

Speaker Biographies



Oscar Benitez, Managing Director of Diversion and Reentry, Third Sector

Oscar is a Managing Director at Third Sector, a national nonprofit that transforms how public systems improve economic opportunity for all. He leads teams in implementing systems-change initiatives with county and state departments, philanthropy, and service providers to deliver more responsive, outcomes-driven programs.

His teams convene government and community partners in blue, red, and purple states at the intersection of housing, behavioral health, public safety, and workforce. Integrating cross-departmental efforts and community engagement improves practices, relationships, and performance frameworks, resulting in more effective services for residents facing the highest barriers to well-being and economic opportunity.

Oscar graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, completed the Bridge Program at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth, and was selected as a Gates Millennium Scholar through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.



Doug Bond, President and CEO, Amity Foundation

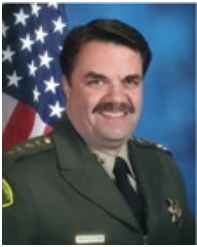
As President and CEO of Amity Foundation, Doug Bond leads all facets of the organization, overseeing dozens of contracts across California and Arizona, including 31 prison locations, two fire camps, and five residential campuses serving people with histories of criminal justice system involvement, addiction, and homelessness. Amity is also developing its first permanent supportive reentry housing, with collectively more than 500 beds in the works.

Bond first came to Amity in 1983 after living in several foster homes and was reunited with his father, who had been incarcerated. He was one of the first children allowed to reunite with a parent while that parent was participating in a reentry program. Bond's mother also received services at Amity following her release from prison in 1986 and later helped open the first in-prison therapeutic community in California at Richard J. Donovan Correctional Facility. Bond reunited with his mother nearly 20 years later when he came to Amity as a student in need of services. He has lost several family members to the opioid crisis and received custody of his then eight-year-old niece following his sister's overdose. His family's experiences with incarceration, addiction, poverty, and violence have driven his commitment to creating safe teaching and therapeutic environments for men, women, and children.

Bond has been instrumental in expanding Amity's California services from serving 2,000 to more than 73,000 people each year. Under his leadership, Amity provides in-prison services throughout California and has implemented significant state and county contracts serving Los Angeles County, including coordinating post-release services for individuals returning to the community from state prisons and supporting youth transitioning out of the juvenile justice system. He has also led the development of Amity's work under California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM), providing enhanced care management for justice-involved populations across five Southern California counties. Bond also served on the design and management team for the Just In Reach (JIR) jail project, funded through the Department of Health Services, which serves individuals most at risk for recidivism and homelessness.

Bond is a member of the Council on Criminal Justice and serves as co-chair of the governor-appointed San Quentin Transformation Advisory Council, as well as on the governor-appointed California Interagency Council on Homelessness Advisory Committee. He chairs the Executive Committee of the Los Angeles Regional Reentry Partnership (LARRP) and the National Foster Youth Institute (NFYI). He also serves on the boards of the World Federation of Therapeutic Communities (WFTC), Treatment Communities of America (TCA), California Association of Alcohol and Drug Program Executives (CAAPDE), CASA Los Angeles, and Episcopal Community Services.

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Bill Brown, Sheriff-Coroner, Santa Barbara County, and Commissioner, Commission for Behavioral Health

Bill Brown has served as Santa Barbara County's Sheriff-Coroner since January 9, 2007. He was first elected to that constitutional office on November 7, 2006, and re-elected to a second term in June 2010, a third term in June 2014, a fourth term in June 2018, and his present fifth term in June 2022.

Beginning his law enforcement career in 1977 with the Pacifica Police Department in the San Francisco Bay Area, Bill Brown transferred to the Inglewood Police Department in 1980. He served the Los Angeles County community as a police officer, sergeant, lieutenant, and acting captain until 1992, when he was selected as chief of police for the City of Moscow, Idaho. In that position, he was responsible for overseeing police operations for both the City of Moscow and the University of Idaho. In 1995, Brown was selected as the chief of police for the City of Lompoc, being only the eighth person to hold the title of police chief in that community since it incorporated in 1899. He led the Lompoc Police Department for the next 11 years until being elected to his present office.

