



Reproductive Health and the Environment in Los Angeles County Communities, Science, and Policy Wednesday, November 7, 2018

**The California Endowment Center for Healthy Communities
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Speaker Biographies

Scott Abbott, R.E.H.S., M.P.A.

Scott Abbott has worked for the Environmental Health Division of the County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Health for 25 years. He is currently the Manager of the Environmental Protection Branch where he is responsible for overseeing the Cross Connection and Water Pollution Control Program, the Drinking Water Program, and the Land Use Program. He helped write the County's Guidelines for Alternate Water Sources and the Local Area Management Program for regulation of onsite wastewater treatment systems. He is a graduate from San Diego State University where he earned a BS in Environmental Health and from California State University of Long Beach where he obtained his Master's degree in Public Administration. Scott is a Registered Environmental Health Specialist with the State of California.

Deborah Allen, Sc.D.

Deborah Allen is Deputy Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, where she heads the Bureau of Health Promotion. Divisions within the bureau include Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health, Women's Health, Children's Medical Services, and Substance Abuse Prevention and Care. Bureau programs take a holistic approach, addressing health needs in the context of family and community. Like all programs of the Department of Public Health, they emphasize elimination of health inequality as a central goal. Dr. Allen is new to the Department of Public Health and to Los Angeles. She served previously as Director of Child, Adolescent and Family Health at the Boston Public Health Commission, as Associate Professor of Maternal and Child Health at the Boston University School of Public and as director of the Division for Special Health Needs at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Dr. Allen received the MCHB Director's Award and the Federation for Children with Special Needs Executive Director's Award in 2016; the Coalition for Excellence in MCH Epidemiology Outstanding Leadership Award in 2014; the American Public Health Association Maternal and Child Health Section Outstanding Leadership Award in 2013; the Massachusetts Association for Behavioral Healthcare Children's Behavioral Health Award in 2012; and the Boston University School of Public Health Excellence in Teaching Award in 2009, 2010 and 2012. She currently chairs the Maternal and Child Health Section of the American Public Health Association and serves on the board of CityMatCH, the national organization of urban maternal and child health leaders. Throughout her career, she has served on multiple leadership and advisory committees for maternal and child health programs at local, state and national levels. Dr. Allen has a doctorate in Maternal and Child Health and master's degrees in MCH and Health Policy and Management from the Harvard University School of Public Health.

Martha Dina Argüello

For the past 32 years, Martha has served in the non-profit sector as an advocate, community organizer, and coalition builder. She joined PSR-LA in 1998 to launch the environmental health programs, and became Executive Director in November 2007. She is committed to making the credible voice of physicians a powerful instrument for transforming California and our planet into a more peaceful and healthy place. Martha grew up in the Pico-Union area of Los Angeles. At the young age of 14, she made a lifelong commitment to effect social change after seeing her friend killed by a school security guard. While working as a health educator in the 1990s, Martha had an epiphany — she realized that although early detection can prevent death from breast cancer, it does not prevent breast cancer, which has been increasingly linked to the exposure of environmental toxicants. Since that realization, Martha has dedicated her career to the environmental justice movement, and has lectured nationwide on the use of precautionary principle policies. As a coalition builder, Martha has emphasized the need for local grassroots advocacy working in partnership with statewide policy actions. She is an active board member of numerous organizations, including Californians for Pesticide Reform, the California Environmental Rights Alliance, and Californians for a Healthy and Green Economy. She also co-founded the Los Angeles County Asthma Coalition and the Coalition for Environmental Health and Justice, and was appointed to Cal/EPA's Environmental Justice Committee and the California Air Resources Board's Global Warming Environmental Justice Advisory Committee.

Cynthia Babich

Ms. Babich is the co-founder and director of the Del Amo Action Committee (DAAC), a grassroots environmental justice community group. Since 1993, DAAC has engaged in issues regarding pollution, toxins, and waste dumping (especially the waste dumped into their community). Since 2005, Ms. Babich has also served as the coordinator for the Los Angeles Environmental Justice Network and has been an integral part in the communication and collaboration of the many EJ groups in the Los Angeles area. She is supported in her work by her husband Frank for over 30 years. Ms. Babich believes that social responsibility is important, because if you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem.

Norchelle Brown, M.S.W.

Norchelle Brown is a Watts Los Angeles native and first-generation college graduate. She completed a dual bachelor's program in sociology and African American studies at the University of California at Riverside. In 2013, Norchelle was accepted into the National Urban League's Internship Program where she further developed her passion for advocating for communities of color while working in the Education and Youth Development division in their New York office.

In 2016, Norchelle completed a Master's degree in social work with a concentration in community organizing, planning, and administration from the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. As a graduate student, Norchelle interned in the office of Board President Monica Garcia of the Los Angeles Board of Education where she co-drafted a resolution passed by the board to increase services and resources to address the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Los Angeles schools. The new policy gained support from Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, Senator Holly Mitchell, the FBI, and local law enforcement.

