

L.A. County Workforce Development Board (WDB) Member

BIOGRAPHIES

REPRESENTATIVES OF BUSINESS

CARLOS ADAME

Carlos Adame is the Vice President of Human Resources at AltaMed. He previously served as Regional Vice President of Human Resources with United Healthcare. He is a member of the Society of Human Resources Management. AltaMed is one of the fastest growing health care providers in the southern California region with locations throughout L.A. County. He received an MBA from UC Irvine and a B.A. in Business Administration from CSU Fullerton. Mr. Adame was nominated by the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce.

RUSSELL BARNARD

Russell Barnard is President of the Hospitality Industry Management Group (HIMG), the operating company for Rusty's Surf Ranch, now in its 22nd year on the Santa Monica Pier, and other industry related activities. Mr. Barnard's previous hospitality industry experience includes concept development and operation of Santa Monica restaurants such as The Tavern on Main, The Atrium Espresso Bar Café, and the Ocean Park Omelet Parlor. Mr. Barnard was an Instructor in the Department of Communications at Stanford and an Assistant Professor of Journalism at CSU Northridge. Mr. Barnard was nominated by Supervisor Kuehl and the Pier Lessees' Association.

RANDY BOWERS

Randy C. Bowers is the President and CEO of Malaga Bank, which has been serving the residents of the South Bay for over 30 years. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees and as Chairman of the Finance Committee for Marymount California University. He is the past Chairman of both the Palos Verdes Peninsula and San Pedro Chambers of Commerce, and is still a member of the Board of Directors for the San Pedro Chamber. Mr. Bowers was nominated by Supervisor Knabe and the San Pedro Chamber of Commerce.

JOSE GARDEA

Jose Gardea is the President of Urbanism Advisors. Urbanism Advisors facilitates, develops and implements action plans for economic and business development through Public/Private Partnerships. He previously served for 12 years as Chief of Staff for the First Council District of the City of Los Angeles, and was a Senior Field Deputy for 6 years prior to that. He received a B.S. in Political Science from UCLA. Mr. Gardea was nominated by the Valley Economic Development Center.

CINDE M. MACGUGAN-CASSIDY

Cinde M. MacGugan-Cassidy is the President of Catalina Business Services, Inc., a provider of accounting services, human resources management, structural establishment, business planning, administrative solutions, and general organizational development for business clients. Ms. MacGugan-Cassidy is an elected member of the Avalon City Council. She has prior experience as a small business and non-profit finance consultant specializing in organizational development, financial management, strategic planning and accounting. She received a B.S. in Business Management. Ms. MacGugan-Cassidy was nominated by Supervisor Knabe and the Catalina Island Chamber of Commerce.

KIMBERLY MAEVERS

Kimberly Maevers is the President of the Greater Antelope Valley Economic Alliance (GAVEA). She worked for many years in the building industry and gained experience in land development, public policy, construction, economic development, community sustainability, and rural land conservation. Ms. Maevers received a B.S. in Consumer Sciences from Colorado State University. She was nominated by Supervisor Antonovich and GAVEA.

JOANNE PETERSON

Joanne Peterson is the Executive Officer of Human Resources at L.A. County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Ms. Peterson has many years of professional experience and has become a respected leader in public sector human resources, a sought-after public speaker and author. Ms. Peterson received an MPA from the University of Washington, an Associate Degree in Occupational Therapy, and Certification in Strategic Leadership from the Dominican University of California. She previously served as a member of the Marin County Workforce Investment Board. She was nominated by the L.A. Area Chamber of Commerce.

HOLLY SCHROEDER

Holly Schroeder is the President and CEO of the Santa Clarita Valley Economic Development Corporation (SCVEDC). Ms. Schroeder has over 20 years of management experience and executive experience in private sector, governmental, and non-profit organizations. Ms. Schroeder received an M.S. in Applied Information Management from the University of Oregon, and a B.A. in Chemistry and French from St. Olaf College. She was nominated by Supervisor Antonovich and the SCVEDC as a Business Representative.

ERICK VERDUZCO-VEGA

Erick Verduzco-Vega is the President of the South Bay Latino Chamber of Commerce (SBLCC) which has over 200 small business members located throughout the County and he is also a business owner and entrepreneur. He served as an appointee of the 2nd District and was Vice Chair of the L.A. County Workforce Investment Board. He currently serves on the City of Long Beach Planning Commission. Mr. Verduzco-Vega received a B.S. in Finance, Real Estate and Law from CSU Long Beach. He was nominated by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas and the SBLCC.