Sheriff Brown received his master's degree in public administration from the University of Southern California in 1995. He was president of the 91st Class of the Delinquency Control Institute. He is a graduate of the Northwest Command College, the 169th Session of the FBI National Academy, and the 33rd Session of the FBI National Executive Institute. Sheriff Brown was elected by his peers as President of the Major County Sheriffs of America and began his two-year term on February 9, 2024. Sheriff Brown is also a past president of both the California State Sheriffs' Association and the California Police Chiefs' Association, the only person to have ever held both positions. Since 2010, he has served as a Commissioner on the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission for the State of California, and he leads Santa Barbara County's version of "Stepping Up," a National Initiative to reduce the Number of Mentally Ill People in Jails. In 2022, Sheriff Brown started "Project Opioid" in Santa Barbara County, an initiative that regularly convenes a diverse group of high-level, county-wide leaders committed to raising awareness about, and reducing the number of overdose deaths from fentanyl and other illicit drugs. He is also Chairman of the Santa Barbara County Law Enforcement Chiefs (C.L.E.C.).



Lewis Brown, Jr., Senior Policy Manager for California State Policy, Corporation for Supportive Housing

Lewis Brown, Jr., is a Senior Policy Manager for California State Policy at the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), a national nonprofit organization working to end homelessness. He advocates for state policies that strengthen supportive housing, particularly for people returning from prison and older adults. As a member of CSH's Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Leadership Cohort, he works to identify system reforms that help supportive housing tenants with behavioral health conditions access meaningful employment through IPS supported employment programs.



Matthew Cate - Secretary, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (retired) and Public Policy Advisor, Mosaic Solutions and Advocacy

Matt Cate is a lawyer and consultant who specializes in the areas of local government relations, public safety, corrections, rehabilitation, renewable energy and environmental law.

Prior to launching Mosaic Solutions and Advocacy, Matt served for five years as the Executive Director of the California State Association of Counties. In that role, he oversaw an influential association that represents California's 58 counties at both the state and federal level. Before serving at CSAC, Matt served both Governors Schwarzenegger and Brown as the Secretary of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. In this role, Matt was instrumental in implementing sweeping reforms to the Department that resulted in reduced recidivism, the end of the prison overcrowding crises, reduced prison spending, and the historic realignment of many public safety services from the State to the County level. Prior to his appointment as Secretary, Matt served for four years as the California Inspector General where he was responsible for public oversight of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Prior to becoming California's Inspector General, Matt served as a state and local prosecutor. In 2012, Matt joined Stanford University School of Law as a Law and Policy Fellow.

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Óscar Chávez, President and Chief Executive Office, Sonoma Community Foundation

Óscar is the President & CEO of Community Foundation Sonoma County. He brings a wealth of experience to his role and is very knowledgeable about the Community Foundation, having served on the Foundation's Board of Directors for nine years and continuing his service as a member of their Community Investment Committee. Óscar spent ten years at the Sonoma County Department of Human Services, where he served as the Assistant Director and six years as the Executive Director for Community Action Partnership Sonoma County. Óscar has been a community leader for more than 25 years, and he has a deep understanding of Sonoma County and a proven track record of convening people to find solutions to community problems.

In 2018, Oscar served as steering committee co-chair for the California Economic Summit, a statewide event that brought together a broad and diverse network of business, equity, environmental, and civic organizations to craft strategies to improve upward mobility, build more housing, create a strong workforce, and strengthen the state's water sustainability.

In 2016, Oscar was honored by Hispanics in Philanthropy, a network of nonprofits, corporations, foundations, and individuals dedicated to addressing poverty issues, identifying solutions, and mobilizing Latinx communities in the U.S. and Latin America. In 2012, he received the Sonoma County Jefferson Award and the North Bay Business Journal Non-Profit Leadership Award. In 2008, he was named one of the North Bay's "40 Under 40" leaders by the North Bay Business Journal.



Camilla Dohlman, Director, Third Sector

Camilla is a Director based in Bend, OR focused on designing and implementing behavioral health initiatives that result in improved well being, housing stability, and public safety. In her work, she aims to build partnerships that are asset-based, equitable, and sustainable. Before joining Third Sector, she worked for the Community, Outreach, Research, and Engagement team at the Oregon Health & Science University where she supported capacity-building initiatives and community-engaged research and evaluation projects in rural Oregon. She previously worked as a program evaluator for Rural Opportunity Institute, a start-up non-profit in Eastern North Carolina, leading the evaluation of a capacity-building program for public institutions seeking to implement trauma-informed programs. She additionally has several years of experience in federal health services research.