Currently, as a Policy Assistant in the office of Congresswoman Nanette Diaz Barragan, who represents California's 44th Congressional District, Norchelle focuses on issues directly impacting the communities of Compton, Carson, Watts, and Willowbrook. Recently, Norchelle led the office's effort of supporting constituents who began complaining of the community's poor water quality earlier this year. As brown water poured from faucets Congresswoman Barragan's office responded with compassion and was able to bring national attention to the many years of poor management of a local water district, and the disregard of its ratepayers. As the water district is currently in the process of being dissolved, community members are optimistic about the future.

Norchelle is eager to continue a career dedicated to underserved communities in Los Angeles County.

Ingrid Brostrom

Ingrid Brostrom is the Assistant Director of the Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment and teaches Environmental Justice at UC Berkeley School of Law. She is a graduate of the University of California-Hastings College of the Law and originally joined CRPE in 2006 as an Equal Justice Works Fellow. She leads CRPE's Toxic-Free Communities campaign, which seeks to eliminate or reduce toxic threats in California's low-income communities and communities of color. As part of this campaign, Ingrid coordinates the People's Senate, a coalition of residents and advocates from communities impacted by toxic waste who work together to drive reforms in California's management and cleanup of hazardous waste. Ingrid is a member of the Hazardous Waste Reduction Initiative Advisory Committee for the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). For the past five years, she has led CRPE's policy team and successfully passed several key pieces of legislation to reform DTSC. Before joining CRPE, Ingrid worked primarily on wildlife and land conservation issues. She graduated from the University of California at Santa Cruz with degrees in environmental studies and politics and interned with the Jane Goodall Institute, the Center for Biological Diversity and the Sierra Club. Ingrid, while no longer on an active team, considers herself a rugby player for life.

Jennifer Clary

Jennifer has served as a water policy and legislative analyst for Clean Water Action since 2003. She directs the Central Valley Program and serves on key state stakeholder committees, advising state agencies on actions to improve groundwater quality and allocate state funding for water infrastructure. Prior to joining Clean Water Action, Jennifer worked in the private sector, including a stint as a San Francisco tour guide, and advocated on environmental issues in San Francisco. She holds a bachelor's degree in Chemistry from U.C. Berkeley.

Veronica Eady, J.D.

Veronica Eady is Assistant Executive Officer of the California Air Resources Board. In this capacity, Ms. Eady is responsible for overseeing Environmental Justice activities of the Board.

Her role will be to serve as the primary internal and external contact for CARB on environmental justice issues and concerns and will be responsible for providing policy consultation and recommendations to CARB staff. She will also participate in decision making during the development and implementation of all major CARB programs to ensure that environmental justice and tribal concerns are considered.

Ms. Eady was formerly the Vice President and Director of Conservation Law Foundation Massachusetts and was the Associate General Counsel and Director of Environmental Justice at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, a non-profit civil rights law firm in New York City. Eady has also served as Director of the Environmental Justice and Brownfields Programs for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, where she was the principal author of Massachusetts Environmental Justice Policy. Eady was also Executive Director of Alternatives for Community and Environment, an environmental justice advocacy organization. She is the former chair of EPA's federal advisory committee for environmental justice, the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council.

Eady has held appointments on several faculties, including Europe-Viadriana University in Germany, Tufts University, in the Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning, Fordham Law School, and at the Stanford Law School. Eady received her B.A. in journalism from the University of Southern California, and her J.D. from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law.

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 health equity for 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: Essential Access Health), and an administrator and instructor at Planned Parenthood Alameda/San Francisco and the Berkeley Women's Health Collective.

Jazmine Johnson

Jazmine Johnson serves as the Land Use & Health Program Associate for Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles (PSR-LA). In this role she coordinates workshops involving health professionals, field experts, and community members, and conducts research surrounding issues of industrial land use and health in the South and Southeast Los Angeles communities. Committed to fighting for social justice and racial equality, Jazmine joined PSR-LA with experience working for the City of Chicago and organizing on the Southside. In this capacity, she was instrumental in engaging with residents and community based organizations to gauge community needs and increase civic engagement. She has also conducted research in the Dominican Republic on health and environmental issues and was involved in social justice campaigns and efforts through organizations on campus while in undergrad.

Jazmine holds a Bachelor of Arts in Biological Sciences with a Specialization in Neuroscience from the University of Chicago, and completed coursework and research in public policy and health, particularly in urban settings, with aspirations of becoming a physician.

Angela Johnson-Meszaros, J.D.

Angela Johnson Meszaros is a staff attorney with the California regional office. She is based in Los Angeles, CA.

