP), the Trusts & Estates Section of the California State Bar, California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform and Coalition for Compassionate Care. These organizations and their individual members provide her with a nationwide network of professionals with whom she collaborates and shares ideas and strategies in the very complex and constantly changing and evolving areas of elder law, estate planning, Medi-Cal, Social Security and Veterans benefits. Sally is a past President of the Northern California Chapter of NAELA.

Sally proudly serves as Board Chair on the Board of Directors of Mission Hospice & Home Care, a non-profit in San Mateo. Additionally, she serves there as a Direct Care Volunteer, providing emotional and social support and companionship to dying individuals and their families. Sally is certified by the Alzheimer's Association® in both their essentiALZ® and essentiALZ® Plus End-of-Life Dementia CARE Programs. She lives in San Mateo with her husband, Doug, and their pet parrot, Victor, who can occasionally be heard in the background during telephone and Zoom calls.

#### **Catherine Blakemore**

Catherine Blakemore has worked as an attorney and director, in legal aid and disability advocacy programs for 40 years. She retired as the executive director of Disability Rights California, the non-profit agency established under federal law to protect and advocate for individuals with disabilities. In 2016, she received the Loren Miller Legal Services Award, given annually to a lawyer who has demonstrated a long-term commitment to legal services.

Ms. Blakemore is dedicated to increasing equal rights and opportunities, access to services, and dignity for Californians with disabilities and individuals from other marginalized communities. She is the Vice-Chair of the California Commission on Access to Justice which works to identify innovative solutions and support efforts to increase access to courts and legal resources for low and modest means individuals and a member of the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission. Catherine currently serves as Chair of the California Health and Human Services Agency Alzheimer's Advisory Committee and is a member of the Department of Aging's Equity Advisory Committee on Aging and Disability. She previously served on Governor Newsom's Business and Jobs Recovery Task Force and the Master Plan for Aging Long-Term Services and Supports Subcommittee.

## Alzheimer's Plan Implementation Update

### **Susan DeMarois**

Susan DeMarois was appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom to serve as Director of the California Department of Aging effective November 1, 2021. As Director, Ms. DeMarois is committed to stakeholder engagement; equity and inclusion; and system transformation to prepare our state for the year 2030 when one in four Californians will be aged 60 or older.

Prior to joining CDA, Director DeMarois led public policy and advocacy for the national Alzheimer's Association in California, serving as the nonprofit organization's registered lobbyist in Sacramento where she advocated for legislative, budget, and regulatory changes at the state capitol. The organization led the effort to enact the first dementia early detection initiative in the nation focused on the Medicaid population: SB 48 (Limón) signed into law by Governor Newsom.

Ms. DeMarois served as an appointee to Governor Newsom's Alzheimer's Prevention and Preparedness Task Force, chaired by former First Lady Maria Shriver, in addition to the Master Plan for Aging Stakeholder Advisory Committee, a workgroup established by Executive Order. In addition, she represented the Alzheimer's Association on the CalHHS Agency Secretary's Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Advisory Committee.

Before working for the Alzheimer's Association, Ms. DeMarois led government and community relations for the UC Davis Health System where she gained deep health policy and clinical workforce experience. Early in her career, she worked for LeadingAge California, the professional trade association representing not-for-profit housing, residential care and skilled nursing providers.

A graduate of CSU Chico, Director DeMarois started her career working for the U.S. Congress and California State Assembly. She is a proud mom to two adult daughters, and draws inspiration for her work from her own mom's experience with dementia.

## Legislative Update

### **Jared Giarrusso-Khlok**

Jared has spent 15 years in public policy – both in higher education administration and policy advocacy, and now in aging policy advocacy. He currently serves as the Alzheimer's Association California State Government Affairs Director. During this time, he has advocated for policy solutions that support Californians receiving a timely and accurate diagnosis, improve the network of public and private care, and help individuals afford that care. Prior to joining the Alzheimer's Association in 2019, Jared

advocated for nearly half a million Cal State students, working to advance policy solutions for student representation, student basic needs, and broad base college affordability solutions. Jared lives in Sacramento with his wife Anira, and two dogs, Chance and Cudi, and is originally from the San Francisco Bay Area.

### **Barbra McLendon**

Barbra McLendon has a deep background in public policy. For over 15 years, she has focused on aging & long-term care policy and advocacy in her position as the Public Policy Director for Alzheimer's Los Angeles. During this time, she has developed legislation and policy recommendations to improve services and supports for people with dementia and their families. Her current projects include advocating for the development of dementia capable health care delivery systems and building dementia friendly communities in and around the Los Angeles area through "Purposeful Aging Los Angeles."

### [Key Indicators for the Master Plan for Aging](#)

#### **Ross Lallian**

Ross Lallian joined the California Department of Aging (CDA) in December 2022 as Chief of Research in the Division of Policy, Research, and Equity. Over the last six years, Ross served as the Healthcare Workforce Development Research and Evaluation Chief at the Department of Health Care Access and Information. In his role with CDA, Ross will be critical to advancing the Master Plan for Aging, including leading the California Aging and Disability Research Partnership, the Data Dashboard for Aging, and many other efforts. Ross also has experience with pension research and has led efforts to understand how pension payments impact state and local economies. Ross holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and a Master of Science in Accounting from Sacramento State.