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Catherine Garoupa White  
Executive Director  
Central Valley Air Quality Coalition  
They/Them, She/Her, Catherine  

Dr. Catherine Garoupa White is the Executive Director of the Central Valley Air Quality Coalition (CVAQ), spearheading policy advocacy for clean air in the San Joaquin Valley. Garoupa White has 15 years of policy advocacy experience and previously worked as a community organizer and CVAQ Director from 2006 to 2011, winning collaborative campaigns such as the incorporation of near roadway air monitoring requirements into the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for particle pollution. While pursuing a PhD in Geography at UC Davis, she worked on community engaged research projects to promote equitable, sustainable development. From 2016 to 2019, she coordinated efforts for a just transition away from extreme oil and gas extraction with Californians Against Fracking and Dangerous Drilling. Complementary to her advocacy, Dr. Garoupa White has taught college classes in social work and community and regional development, and is currently a lecturer at CSU Stanislaus and Columbia College.

Swati Sharma  
Research and Policy Consultant  
The California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative  
She/Her  

Swati is the Research and Policy Consultant for the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative (CHNSC) and is also an independent public and environmental health consultant. For the past 15 years, she has been committed to fighting for environmental justice, worker’s rights, women’s rights, environmental health, and social justice. She has extensive experience in toxics reductions strategies, pollution prevention polices, sustainable practices and project management. In nearly 7 years at San Francisco’s Department of Environment she previously managed the Commercial Toxics Reduction and Green Business programs, where she was responsible for crafting and implementing environmental health policies to promote the use of less-toxics alternatives. She spearheaded the first Healthy Nail Salon Recognition program in the nation, which won the Harvard Roy Family Award for Environmental Partnership. Swati received her B.S. from UCLA in Microbiology, Immunology and Molecular Genetics and her M.S. in Global Environmental Health from UC Berkeley.
Felisa Vallejo

Program Assistant
GRID Alternatives
She/Her

Felisa Vallejo is a Program Assistant with the Program Administration team at the GRID Alternatives headquarters. A Bay Area native, Felisa spent time in Chico, CA receiving a B.S. in Environmental Science with a concentration in Applied Ecology and a minor in Sustainability. Felisa earned her degree and returned to the Bay Area in search of work that focused on equitable and intersectional environmental justice in the communities she grew up in and for an organization directly working with and for these communities. Felisa began her work at GRID Alternatives as a Project Management Fellow and is now a Program Assistant. She is directly working on the implementation of multiple state-wide programs to ensure that the benefits and opportunities of renewable energy are accessible to communities on the frontline of environmental and economic justice.

Patricia Leal-Gutierrez

Program Manager
Alianza Coachella Valley
She/Her

Patricia Leal-Gutierrez was born and raised in the agricultural towns of the Eastern Coachella Valley. During her teenage years, Patricia worked in the fields alongside her family picking grapes. It was through this work that Patricia gained a better understanding of the realities and the resiliency of her community. Patricia is a proud alumna of Desert Mirage High School. She received her B.A. in Political Science and Chicano Studies from UCLA. She continued her trajectory as a policy advocate and community organizer in the Central Valley, advocating alongside community residents and youth at the local and state level on air, water, housing, and infrastructure needs. Patricia later continued her educational journey and completed her Masters in Education from Stanford University. Patricia understands the crucial need to elevate and work alongside low-income communities like the East Coachella Valley in order to bring environmental and educational justice.
Héctor Plascencia

Héctor Trinidad Plascencia (they/them/we/us) was raised in La Puente, California by powerful Latina cis-women, and is originally from Guadalajara, Mexico. As a transgender, undocumented, queer sister, uncti, daughter and beloved bridge builder, Héctor's identities and privileges shape their work and holistic approach to social justice. Grounded in community centered transformation, Héctor is guided by the belief that impacted people must be active in all aspects of movement development and implementation. Their natural progression from immigrant rights organizer to health justice and trans policy advocate led them to center health and healing as focal points of movement building and sustainability. Beyond movement magic, Héctor loves to dance in the mornings, visit the woods with their furry baby and pays homage to their trans-cestors by choosing to live.
Claudia J. Gonzalez