Camilla holds an MPH with a concentration in Health Equity, Social Justice, and Human Rights from the University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health and a BA in Public Health, with honors, from Johns Hopkins University.



Michelle Doty Cabrera, Executive Director, County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California

Michelle Doty Cabrera is the Executive Director of CBHDA, a statewide association representing the behavioral health directors from California's 58 counties, in addition to the Tri-City (Cities of Pomona, Claremont and La Verne) and City of Berkeley Mental Health Authorities.

Prior to joining CBHDA, she served as the Healthcare Director for the California State Council of the Services Employees International Union (SEIU California), where she advocated on behalf of healthcare workers and consumers, including SEIU California's county behavioral health workforce, on issues related to Medicaid, behavioral health, universal health coverage, health equity, and cost containment, among others. She served as a Senior Consultant for the Assembly Human Services Committee, where she specialized in child welfare issues and staffed legislation which extended foster care in California to age 21. She also served as a Program Officer for the California Healthcare Foundation, working as a liaison on state health policy in Sacramento. Ms. Cabrera was an inaugural member of the National Quality Forum's Standing Committee on Disparities which developed a roadmap to advance health equity through data and quality measurement.

Ms. Cabrera served as an appointed member of Governor Newsom's Council of Regional Homeless Advisors and is a member of the California Health and Human Services Behavioral Health Task Force. She graduated from Georgetown University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Foreign Service.

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Tara Gamboa-Eastman, Director of Government Affairs, Steinberg Institute

Currently serving as the Director of Government Affairs at the Steinberg Institute, Tara leads integrated advocacy campaigns, leveraging her expertise in policy analysis, strategic communications, and coalition-building. She plays a key role in shaping legislative, budget, and regulatory priorities, ensuring that critical mental health and social policy issues remain at the forefront of policymaking.

At the Steinberg Institute, Tara has spearheaded numerous legislative and budgetary initiatives. She was the lead advocate for AB 988 (Bauer-Kahan), a groundbreaking bill establishing a statewide mental health crisis response system. Additionally, she played a pivotal role in securing hundreds of millions of dollars in workforce funding through the state budget to address our behavioral health workforce shortage.

Before joining the Steinberg Institute, Tara served in the California State Assembly in the Office of Assemblymember Phil Ting, where she managed legislative efforts related to housing, homelessness, and human services. Over her career, she has also held impactful roles with the San Francisco Treasurer's Financial Justice Project, Western Center on Law & Poverty, and the California Work & Family Coalition, driving research, advocacy, and policy development in areas of economic and social justice.

Tara holds a Master in Public Policy from Harvard University and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from UC Berkeley. With a track record of policy innovation and legislative success, she remains dedicated to fostering equitable and effective public policies that improve the lives of all Californians.



Rob Gitin, Consultant, Geeslin Family Fund

Rob Gitin is a consultant for homelessness philanthropists and nonprofits in the Bay Area. His primary work is with a local philanthropist, Keith Geeslin, partnering with him to strengthen existing homelessness organizations in San Francisco and to create new initiatives to better address the homelessness crisis.

Rob helps connect Keith with opportunities for his giving to make the greatest impact on homelessness. He consults in different capacities for a handful of San Francisco-based homelessness nonprofits, including strategy, program design, coaching, and fundraising. He works with local homelessness leaders in nonprofits, government, and philanthropy, and those with lived experience, to identify opportunities to support and develop new initiatives to help unhoused and formerly unhoused people.

In April 1997, he and his colleague Taj Mustpaha were awarded Echoing Green fellowships to start-up At The Crossroads (ATC), where he served as the co-director of ATC from 1997-2001, and then the Executive Director from 2001-2018. ATC reaches out to homeless youth and young adults at their point of need, and works with them to build healthy and fulfilling lives.

Rob has been invited to speak around the country on the topics of homeless youth, organizational development, private fundraising and youth development. In 2012, he was given the GQ Leader award and was a 2015 SEERS Fellow at Stanford University. Rob was the chair of both the Citizen's Advisory Committee for the Central Market and Tenderloin Area, and the Department of Children, Youth and their Families Oversight & Advisory Committee. He currently serves as the co-chair of Bay Area Funders Together to End Homelessness.