Angela's docket focuses on working with communities of color on issues related to air pollution, energy, and the urban environment. Over nearly 25 years, Angela has used a range of tools to enhance the health, safety, and quality of life in communities impacted by environmental hazards including: providing technical assistance to community members to support their effective advocacy on behalf of their communities, litigation, legislative drafting and policy advocacy, and media engagement.

Angela's efforts have focused on policy development, implementation, and enforcement in a variety of environmental areas including: the impacts of climate change policy on communities of color, eliminating extraction of oil in LA's urban neighborhoods, meeting the health-based air standards established by the Clean Air Act, public participation in environmental decision-making, reducing childhood lead poisoning, defending against destructive freeway siting, stopping inappropriate siting of sources of air pollution, land use policies and their impact on community health, reducing health impacts of air toxics from mobile and stationary sources, Superfund clean up, the California Environmental Quality Act, and air permit development and compliance.

Angela holds both a degree in philosophy and a law degree from the University of Southern California. She is a member of the California state bar. She's the proud mother of two children, a decent archer, and a lover of good stories told well.

Mashariki K. Kudumu, M.P.H.

Mashariki Kudumu, MPH is the March of Dimes Maternal and Child Health Director for Greater Los Angeles. In this role she directs programs that improve the health of all moms and babies and represents March of Dimes in local and statewide health equity initiatives. Mashariki has lived and worked in California, New York City, and Latin America, and has expertise in program development, health education, community engagement, and grant writing. Prior to joining the March of Dimes, Mashariki was a Prenatal Screening Coordinator at Cedars-Sinai Medical and involved in quality improvement committees to reduce the cesarean section rate among low-risk, first-time mothers. Mashariki was also a community and prenatal health education with UCSD's Mother, Child and Adolescent HIV/AIDS Program. With a background in social work, Mashariki has worked with families experiencing homelessness and impacted by HIV/AIDS. She has been a doula, providing labor support to pregnant women who were justice-involved or living with HIV/AIDS. A life-long social justice advocate, Mashariki is committed to community-informed solutions to advance health equity and promote wellness.

Mashariki has a bachelor's degree in Social Work and Psychology from UC Berkeley and a Master of Public Health degree with an emphasis in Community Health and Reproductive Health from UCLA.

mark! Lopez, M.A.

mark! Lopez comes from a family with a long history of activism. He was raised in the Madres del Este de Los Angeles Santa Isabel (Mothers of East LA Santa Isabel – MELASI), an organization co-founded by his grandparents, Juana Beatriz Gutierrez and Ricardo Gutierrez. This set his trajectory as a community activist. He has engaged in a wide array of student activism at UC Santa Cruz where he earned his B.A. in Environmental Studies, and taught university courses at UC Santa Cruz, Cal State Northridge, and UCLA Extension. mark! earned his M.A. from the Chican@ Studies Department at Cal State Northridge, where he completed his Masters thesis titled “The Fire: Decolonizing “Environmental Justice.” mark! joined East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice as a member three years before joining the staff. After serving as Lead Organizer for East Yard Communities and Co-Director with EYCEJ Co-Founder Angelo Logan, mark! is now the Executive Director. He organizes in the area where he was born, raised and continues to live. mark! is the 2017 North American Recipient of the Goldman Environmental Prize.

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, which promotes comprehensive women's healthcare through model clinical care, research, professional education, and community partnerships. 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. Dr. Pregler received the 2017 Health Honoree award from the Los Angeles County Commission for Women, presented by the Commission and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. The award acknowledged exceptional work improving the lives of women in Los Angeles County.

Jyoti Puvvula, M.D., M.P.H

Jyoti Puvvula MD, MPH is Associate Clinical Professor at David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. She is faculty physician at the Harbor-UCLA Department of Family Medicine where she directs the community medicine and adolescent health curriculum, with focus on Health & Human Rights, Social Injustice, and Care of Vulnerable Populations. She is co-medical director of the Gardena High School Based Clinic. As the coordinator of the adolescent health curriculum, she also helps coordinate the teen pregnancy program, the teen peer health education curriculum and YOLO (Youth Opportunities for Life Options Healthy Lifestyles) programs. She is the co-director of the Summer Urban Health fellowship, which is an intense 6-week pipeline health program that brings together family medicine resident physicians, medical students, undergraduates and local inner-city high school youth in mentoring relationships to address health disparities in their communities. Her research and interests are in Structural vulnerability, Social/Economic Injustices & Human Rights, Health & Health Care Disparities, Higher Education & Pipeline Programs, Care of Vulnerable Populations. Her recent research has been working with the Day Laborers in the Los Angeles area, and with Homeboy Industries in conducting health needs assessments of formerly gang involved and incarcerated individuals. For the past 3 years she has been actively involved with the Better Watts Initiative and Jordan Downs Environmental Justice Coalition. Through this initiative she has been working alongside a coalition of Watts residents and advocacy groups, conducting health needs assessments, promoting health education and doing advocacy work in environmental and other health injustices that plague the community of Watts. Co-founder of local group Doctors for Peace and Justice, she works on education and activism surrounding issues of human rights. Dr. Puvvula has also been active in global health. She has co-led several global health teams to countries like India, Sri Lanka, Guatemala, Haiti, and annually to Chiapas, Mexico and most recently with refugees in Greece. She is on the board of directors for Doctors for Global Health (www.dghonline.org) and continues to chair the Human Rights and Advocacy Committee. However, her most challenging and rewarding work continues to be parenting her young son.