Policy Advocate & Economic Security Coach  
Root & Rebound  
She/Her/Ella

Claudia J. is an organizer and advocate in California’s Central Valley. As a formerly incarcerated Xicana womxn, it is important for her to create opportunities for other formerly incarcerated women and help illuminate the pathway for those just beginning the healing, transformation, and leadership process. In her role as the Policy Advocate and Economic Security Coach at Root and Rebound, she supports and empowers system-impacted women in their reentry journeys while also centering and advocating for communities that are often overlooked and forgotten in justice reform. Claudia also holds the distinction of being a Soros Justice Advocacy Fellow and through her fellowship, launched the first wraparound reentry program for formerly incarcerated women and girls in the Central Valley, Formerly Incarcerated Xingonas (FIX). Passionate about policy advocacy and community organizing, Claudia hopes to transform the Central Valley into a political force and champion of justice reform.

Katie Dixon

Fair Chance Community Rights Organizer  
Legal Aid At Work  
She/Her

Katie Dixon is the Fair Chance Community Rights Organizer, with Legal Aid At Work (LAAW), a non-profit legal services organization that has been assisting low-income, working families, in California, for over 100 years. LAAW provides free employment-related legal services through our clinics, and helplines, and we also engage in advocacy work, using four main strategies to enforce and strengthen workers rights. Since graduating from the Delancey Street Foundation in 2014, Katie has been active in supporting communities throughout the Bay Area. Katie recently completed a Policy Fellowship, with Legal Services for Prisoners with Children (LSPC), designed for Formerly Incarcerated people to develop skills necessary to pursue a career in public policy. Katie is a proud alumni of the Young Women’s Freedom Center, where young women are transformed into leaders; she continues to work closely with SF Adult Probation Department-Reentry Division, that focuses on job development and placement for people on probation.
Leah Daoud
Policy Associate
UnCommon Law
She/Her

The daughter of Lebanese immigrants, Leah Daoud was born and raised in the Bay Area. Leah joined UnCommon Law as a Program Support Coordinator in 2019 before transitioning to her current role as a Policy Associate in March 2020. In this role, Leah analyzes key criminal justice reform legislation, works in partnership with other community organizations, and advocates for the health, wellness, and freedom of incarcerated people who have been convicted of violent crimes. Before joining UnCommon Law, Leah worked at the American Jobs Project, an advanced energy think tank; interned at the White House during the Obama Administration; and served as a summer press assistant at the office of Attorney General Kamala Harris. Leah received her B.A. in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley in 2017.

Kelly Savage-Rodriguez
Drop LWOP program coordinator
California Coalition of Women Prisoners
She/Her

Kelly Ann Savage-Rodriguez is the DROP LWOP coordinator for California Coalition for Women Prisoners. A 46 year-old white woman, Kelly was just recently released after 23 years of incarceration. Governor Jerry Brown commuted her Life Without Parole sentence in December of 2017, allowing her a chance for a parole hearing. In November 2018, Kelly was finally released. Kelly has experienced the shattering effects of both domestic violence and incarceration. In which she survived the impact on her mind and spirit. She was an inside member of CCWP for over 15 years and helped initiate first the Living Chance storytelling project, and then the DROP LWOP campaign. Kelly is now working first hand with survivors of both domestic violence and incarceration. She is connecting with other formerly-incarcerated women and men, and networking with social justice organizations around the state to expand the DROP LWOP campaign.
Zakiya Prince

Zakiya Prince is a graduate of California State University, Northridge and has worked as an educator and social worker for the last several years. She has been a fierce advocate for her husband, who was sentenced to 35 years to life under California’s Three Strikes law, and for many others who are directly impacted by the carceral system. As a system impacted person herself, she has dedicated her life to disrupting the school-to-prison pipeline, fighting to end mass incarceration and empowering people who have been oppressed to fight for the freedoms of us all. She is currently working with the Repeal California’s Three Strikes Law Coalition and is working to build a coalition of grassroots organizations and community stakeholders to repeal the Three Strikes law with a ballot initiative in 2022.
Pol(ICE) Reform Team