Joseph Graterol, Community Paramedicine Medical Director, San Francisco Fire Department

Joe Graterol is Assistant Professor of Emergency medicine at UCSF Health-UCSF Medical Center and Attending Physician at the Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center. He's also the Medical Director of Community Paramedicine Division of the San Francisco Fire Department. His scholarly interests are in Social Emergency Medicine, Medical Education, and Emergency Medical Services. He received his medical degree from Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth.

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Brenda Grealish, Executive Officer, Commission for Behavioral Health

Brenda Grealish is the Executive Director of the California Commission for Behavioral Health where she leads statewide efforts to improve behavioral health outcomes through policy innovation, cross-sector collaboration, and stakeholder engagement. She brings over 25 years of leadership experience in California state government, with expertise in public behavioral health policy and delivery system administration, with a focus on the intersection of behavioral health and criminal justice. Prior to her current role, she served as Executive Officer of the Council on Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health, Chief of the Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Division and Assistant Deputy Director at the Department of Health Care Services, and Deputy Director of the Office of Research at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Ms. Grealish is known for her collaborative leadership style, deep policy knowledge, and commitment to ensuring that individuals with complex behavioral health needs can live healthy, meaningful lives.



Ana Gutiérrez, Behavioral Health Program Manager, Redefine Alliance

Ana Gutiérrez leads Redefine Alliance's Bridge to Behavioral Health: Career Pathways, a High Road Training Partnership (H RTP) initiative connecting people to training and careers in behavioral health. Her expertise spans workforce development, program design, and cross-sector collaboration. She partners with employment social enterprises, training providers, and employers to prepare people with lived experience, including justice system involvement, for peer support careers. She brings practical lessons from this work to explore how counties can strengthen hiring pathways and workplace support for peers, and how these approaches could inform the development of the peer workforce for forensic ACT teams.



Rachel Herrmann, Director of CalAIM, Episcopal Community Services of San Francisco

Rachel Herrmann is the Director of CalAIM at Episcopal Community Services of San Francisco, where she is currently leading the development and implementation of programs designed to improve healthcare access, coordination, and outcomes for individuals with complex health needs. Previously, Rachel led the development and launch of ECS's Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Supported Employment program, including the integration of evidence-based employment services within supportive housing settings. Her background spans program development, adult education, and workforce development, with a focus on creating person-centered systems that support individuals in pursuing personally meaningful goals.



Chet Hewitt, President and Chief Executive Officer, Sierra Health Foundation

Chet P. Hewitt is President and CEO of Sierra Health Foundation and its nonprofit intermediary partner, The Center at Sierra Health Foundation. Over the past decade, Chet has led a bold collective impact strategy focused on promoting health, equity and social justice in underserved communities to improve the well-being of children, youth and families.

Recognized for his strategic thinking and willingness to take thoughtful risk, Chet has received national attention for his emphasis on making the Foundation's and The Center's partnerships with local communities and public and private funders the centerpiece of both organizations' strategy for change. Efforts launched by the Foundation and The Center include California Funders for Boys and Men of Color, Positive Youth Justice Initiative, Black Child Legacy Campaign, Build.Black. Coalition and San Joaquin Valley Health Fund.

Prior to joining Sierra Health Foundation, Chet served as Director of Alameda County's Social Services Agency, Associate Director for the Rockefeller Foundation in New York, and Director of the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice in San Francisco. He has received numerous awards for his service to children and families, including the 2017 Terrance Keenan Leadership in Health Philanthropy Award. Chet is an Annie E. Casey Children and Families Leadership Fellow, and serves on the boards of the Roberts Enterprise Development Fund, Public Policy Institute of California, Advance Peace and CalNonprofits.

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Carla Javits, Senior Advisor/Board Member, Redefine Alliance

Carla Javits was Redefine Alliance president and CEO from 2007 – 2021. Inspired by the leadership of Redefine Alliance's founder, George R. Roberts, Carla focused on achieving measurable results by leveraging the business community's knowledge, networks, and resources, and the mission of the nonprofit sector to address some of our country's most pressing challenges. In fighting to create a more inclusive society, Carla is carrying on the legacy of her father, New York Senator Jacob Javits.

