



Reproductive Health and the Environment in Los Angeles County Communities, Science, and Policy

Monday, January 27, 2014

The California Endowment Center for Healthy Communities
1000 N. Alameda St., Los Angeles

Made possible by support from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation
Additional support from the Executive Advisory Board of the Iris Cantor-UCLA Women's Health Center

Speaker Biographies

Efren Aguilar

Efren Aguilar, GIS Lead, has over 25 years experience serving his community through national, statewide and local non-profit organizations. His professional experience runs a broad range of social service issues including, social justice, homelessness, supporting displaced political refugees, domestic violence, education, public health and child development. He heads the GIS activities for the UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities. His recent professional experiences include Healthy City as their Senior Research Analyst, and First 5 LA as a Program Officer in their planning and development department. In these positions, he has been pioneering changes in planning and evaluation practices that emphasize the critical impact that place/neighborhood conditions have on individual and community health utilizing cutting edge GIS and web-based technologies. Central to his community change philosophy is the democratization of data and inclusion of local residents in developing community-based planning efforts, actionable research and informing place-based funding decisions. Mr. Aguilar's previous work experience includes consulting for The LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investments, The California Endowment, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services, and serving as staff with the Statewide California Coalition for Battered Women, The American Cancer Society and the Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law.

Kathryn Alcantar

Kathryn serves as the California Policy Director for the Center for Environmental Health (CEH) and as the Campaign Director for Californians for a Healthy and Green Economy (CHANGE) -- a coalition of 35 diverse organizations working to create a better system for regulating toxic chemicals for the protection of workers, children, public health, the environment, and the economy. Kathryn has almost 15 years of experience working at the intersection of environment, health, and social justice in the private, government, and non-profit sectors. She joined CEH after two years of consulting for the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors while completing her joint Master's in Public Health and Public Administration in Environmental Health Science and Policy at Columbia University. Kathryn completed a two-year fellowship at the San Francisco Foundation where she managed the Environmental Health and Justice Initiative and supported their \$2 million annual environmental grant-making portfolio. As part of her work with Latino Issues Forum, the Greenlining Institute, and WE ACT for Environmental Justice, she has experience in policy and advocacy at the local, regional, state, and federal levels. The central goal of Kathryn's work is to build power in low-income communities of color to engage in policy development that transforms their health, environment and economic opportunities. She is a Senior Fellow with the Environmental Leadership Program and has a B.S. in Civil and Environmental Engineering from U.C. Berkeley.

Martha Dina Arguello, Ph.D.

Martha has spent 35 years in working on social justice and health issues. From her early experience as a youth organizer, coordinating one of the first gang truces in Los Angeles, to her current work as Executive Director of Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles (PSR-LA), she has remained committed to promoting healthy and engaged communities through organizing, media and policy advocacy.

Martha is a major leader in California's environmental health movement – a movement. She works on a wide range of local state and national policy issues related to, air quality, climate change, and toxic chemicals. Martha organized the first Precautionary Principle Conference in Los Angeles in 2001 and helped craft the precautionary and cumulative impacts language for Cal EPA environmental Justice Guidelines.

Under her leadership PSR-LA has been a leader in passing legislation to protect human health and the environment including a ban on BPA in baby products, changing the California flammability standard that is driving the use of toxic flame-retardants and numerous other environmental health bills over the last 15 years.

She is one of the founders and current chair of the steering committee for Californians for a Green and Healthy Economy and Chair of the steering committee for Californians for a Healthy and Green Economy.

Adam Carter

Adam Carter, District Representative, currently staffs State Senator Carol Liu (D-La Cañada Flintridge). As a District Representative, he is the main point of contact for the Senator's constituency. Adam also serves as the primary advisor for healthcare related issues in the district. Prior to his time with Sen. Liu, Adam previously worked as a staff assistant for Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Burbank) and as a field representative for former Assemblymember Anthony Portantino (D-La Cañada Flintridge). Adam received his degree in Political Science with an Emphasis in American Politics from UCLA.

Christina Chambers, Ph.D.

Christina Chambers, PhD, MPH, is a professor of pediatrics at UC San Diego and Director of Clinical Research for the Department of Pediatrics at UCSD and Rady Children's Hospital. She is a perinatal epidemiologist whose research is focused on environmental exposures and pregnancy and child health outcomes. She co-directs the UCSD Center for the Promotion of Maternal Health and Infant Development, and leads a number of national and international clinical research projects addressing medication and vaccine safety in pregnancy. She heads the National Children's Study San Diego site, and has conducted extensive research on improved diagnosis, prevention and treatment for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders. Dr. Chambers received her PhD in public health/epidemiology in 2002 from the joint doctoral program at UCSD and San Diego State University. She is author of more than 100 research publications and has served as president of the US Teratology Society as well as president of the North American Organization of Teratology Information Services.