Elizeth Virrueta

Team Lead Youth Organizer
Youth Justice Coalition
They/Them, She/Her

Elizeth, or Ellie, is an undocu artist youth organizer with the Youth Justice Coalition. She attended Cal State LA, where she received her Bachelor of Arts in Communication with an emphasis on Intersecting Identities and Relationships. Ellie initially used art as a healthy avenue to cope with the challenges she experienced as an undocumented person. Ellie's evolution as an artist and organizer allowed her to merge both her passions. She continues to use her artwork as a wellness tool, but also utilizes it to highlight the social injustices and oppressions that marginalized communities face. Her passion as an organizer stems from her own experiences as an undocumented young woman of color, her families interactions with immigration, and experiencing the murder of her 14-year-old cousin at the hands of law enforcement.

Erika Céspedes

Network Director
Youth Organize! California
They/Them, She/Her

Erika is a first-generation Colombian artist, educator, and organizer working at the intersections of popular education, youth organizing, and arts, culture, and storytelling. As the Network Director for Youth Organize! California, Erika helps lead power-building strategies for a statewide network of grassroots organizations committed to practicing transformative youth organizing with Black, Indigenous, undocumented, systems-impacted, and LGBTQIA+ membership. Her statewide work is rooted in the belief that defunding the pol(ice) is a critical step towards abolishing prisons and investing directly in community-led priorities. Prior to YO! Cali, Erika worked at Youth Leadership Institute (YLI), centering youth-led action research and community organizing to drive policy change on racial, social, and environmental justice issues. Erika holds a master's degree in Ethnic Studies. In 2016, she joined the College of Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University as an adjunct faculty lecturer.
Briana Zweifler
Youth Law & Policy Attorney
Fresno Barrios Unidos
They/them/she/her, Briana

Briana Zweifler is a California attorney working towards decarceration, decriminalization, and reinvestment in community health. In 2020, she returned to her hometown of Fresno to serve as the Youth Law & Policy Attorney at Fresno Barrios Unidos (FBU). In this role, Briana supports youth- and community-led policy initiatives to promote youth justice, health justice, and education justice. Prior to joining FBU, Briana advocated for community-based and developmentally-appropriate responses to youth in contact with the juvenile justice system as the UC Presidential Public Service Fellow at the National Center for Youth Law. She worked with several Northern California organizations during law school, including the W. Haywood Burns Institute, the ACLU of Northern California, the Prison Law Office, and the Yurok Tribal Court. She earned her B.A. from UC Berkeley in 2013 and J.D. from the UC Davis School of Law in 2018.

Rocio Zamora
Community Organizer/Outreach Specialist
Stop Terror and Oppression by Police Coalition
She/Her

Rocio Zamora is a community organizer, educator, and artist. She started as an undergrad supporting the national DREAM Act and campus diversity and inclusion efforts. She then became a reproductive justice organizer with the California Latinas for Reproductive Justice, and ever since her cousin, Jonathon Coronel, was shot 16 times in the back by San Diego Sheriff Christopher Villanueva, Rocio has led grassroots campaigns to end the racist gang injunctions, demand police accountability, defund the police, end the school-to-prison-pipeline, and equip families of victims with support. As a member of the STOP coalition she has participated in the creation of SB731, AB1196, AB2054. She works at San Diego State University’s Office of Educational Opportunity Programs and Ethnic Affairs where she supports first generation low-income students in their successful transition, retention, and graduation. As a first generation brown indigenous Otomi woman from poverty and criminalized areas, this is self/community defense.
Chloe Cheney-Rice is a Los Angeles native who currently serves as the Mental Health Therapist at the Anti-Recidivism Coalition in Downtown LA. She has three years of experience as a trauma-informed and client-centered therapist, working with people returning home from California state prisons. She utilizes a collaborative approach and focuses her individual and group therapy work on collective healing. She is passionate about clinical support as well as systemic-level change. At ARC, Chloe has supported the policy team by providing trauma-informed storytelling trainings, and participating in policy advocacy work which led to SB 1391 passing in 2018. As a social worker in the criminal-justice space and an advocate for the prison abolition movement, she is committed to the fight for a world in which justice and safety is accessible to all.
Economic Security Team