Before joining Redefine Alliance, Carla was president and CEO of the Corporation for Supportive Housing. In the 1980's she was a program analyst with the California Office of the Legislative Analyst and Director of policy and planning for the San Francisco Department of Social Services. Carla was an appointee to Governor Gavin Newsom's Future of Work Commission, which brought together California leaders in technology, labor, business, education, and venture capital. She also worked in the food and hospitality industry.

Carla holds a BA and master's in public policy from UC Berkeley and an AA in Hotel and Restaurant Management from San Francisco City College. She serves on the board of directors of KQED and Third Sector Capital Partners, and the advisory boards of the Goldman School of Public Policy at UC Berkeley, America Forward, and Industrial Commons.



Shavia Johnson, Health, Housing, and Integrated Services Program Manager, LifeLong Medical Care

Shavia Johnson has been with Lifelong Medical Care for seven years, beginning her career with the organization as a Case Manager in the Respite Program. She currently serves as a Program Manager with Lifelong's Supportive Housing Program, providing leadership and supervision to Case Managers supporting individuals in permanent supportive housing.

Throughout her career, Shavia has been passionate about client-centered care, housing stability, staff development, and building strong systems of support. She is also deeply passionate about workplace self-care and wellness, with a focus on burnout prevention and creating healthy, sustainable work environments where staff feel supported and empowered to thrive while providing quality care to the communities they serve.



Ky Le, Deputy County Executive, County of Santa Clara

Ky Le is a Deputy County Executive for the County of Santa Clara. For over 25 years he has led efforts to reduce and prevent homelessness in Santa Clara County by addressing the housing, health and economic needs of the community's most underserved residents. Ky's current portfolio includes providing strategic leadership to the County's Behavioral Health Services Department, Countywide procurement functions, the County's Guaranteed Basic Income programs, and the County's Vietnamese American Service Center.

Prior to joining the County, Ky spent over six years as the Senior Director of Operations for HomeFirst and four years as an Intelligence Officer in the US Army. Ky joined the County of Santa Clara in 2008, beginning as a Mental Health Services Act Project Manager and Director of the Office of Supportive Housing since 2011. In November of 2020, Ky was appointed as a Deputy County Executive.

Ky earned Bachelor of Arts degrees in History and Political Science from UC Davis. Ky loves spending time with Christine, his wife of 28 years, and their cat, Mothy. Ky advocates against the exploitation of animals, is a Trustee for Palo Alto University, and serves on the Destination: Home Board of Directors.

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Shane Matthews, Assistant Sheriff, Ventura County Sheriff's Office

Assistant Sheriff Shane Matthews is a 31-year veteran of the Ventura County Sheriff's Office and a lifelong Ventura County resident whose career has been defined by servant leadership, operational excellence, and a commitment to developing public safety professionals. Beginning his career in Detention Services in 1995, Shane has served in nearly every facet of law enforcement and corrections, including patrol, narcotics, detectives, aviation, search and rescue, special enforcement, and detention operations. Throughout his distinguished career, he has led specialized teams, supervised complex operations, and earned a reputation as a collaborative leader who values professionalism, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Today, Shane oversees the Ventura County Sheriff's Detention Services Division, providing executive leadership for three county jails, three courthouse holding facilities, and the Civil Unit. Responsible for more than 500 employees and an average daily population of approximately 1,200 incarcerated individuals, he ensures compliance with California Title 15 and Title 24 standards while overseeing the safe and efficient operation of one of California's premier correctional systems. In addition to his executive responsibilities, Shane is a respected instructor who has taught for both the California State Sheriffs' Association and the American Jail Association, sharing his expertise in correctional leadership, detention operations, and regulatory compliance with professionals from across the country.



Crystal McMahon, IPS Lead Implementation Specialist, California Center of Excellence / The IPS Employment Center

Crystal McMahon has held a variety of IPS roles including Employment Specialist, Employment Program Supervisor, State Supported Employment Trainer, Instructor, and Research Associate for the Mental Health Treatment Study. She holds an MS in Psychology and was the Director of the Oregon Supported Employment Center for Excellence for 15 years. She taught courses on IPS Supported Employment at Portland State University and Dartmouth College. Ms. McMahon has a longstanding interest in the natural world and has helped conserve hundreds of acres of wildlife habitat.