DR. MICHELLE YANEZ

Dr. Michelle Yanez is the Director of Education Pathways at the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership. In this role, Dr. Yanez works collaboratively with Pasadena City College, Citrus College, Mt. SAC, Rio Hondo College and the L.A. County WDB on regional plans under WIOA. She has extensive professional experience in economic and workforce development, in both the public and private sectors, beginning in 1998 when she served as the Executive Director of the East Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce. She currently sits on the Board of Regents for the Southern California University of Health Sciences and the Skills Organization, both in Whittier. She obtained a doctorate of Educational Leadership from CSU Long Beach, a Masters of Public Administration from USC and a Bachelor of Arts in English from CSU L.A. Dr. Yanez was nominated by the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE WORKFORCE

AIDA BARRAGAN

Aida Barragan is the Executive Director of the Building Skills Partnership, a statewide organization that works to improve the quality of life for property service workers by increasing their skills, access to education, and opportunities for career and community advancement. Prior to her current role, she served as Staff Director with the Service Employees International Union – United Service Workers West for more than 10 years. She previously served as a Labor Representative on both the L.A. County and L.A. City Workforce Investment Boards. She received her B.A. from UCLA and her A.A. from Santa Monica College.

Ms. Barragan was nominated by the L.A. County Federation of Labor to serve as a Representative of Labor and the Workforce.

LOLA SMALLWOOD CUEVAS

Lola Smallwood Cuevas is a Project Director for the UCLA Labor Center, and is volunteers at the Los Angeles Black Worker Center, the first worker center in California focused on solving the black job crisis by building power among black workers to create greater access to quality jobs, addressing employment discrimination, and transforming industries that employ black workers. She previously served on the L.A. County Workforce Investment Board. Ms. Cuevas was nominated by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas and the L.A. County Federation of Labor to serve as a Representative of Labor and the Workforce.

SHOMARI DAVIS

Shomari Davis is a Business Representative with the International Brotherhood of Electric Workers –(IBEW) Local 11. In this capacity he works to expand employment opportunities for L.A. County residents in the building trades and serves as a liaison between labor and management on construction projects. He received an Associate of Sciences Degree in Electrical Technology in 1988 from Pasadena City College. He previously served on both the L.A. County and L.A. City Workforce Investment Boards. Mr. Davis was nominated by the L.A. County Federation of Labor to serve as a Representative of Labor and the Workforce.

CORINNE SANCHEZ

Corinne Sanchez is the President and CEO of El Proyecto del Barrio, Inc. a non-profit organization that provides comprehensive health, employment, childcare development, HIV outpatient medical and education, youth and rehabilitative services to the underserved communities throughout L.A. County. Ms. Sanchez served as an appointee of the 1st District on the L.A. County WIB. She has over 37 years of experience in Non-Profit Organization Administration. She received a JD from the San Fernando College of Law and a B.A. from CSU Long Beach. Ms. Sanchez was nominated by Supervisor Solis as a Representative of the Workforce.

LAURIE TRAKTMAN

Laurie Traktman has served as a labor attorney in Los Angeles for over 20 years. She serves on the Board of Directors for the California Conservation Corps Foundation where her work is focused on expanding employment opportunities for California's disconnected youth and young adults with barriers to education and employment. Ms. Traktman served as an appointee of the 1st District on the L.A. County WIB. She recently joined the Advisory Board of the Los Angeles Alliance of a New Economy, an organization that addresses the challenges of working poverty, inadequate healthcare and polluted communities. Ms. Traktman received a JD from USC and a BA from Barnard College of Columbia University. She was nominated by Supervisor Solis as a Representative of the Workforce.

JAIME VALDIVIA

Jaime Valdivia is the Executive Director of the Piping Industry Progress and Education (PIPE) Labor-Management Cooperation Committee. He is affiliated with many labor associations including serving as the President of United Association Local Union 398. He is also a member of the Advisory Board for the Mounty Baldy Regional Occupational Center. Mr. Valdivia is also a Certified Instructor of Journeyman Training. He received a B.A. in Labor Education from National Labor College and an Associate Degree in Applied Science/Industrial Training from Washtenaw Community College. He was nominated by the L.A. County Federation of Labor as the Representative of Joint Labor-Management Apprenticeship Programs.

REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENTAL & ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ENTITIES

ADRIANA BARBARA KUHNLE

Adriana Barbara Kuhnle is the Division Chief for the newly configured Los Angeles – Coastal Field Division of the Workforce Services Branch of the California Employment Development Department (EDD). Previously, Adriana served as the Deputy Division Chief for the Central South Region of Southern Workforce Services Division which encompasses over 41,000 miles, consists of nine counties, seven Workforce Development Boards (WDB), 12 AJCCs, and 120 staff. She has served on three WDBs and multiple sub-committees. Adriana has 33 years of experience working with the Employment Development Department; 15 of which have been in Workforce Services. She was nominated by EDD as a Representative of the State employment service office under the Wagner-Peyser Act.