Ellen Eidem M.S.

A longtime proponent of women's health, Ms. Eidem serves as the Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's Office of Women's Health (OWH). The OWH works at the individual, community, and systems level to decrease health disparities and improve the health status of women in LA County through education, advocacy, program planning and promotion, data analysis and reporting, facilitating and building collaborations, policy recommendations, and increasing access to services for low income and underserved women. She is responsible for the Women's Health Policy Council, the advisory body to the OWH. Previously, Ms. Eidem served as the Director of Programs and Administration for the Los Angeles Free Clinic (dba: The Saban Community Clinic) and as the Director of Quality Improvement for the California and Los Angeles Regional Family Planning Councils, (dba: California Family Health Council), and an administrator and instructor at Planned Parenthood Alameda/San Francisco and the Berkeley Women's Health Collective.

Linda Kite

Linda Kite is the Director for the Healthy Homes Collaborative in Los Angeles, CA. She works collaboratively with government agencies and community based organizations to ensure that primary prevention takes place in the highest risk communities. She has worked on lead poisoning prevention in Los Angeles, at the state and at the national level since 1992. She was trained as an Environmental Justice Organizer by the Center for Third World Organizing. In 2012 she completed the Healthy Homes Specialist Credential and the Healthy Housing Rating Systems training and certification. She has an MBA and a Masters in International Relations.

Diana Liu, MPH

Ms. Diana Liu began her career in Public Health as a California Epidemiologic Investigation Services (CAL-EIS) resident in Orange County Health Care Agency. She then worked as the Public Health Epidemiologist at the San Bernardino Department of Public Health. Ms. Liu has been an Epidemiologist at the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Programs for over 15 years. She is blessed to work with a group of caring, passionate and dedicated MCAH colleagues whose mission is to improve the health and lives of women, children and their families. She looks forward to going to work every day!"

Kristin Palmsten, ScD

Kristin is a postdoctoral scholar in the Department of Pediatrics at UC San Diego. Her research interest is the safety of medication use during pregnancy. For her doctoral dissertation, Kristin identified a cohort of over 1 million pregnancies ending in live birth from national Medicaid health care utilization data and studied the safety of antidepressant use during pregnancy. Kristin graduated from Harvard School of Public Health in 2013 with a Doctor of Science in Epidemiology. She majored in Biology and minored in Women's Studies at Boston College.

Kathryn Phillips

Kathryn Phillips leads lobbying and regulatory advocacy and overall administration of Sierra Club California. She began this role in August 2011. She previously directed transportation and air pollution work in California for Environmental Defense Fund, where she worked on regional, state and federal policy, and also gained experience in agriculture policy and water policy. Before joining EDF, she was a senior policy advisor at the Center for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Technologies where she focused on air quality and transportation issues. Kathryn has been based in Sacramento since 2001.

Kathryn holds a B.A in history from the University of California, Berkeley, an M.A. in Journalism from the University of Missouri, Columbia, and a Master of Public Policy degree, with a dual focus on natural resources and transportation, from the University of California, Los Angeles. A former journalist, she is the author of two books about environmental issues.

Janet Pregler, M.D.

Janet P. Pregler, M.D. is Professor of Clinical Medicine at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. She is the director of the Iris Cantor-UCLA Women's Health Center. She is also director of the UCLA National Center of Excellence in Women's Health, established by a contract awarded by the Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health in 1997. Dr. Pregler is co-editor of the textbook "Women's Health: Principles and Clinical Practice". She has developed educational programs on women's health for the American College of Physicians, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, and the Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health.

Radhika Rible, MD

Radhika Rible MD, MSc is an Assistant Clinical Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. She is a member of the Division of Family Planning, and she is an assistant director of the UCLA Fellowship in Family Planning. Dr. Rible received her MD from Columbia University and MSc in Clinical Investigations from the University of Southern California. Her research interests include contraception and preconception care for women with complex medical conditions, long acting reversible contraception, and reproductive health outcomes.

Beate Ritz, MD, Ph.D.