Tomiquia Moss, Secretary, California Housing and Homelessness Agency

Tomiquia Moss was appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom to serve as Secretary of the California Housing and Homelessness Agency (CHHA), established on July 1, 2026, under the Governor's Reorganization Plan 2025. CHHA is responsible for defending civil rights, funding and preserving affordable housing, expanding homeownership, and working to prevent and end homelessness statewide.

Prior to this appointment, Secretary Moss led the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency, overseeing 12 entities and more than 40 boards and bureaus with the goal of expanding safe, affordable housing; advancing efforts to prevent and end homelessness; protecting consumers; and upholding Californians' civil rights.

Tomiquia brings more than 20 years of leadership experience in the nonprofit and public sectors with deep expertise in housing and homelessness, public policy, civil rights, and community development. She is a dynamic and visionary leader, known for her ability to bring people together to tackle complex problems in a strategic and collaborative way.

In 2019, Tomiquia founded All Home, a Bay Area organization advancing regional solutions to disrupt the cycles that perpetuate homelessness and poverty. They have advocated successfully for state and local policy change, launched multiple new programs, and granted millions of dollars to nonprofit and local government partners to prevent homelessness and create economic mobility for the people who need it most.

Before founding All Home, Tomiquia served as the CEO of Hamilton Families, which offers emergency, transitional, and permanent housing services for families experiencing homelessness in San Francisco. From 2014 to 2017, she served directly under the mayors of both San Francisco and Oakland, including as Chief of Staff for Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf. Previously, she was the Executive Director of the HOPE SF Initiative, a public housing and neighborhood revitalization effort

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in San Francisco. Tomiquia also served as the founding project director of the San Francisco Community Justice Center of the Superior Court of California.

Tomiquia was appointed by the Senate Pro-Tem to serve as a member of the California Interagency Council on Homelessness. She has served as co-chair of Cal ICH as Secretary of BCSH and now as Secretary of CHHA. She served as an Advisory Committee member for the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority from its inception until her appointment as Secretary. She remains a board member of the Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation.

Tomiquia holds a Masters' in Public Administration from Golden Gate University. She and her family are proud to call Oakland home.



Jenn Oakley, Lead Case Manager, Rising Sun Center for Opportunity

Jenn Oakley is a housing and homelessness systems advocate whose work is shaped by both lived and professional experience. After surviving long-term homelessness and addiction, she committed her career to improving the systems that serve people experiencing homelessness and individuals with complex health and social needs.

Jenn currently serves as a Lead Case Manager at Rising Sun Center for Opportunity, where she helps participants overcome barriers to employment and achieve greater stability. Her previous work as a supportive housing case manager at LifeLong Medical Care reinforced the critical connection between stable housing, coordinated healthcare, and long-term well-being.

In addition to serving on the Board of Directors of LifeLong Medical Care, Jenn is an active member of Alameda County's Continuum of Care and the Home Together 2030 Strategic Plan Task Force, contributing to regional efforts to improve housing stability and strengthen systems of care. She is currently pursuing a Master of Public Administration at Northeastern University.

Her goal is to bridge the gap between policy and practice by ensuring that evidence, frontline experience, and lived expertise all play a meaningful role in creating more effective, equitable, and person-centered systems of care.



Sanford Pearlman, Marriage and Family Therapist and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Alameda County Vocational Program

Sanford Pearlman is a licensed marriage and family therapist and vocational rehabilitation counselor with the Alameda County Vocational Program. He earned his Master's in Counseling from the California Institute of Integral Studies in 2017 and is an alumnus of Northwestern University.

Within Alameda County Behavioral Health, Sanford leads a team supporting transitional-age youth and adults in pursuing their employment and educational goals. Since 2016, he has worked with the LifeLong Medical Care programs, assisting unsheltered and recently housed individuals in developing meaningful work skills and rebuilding their livelihoods following housing instability. He is grounded in the belief that every individual deserves a life of meaning and purpose, and that everyone has the capacity to work and contribute.



Will Rhett, Managing Director of Behavioral Health, Third Sector

Will Rhett leads Third Sector's behavioral health practice. He brings more than 20 years of clinical and consulting experience to the role. Before joining Third Sector, he served on the executive management team at the California Institute for Behavioral Health Solutions, where he spent nearly 14 years guiding training and technical assistance for California state and county behavioral health agencies. His work included implementation of Mental Health Services Act programs, care coordination and health equity initiatives, and the Drug Medi-Cal Waiver. Will has also led learning collaboratives focused on improving outcomes through continuous quality improvement. His clinical experience includes work as a bilingual therapist with Spanish-speaking families and young people. He holds a bachelor's degree from Harvard University, a doctorate in anthropology from UC San Diego, and two master's degrees, including one in psychology, marriage, and family therapy.