WAN-CHUN CHANG

Wan-Chun Chang has worked with the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) for over 38 years and is currently responsible for managing a vocational rehabilitation services program as the District Administrator over the Van Nuys/Foothill District. She has been a member of the L.A. County Commission on Disabilities and the Advisory Board since 2007 and previously served on the L.A. County Workforce Investment Board. She received her M.A. in Guidance from Eastern Kentucky University and her B.A. in English from Fu Jen Catholic University. She was nominated by DOR as the representative of programs carried out under title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

DAVID FLAKS

David Flaks is the Chief Operating Officer of the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC), the largest regional economic development and one of the most diverse business associations in the L.A. County region. Mr. Flaks previously held positions of LAEDC Senior Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, Communications Director for a Democratic Nominee in a U.S. Congressional race, and President of David Flaks Capital, a communications and financial consulting firm. He received a Master's Degree in Political Management from George Washington University, a JD from American University, and a B.S. in Philosophy from the University of Wisconsin. He previously served as a Representative of Business and Economic Development on both the L.A. County and L.A. City Workforce Investment Boards. He was nominated by LAEDC as a Representative of Business and of Economic Development.

REPRESENTATIVES OF ENTITIES ADMINISTERING EDUCATION & TRAINING

CYNTHIA PARULAN-COLFER

Cynthia Parulan-Colfer is the Superintendent of the Hacienda-La Puente Unified School District, the 2nd largest adult education system in California (after LAUSD). She has over 25 years of educational leadership experience in Vocational Education, English-as-a-Second Language, Citizenship, Greater Avenues for Independence, Adults with Disabilities, and Parent Education. Ms. Parulan-Colfer received a J.D. from Boalt Hall School of Law, UC Berkeley, an M.A. in Educational Administration from CSU Fullerton, and a B.A. from UCLA. She was nominated by the Department of Community and Senior Services as a Representative of Adult Education.

DR. PATRICIA RAMOS

Dr. Patricia Ramos is the Dean of Workforce and Economic Development at Santa Monica College. She is also the owner and operator of Los Angeles' premier espresso catering business; America's Cup Espresso Bars, located in Santa Monica. Dr. Ramos was the 2015 Chair for the 26th Anniversary Awards Dinner of Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE). She previously served as the Youth Council Chair of the L.A. County Workforce Investment Board. She was nominated by Supervisor Kuehl as a Representative of Institutions of Higher Education.

RICHARD VERCHES, WDB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

He has served as Executive Director of the L.A. County Workforce Development Board since 2009. He was previously the Chief Deputy Director of the L.A. County Human Relations Commission. He has professional experience in international human rights and refugee law, university administration and teaching, small business, corporate communications, public affairs and government relations, non-profit organizations and philanthropy.

Since 2003, he has taught a course on “Human Rights in the Americas” at UCLA. He has co-directed Santa Clara University School of Law’s international human rights law summer program in Strasbourg, France; co-founded an immigrant education and financial literacy community organization; was a Partner in a national research, strategic communications firm; President/COO of the Latin Business Association; Director of Community/Media Relations, and Crisis Communications and Sr. Consultant for International Affairs with ARCO, and a Legal Officer with the United Nations in Geneva.

His community service and civic leadership includes coordination of the European Fellows program for the German Marshall Fund of the U.S. transatlantic leadership program in L.A., serving on the Board of Directors of the Dashew International Center at UCLA, Advisory Council of the Center of Global Law and Policy of Santa Clara Univ. School of Law, UCLA Foundation Board of Governors, and UCLA School of Public Affairs Board of Advisors. He was appointed by Governor Davis to the California Quality Education Commission and High School Exit Examination Independent Consultant Selection Panel. He served on the Board of Directors of the UCLA Alumni Association and the Cerritos College Foundation.

He was nominated by the California Community College Chancellor’s Office and appointed in 2012 by the L.A. County Board of Supervisors to the Redevelopment Oversight Boards for the cities of Alhambra and Huntington Park. He is Vice-Chair of the Capacity Building Committee and Executive Committee member for the California Workforce Association and was appointed Co-Chair of BizFed’s Workforce Development Council and to the BizFed Executive Committee. Hacienda La Puente Adult Education honored him with a 2015 HEROES Award.