Janette Robinson-Flint

As a founding member of Black Women for Wellness, Janette holds the executive director position of Black Women for Wellness. Her work in the health field began as an advocate during her pregnancy, seeking a holistic practitioner to work with her concept of a gentle birth. Today she is part of the Los Angeles Coalition for Reproductive Justice, the California Coalition for Reproductive Freedom and In Our Own Voice; the National Black Women’s Reproductive Justice Agenda. Jan takes great pleasure in imagining a world with powerful women, at optimum physical, mental, spiritual, emotional and financial health leading us to justice and peace.

Over the course of the years Jan's journey includes The Birthing Project USA, Great Beginnings for Black Babies, National Health Foundation, March of Dimes, California Primary Care Association, Inglewood Healthy Mothers & Babies, South Los Angeles Health Project and Women Infant & Children (South Los Angeles advisory board) programs as well with a member of the community faculty with Charles R Drew University of Medicine and Science. Travel is a love she combines with my work, attending the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing China inspired the creation of Black Women for Wellness. As a researcher in Cuba she witnessed the reality of what political will accomplishes with health for all. Great food, a good story (either book or movie), spoken word, live music, salsa dancing and a scenic walk makes her day in Los Angeles. A victory that encourages health for women and girls grounds her through the challenges, traffic and the struggle for freedom.

James Sadd, Ph.D.

Dr. Sadd teaches courses in Geographic Information Systems in which students evaluate many types of information using spatial analysis and statistical tools. Dr. Sadd also uses GIS and other geospatial and statistical tools in his research to evaluate environmental problems, such as human exposure to environmental hazards, patterns or health risk and vulnerability, and environmental justice/equity, particularly as it relates to air pollution and climate change. He also works on questions related to coastal erosion, and marine habitat distribution and change.

Michelle Tsiebos, R.E.H.S., D.P.A., M.P.A.

Michelle Tsiebos is a Registered Environmental Health Specialist with the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division. She is currently the Chief of the Recruitment and Training program. Prior to leading the Recruitment and Training program, she was the Chief of the Land Use program where she overviewed the use and regulation of decentralized wastewater treatment systems, or septic systems, for areas of the County of Los Angeles not connected to the public sewer system. Michelle has also acquired knowledge of drinking water regulation through the few years she worked with the County of Los Angeles Drinking Water program. Michelle holds a B.S. in chemical engineering from the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium, a Master in Public Administration from the California State University Northridge and a Doctoral degree in Public Administration from the University of La Verne.

Janet Valenzuela

Janet Valenzuela is an eco-mujerista from Huntington Park (Southeast Los Angeles), who's work is centered on bridging the outdoor industrial complex to environmental justice issues in the Los Angeles area using alterNative models to connect the outdoors to environmentally disadvantaged communities. She will be graduating from California State University Northridge with a B.A. in Chicano/a Studies and a Minor in Sustainability, with plans to pursue a career in environmental health law, particularly incorporating the intersections of grassroots activism and environmental justice. She is dedicated to challenging ongoing structures of colonialism that work towards rationalizing the use of destructive elements in her community and those alike.

Jane Williams

Ms. Williams is the executive director of California Communities Against Toxics. She is a graduate of the University of California, Los Angeles, and has worked extensively on environmental health and justice issues since 1992. She assists local groups and Native Nations on pollution-related issues and policy advocacy at both the state and national level. She chairs the Sierra Club's National Air Toxics Task Force and serves on numerous Boards and Advisory Groups for environmental justice organizations.

Nancy Zuniga, M.P.H.

Nancy Zuniga considers herself a life-long learner, as well as a health advocate. She currently manages the Workers Health Program at the Institute of Popular Education of Southern California (IDEPSCA). Her scope of work involves occupational health, community organizing around health issues, and workers' rights. Through popular education, Nancy has had the opportunity to transform her own lived experience as daughter of an immigrant household worker, into a shared human experience and struggle with other low-wage workers. She graduated from UCLA with a BS in Chemistry and completed her Masters in Public Health degree at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science. However, she attributes her evolving growth and learning to the knowledge of Promotoras de Salud (community health workers), and long-time community leaders, comrades and mentors.