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Jacob Rosen, Managing Mental Health Clinician, Crisis Alternative Response of Eureka

Jacob Rosen is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in California with a career focused on acute psychiatric care and behavioral health crisis response. He currently serves as the Managing Mental Health Clinician for the City of Eureka's crisis team, Crisis Alternative Response of Eureka (CARE). Jacob plays a central role in Humboldt County's Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program as both a steering committee member and CIT coordinator. He regularly provides training to law enforcement, behavioral health professionals, and community partners on de-escalation, involuntary detainments, suicide risk assessment, and other crisis response practices. In addition to his clinical leadership, Jacob is a trained crisis negotiator and active member of the Humboldt County Crisis Negotiations Team. Across roles ranging from frontline crisis response to high-risk negotiations, Jacob emphasizes a consistent principle: effective crisis intervention begins with authentic human connection. His work focuses on strengthening collaboration between behavioral health and law enforcement while promoting practical, relationship-driven approaches to crisis engagement.



Kevin Walker, Supervising Analyst, Judicial Council of California

Kevin Walker is a Supervising Analyst in the Judicial Council of California's Criminal Justice Services Office, working within the Data Analysis and Evaluation Unit. In this role, he supports a wide range of projects with courts and justice system partners, including efforts related to Proposition 36. On this Words to Deeds panel, Kevin brings insight from early court implementation data reported across the state.



Caroline Whistler, Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer, Third Sector

Caroline Whistler is co-founder and CEO of Third Sector, where she leads the organization's work advising our government agencies on effective ways to reshape their policies, systems, and services toward better outcomes for all people, no matter their race, background, and circumstances. Third Sector is a national nonprofit helping to unlock possibility, confront inequity, and catalyze change to the benefit of the people and places our government, community-based, and philanthropic partners serve. It has transitioned more than \$1.8B in public funding to be outcomes-focused, directing those resources on improving solutions for key social issues, including diversion and re-entry, behavioral health, early childhood, and family economic mobility. Third Sector has grown to serve more than 50 state and local government jurisdictions.



Amber Williams, Chief Executive Officer, Janus of Santa Cruz

Amber Williams is the Chief Executive Officer of Janus of Santa Cruz, a leading nonprofit provider of substance use disorder treatment and recovery services in Santa Cruz County. With more than 20 years of experience in behavioral health and substance use disorder services, Amber brings extensive expertise in treatment delivery, healthcare administration, regulatory compliance, workforce development, and behavioral health policy.

Since assuming the role of CEO, Amber has led Janus through a period of significant growth and transformation. Under her leadership, the organization has expanded from an annual operating budget of approximately \$9 million to \$32 million, substantially increasing its capacity, infrastructure, and reach. This growth reflects Amber's focus on building a strong and sustainable organization while expanding the continuum of care and responding to the evolving substance use disorder treatment needs of the community.

Throughout her career, Amber has been committed to strengthening California's substance use disorder system and expanding access to high-quality, person-centered care. She brings the perspective of a community-based provider to broader conversations about behavioral health policy, financing, workforce, access, and system transformation, with a particular understanding of the opportunities and challenges involved in translating state policy into effective services locally.

In 2025, Amber was selected as the inaugural featured Champion in the Steinberg Institute's Champion series, recognizing leaders working to transform behavioral health care in California.

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Amber is actively engaged in behavioral health leadership beyond Janus. She serves on the Board of Directors of the California Association of Alcohol & Drug Program Executives (CAADPE), President of the Santa Cruz County Health Improvement Partnership, and Public Policy Institute of California criminal justice advisory council. She advocates for and helps shape legislation to improve access to SUD treatment and the effectiveness of services statewide, bringing the experience of community-based providers and the people they serve into statewide policy discussions.

A respected advocate for individuals and families impacted by substance use disorders, Amber is passionate about reducing stigma, strengthening the behavioral health workforce, eliminating barriers to treatment, and ensuring that policy and systems decisions reflect the realities of the people, families, providers, and communities they are intended to serve.