Beate Ritz joined the faculty of the School of Public Health at UCLA in 1995 and is currently Professor and Chair of the Epidemiology Department and holds co-appointments in the Environmental Health department at the UCLA School of Public Health and in Neurology, UCLA School of Medicine. She is a member of the Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (COEH), the Southern California Environmental Health Science Center (SCEHSC), and previously co-directed the NIEHS-funded UCLA Center for Gene-Environment Studies of Parkinson's disease. Dr. Ritz received her MD from the University of Hamburg Germany in 1983 and a PhD degree in Epidemiology in 1995 from UCLA. Her research addresses occupational and environmental toxins such as pesticides, ionizing radiation, and air pollution on chronic diseases with a focus on neurodegenerative and neurodevelopmental disorders, cancers, adverse birth outcomes and autism. She has developed geographic information system (GIS) based exposure assessment tools to study health effects of air pollution and of long-term pesticide exposures. She is a Collegium Ramazzini Fellow, served on multiple IOM committees evaluating Gulf War Illness, the U.S. EPA CASAC panel (Carbon Monoxide National Ambient Air Quality Standards) and the Scientific Review Panel on Toxic Air Contaminants for the state of California.

Janette Robinson-Flint

Janette Robinson Flint is a founding member and currently serves as the executive director for Black Women for Wellness in Los Angeles. Jan is recognized for her commitment to Black women's and girls' health issues and for her skill at collaborating across cultures and communities to champion common issues. She builds consensus by engaging peoples' heads and hearts before moving forward to tackle the issue at hand.

Janette participates in a number of local, statewide and national coalitions and partnerships including: California Coalition for Reproductive Freedom, a coalition working to ensure access to reproductive health services for women & girls; Having Our Say, coalition of advocates and people of color organizations working to implement health care reform throughout California; and the Reproductive Justice Coalition of Los Angeles.

Annie Sartor

Annie is a core member of BCAction's program team and leads BCAction's national campaigns and policy advocacy. Annie's activist background includes environmental and social justice campaigning to slow climate change, demand corporate accountability and stand up for the rights of people most impacted by greed and inequality. A Women's Studies major from the University of Washington, Annie is inspired by BCAction's unwavering commitment to women's health.

Laura Sirott, MD

Laura Sirott, MD is currently in private practice of Obstetrics and Gynecology in Pasadena, CA. She is affiliated with Huntington Hospital and is the Chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She is the Secretary for ACOG District IX (California) and serves as the Chairman of the Committee on Legislation. Additionally, on the national level, she sits on the ACOG OB/Gyn PAC Governing Committee and the Committee on Practice Bulletins for Obstetrics. Dr. Sirott has lobbied on the State and National level for issues concerning women's health.

She is a graduate of Pitzer College (BA Biology) and the Autonomous University of Guadalajara (MD). She completed her training in obstetrics and gynecology at Michigan State University, Lansing, MI prior to returning to California to enter private practice.

Cristina Tirado, DVM, MS, PhD

Dr. Tirado is adjunct professor at the School of Public Health of the University of California at Los Angeles and adviser for several UN organizations. She has been involved on food, health, climate and environment change and sustainable development research programs and policy making with the UN, governmental, non-governmental int'l organizations and at the university in more than 100 countries in Europe, Central Asia, Africa, Middle East, South Asia and the Americas. She has served as PAHO Food Safety Adviser, as WHO Food Safety Regional Adviser for Europe, and coordinator of the WHO Surveillance Program for Foodborne diseases in Europe at the WHO/FAO Collaborating Center at Federal Institute for Risk Assessment in Berlin.

Dr. Tirado is currently focused on addressing the challenges of Climate Change to health, food and nutrition security and safety. She has been contributing author of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) last assessment report, she is moderator of the U.N. Standing Committee on Nutrition's e-working group on Climate Change and she is a health and nutrition advocate at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). She is a DVM and she obtained her Master and PhD degrees on Environmental Sciences from Cornell University, NY.

Margaret Lynn Yonekura, M.D.

Dr. Yonekura received her BA from Pomona College and her MD from USC School of Medicine. She completed her internship and residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at LA County/USC Medical Center and a fellowship in Maternal-Fetal Medicine at George Washington University Medical Center. She was on the Ob/Gyn faculty at LAC+USC medical Center from 1980-86 and Chief of the division of Obstetrics/Maternal-Fetal Medicine at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center from 1986-1992. She is currently an Associate Professor of Clinical OB/GYN at UCLA School of Medicine and USC School of Medicine. Dr. Yonekura is also the Director of Community Benefits at California Hospital Medical Center in Los Angeles and Executive Director of Los Angeles Best Babies Network and Options for Recovery: Harbor/South Bay. She is a member of the Women's Health Policy Council of L.A. County's Office of Women's Health, LA County Preconception Health Collaborative, LA County Prenatal and Early Childhood Home Visitation Consortium Advisory Committee, L.A. County Substance Abuse Access Project Steering Committee, LA County Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Project Steering Committee, YMCA Diabetes Prevention Program Community Advisory Board, and Preconception Health Council of CA. Dr. Yonekura also serves on the Board of Trustees of Pomona College and the Good Hope Medical Foundation.