Vanessa Terán

Policy & Communications Associate
Mixteco/Indígena Community Organizing Project (MICOP)
They/Them

Vanessa Terán is a Mexican-American, LGBT+, social justice, language access and human rights political advocate. They joined the Mixteco/Indígena Community Organizing Project in the summer of 2013. At MICOP, Vanessa previously oversaw programming in youth advocacy and higher education, adult education and literacy, indigenous migrant culture, women’s workforce development, indigenous language services, language preservation, indigenous reproductive justice and programming on early childhood education. They currently serve as Policy and Communications Associate for MICOP, with a focus on health access, public charge and environmental justice policies. Through their work at MICOP, they envision a strong indigenous immigrant community, actively engaged to achieve just working and living conditions, equality, and full human rights in the broader community. Vanessa is from Oxnard, CA and a graduate of Chicana and Chicano Studies from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Sunhee Kim

DV Program Manager
Korean American Family Services (KFAM)
She/Her

Sunhee Kim is a Domestic Violence Program Manager at Korean American Family Services (KFAM), where she manages all the services provided to Korean immigrant Domestic Violence survivors. She graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles with Bachelors degree in Psychology in 2012 and the Pepperdine University with Master's degree in Clinical Psychology in 2016. As a daughter of Korean immigrant parents, she understands the intersectionality and cultural barriers that immigrant Domestic Violence survivors experience in their journey of healing, and she has been working to bring justice and equity for her domestic violence survivors by providing direct services to survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, reaching out to the community for a partnership, and providing training to community partners on culturally responsive work.
Esmeralda Flores

Immigrant Rights and Binational Affairs Advocate
ACLU of San Diego and Imperial Counties
She/Her

Esmeralda is a native of Tijuana and has an acute and multi-faceted understanding of US-Mexico border issues through personal and professional experiences and a complete overview of the needs and injustices that impact migrants at an individual and policy level. She is a co-founder of Al Otro Lado a bi-national, social justice legal services organization serving indigent deportees, immigrants, and asylum seekers in Tijuana, Mexico. For the past four years she has been the Immigrant Rights and Binational Affairs Advocate for the ACLU of SDIC. Esmeralda is a recipient of the FWD.us “Keeping Families Together Champions Award” for her efforts to reunite children and parents during the family separation crisis of 2018. Esmeralda is a graduate from Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, School of Law.

Alma Lopez

Executive Director
Brown Issues
She/Her

Alma currently serves as the Executive Director of Brown Issues, a statewide youth-centered leadership organization that cultivates the next generation of Brown Leaders. In this capacity, Alma supports systems change organizing and leads collaborative work with healthcare and education advocates. She also manages the organization’s year-round Sacramento County high school organizing programming on education, healing, civic engagement, and narrative change. Previously, Alma held positions as community organizer, education and health policy analyst, and continues to work directly with youth and their families around immigration, K-12 education, and higher education; topics dear to Alma’s heart. As a first-generation college student, Alma received her Bachelors of Science in Biology and a minor in Chicano Studies from California State University, Sacramento. She was born and raised in Zamora, Michoacán, México, and spends time with her family or playing soccer in her free time.
Lucia Mattox is a Policy & Outreach Associate at the Center for Responsible Lending. Based in the Oakland office, Lucia works on small dollar lending, student loan debt, and criminal legal debt issues. She helps advance policies in these focus areas to protect and expand economic security for communities throughout California and in select other states. Prior to joining CRL, Lucia worked at the Campaign for Black Male Achievement in New York, where she supported the CEO in expanding and deepening the organization’s impact to ensure black men and boys across the country thrive. She has also worked on the External Relations team for Achievement First, a network of over 30 high-performing K-12 public charter schools in historically underserved communities across Brooklyn, Connecticut and Rhode Island. Originally from San Francisco, Lucia holds a B.S. in Urban Studies with a Concentration in Sociology from Barnard College.
Reproductive Health, Rights, & Justice Team

Trina Greene Brown

Executive Director
Parenting for Liberation
She/Her

Recognized as a 2018 Inspirational Parent and as a 2017 Black Feminist Rising, Trina Greene Brown is a leader on the rise and she’s taking Black parents and children along with her to higher heights. She brings 15 years of experience engaging leaders within the violence against women’s movement to build an inclusive gender and racial justice movement by fostering deep, authentic relationships in beloved community. Trina Greene Brown is a proud Black-feminist Mama-activist of two and in 2016, she founded Parenting for Liberation for parents of Black children to envision a world where our children are free to be their most liberated selves as a virtual platform consisting of a blog, podcast, and in-person trainings and conferences. She is the author of “Parenting for Liberation: A Guide for Raising Black Children” published in June 2020 by Feminist Press.

Jessica Navarro

Administrative and Project Coordinator
Advancing New Standards Reproductive Health (ANSIRH), UCSF
She/Her

Jessica Navarro is an administrative and project coordinator for Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health (ANSIRH) at the University of California, San Francisco. In this role, she provides executive level support to the program’s Director and conducts innovative research focusing on alternative methods for providing medication abortion. She is committed to advancing equitable policies to safeguard the reproductive rights for individuals of color and other marginalized communities. Jessica is a certified health education specialist (CHES) with experience in public health consulting. She has restructured and implemented health education and nutrition programs in Northern California. She completed her undergraduate education in Psychology and Business Administration at the University of Oregon, and received her Master’s in Public Health from New York Medical College. Jessica is a certified abortion, birthing and post partum doula, and a native of the San Francisco Bay Area.
Gina Moore

Southern California Organizer
NARAL Pro-Choice America
They/Them, She/Her, Gina

Gina Moore is an organizer and reproductive freedom advocate, committed to broadening the scope of the reproductive rights movement to encompass human rights and self-determination for all people. Her experiences as a Black and Jewish woman and as the daughter of a single mother, influence her role as the Southern California Organizer at NARAL Pro-Choice America. At NARAL, Gina works to mobilize over 270,000 highly-engaged volunteers around NARAL’s endorsed Congressional and State Assembly candidates; and in support of legislative efforts to improve the rights of working families, protect access to gender affirming care and to increase positive birth outcomes for Black women. Prior to moving to California, Gina worked at Planned Parenthood Advocates of Southwest Oregon, as a Field Director on local campaigns and in Oregon’s Capitol. Gina received a B.A. in Sociology and Political Science from the University of Oregon.

Nikki Lanshaw

Project Director
University of California San Francisco
She/Her

Nikki Lanshaw is a health policy advocate and scholar who has spent the past nine years working in reproductive health, rights, and justice. As a biracial woman who grew up in the Eastern Sierra, she is especially passionate about improving access to reproductive health services for communities of color in rural areas. She is currently the Project Director for the Abortion Care Training Incubator for Outstanding Nurse Scholars (ACTIONS) fellowship at the UCSF School of Nursing, where she supports pre- and post-doctoral learners in reproductive justice-informed scholarship. She is also a Co-Chair of the Abortion Task Force in the Sexual and Reproductive Health Section of the American Public Health Association. Nikki received her MPH from UC Berkeley in 2019, where she was a Kaiser Permanente KP Scholar and focused on integrating health equity and social justice into health policy proposals and research.
Tanisha Payton
Policy and Research Associate
Parent Voices Oakland
She/Her

Tanisha Payton is a Black woman with indigenous ancestry. Payton is the Policy and Research Associate at Parent Voices Oakland, where she engages critically within local political spaces to help build power within low-income, BIPOC communities most in need of social support. Payton helps PVO leaders understand and use community participatory research and advocacy to address the issues of poverty, surveillance, and resource scarcity embedded in early childhood policy through an anti-oppression lens. Payton has a BA in Psychology-Human Development and Education, and a Masters in Cultural Anthropology- Race, Gender, and Ecology. Payton has also undertaken participatory research projects linked to diabetes prevention, oral story-telling, systemic scarcity, and identity formation within Native American communities with the Intertribal Friendship House in Oakland, California. She aims to continue using her ethnic legacies and experiences of marginality and poverty to infuse her community-driven, emancipatory work.
Adrianna Griffith
Interim Volunteer and Outreach Program Coordinator
Women’s Center Youth & Family Services
She/Her, Adrianna

Adrianna is a native of San Jose and longtime resident of Stockton. She is a Program Specialist in the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program for the Women’s Center Youth & Family Services where she has worked for the past 4 years providing direct services to individuals and families experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking. She is a Lived Experience Expert using her past experience of victimization and incarceration to assist others experiencing trauma. Her passion and focus has been to empower those most impacted by incarceration and human trafficking, helping them to unlock their full potential and understand how their vulnerabilities and victimization’s led to their decision making as well as bringing awareness to her community about how they can intersect in someone's life. She is currently back in school and studying for a degree in political science and hopes to one day hold a law degree.

Jaden Fields
Co-Director
Mirror Memoirs
He/Him/Jaden

Jaden Fields is an LA-based organizer, cultural worker, and educator. Jaden is the incoming Co-Director of Mirror Memoirs, an oral history and national organizing project that uplifts the healing and liberation of queer, trans, intersex, and non-binary Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (QTIBIPOC) who are survivors of child sexual abuse. In his work with Mirror Memoirs, Jaden is an archive storyteller and has played a pivotal role in co-designing Mirror Memoirs’ strategic vision, programs, and structure. His work within grassroots and nonprofit organizations in Los Angeles County has included designing and leading trauma-informed programs for trans folks to access health services, training government agencies to better serve transgender people, participatory action research, and policy advocacy at the city and county level. Jaden was an inaugural member of the Los Angeles Transgender Advisory Council, a 2017 California HIV/AIDS Policy Research Fellow, and 2019 Echoing Green finalist.
Carielle Escalante
DV Regional Coordinator
Rainbow Services, LTD
She/Her
Carielle Escalante has worked in the domestic violence field for 5 years. She is currently the DV Regional Coordinator for Rainbow Services, Ltd., a Los Angeles agency that provides shelter and supportive services for individuals experiencing DV. In her current role, Carielle works towards building and strengthening relationships between victim service providers and homeless service providers. A large focus of her work also includes advocating for policies that offer protections to survivors within city, county, and state agencies, all with the goal of improving the system and reducing the staggering numbers of survivors experiencing homelessness. Prior to this role, Carielle worked as a paralegal, providing critical legal services for survivor who faced significant challenges in accessing civil and criminal legal systems to obtain the protections they needed.

Laura Alberti
Prevention Coordinator
Bay Area Women Against Rape (BAWAR)
She/Her
Laura Alberti (she/her) is the Prevention Coordinator at BAWAR, an Oakland-based sexual violence crisis center serving all of Alameda County, CA. In this role, Laura runs the California Department of Public Health funded Rape Prevention and Education Program at a high school in Oakland. This comprehensive sexual violence prevention program incorporates evidence-based healthy relationships curricula, gender-based violence prevention and response policy development, training for staff and faculty on trauma-informed responses to disclosures of sexual violence, and a peer education program. Laura is passionate about youth advocacy and believes in sexual violence prevention programming that is inclusive, accessible, and responsive to specific communities' needs. For the past four years, she has developed K-12 educational models and trauma-informed implementations of Title IX and school conduct procedures. Laura holds a B.A. in psychology from Pitzer College of the Claremont Colleges, where she helped develop Pitzer Advocates for Survivors of Sexual Assault.
Estefany Garcia
Alumni Organizing Coordinator
InnerCity Struggle
She/Her

Estefany Garcia is a proud Chicana that was raised in the Eastside of Los Angeles, CA. Brought up by immigrant parents, she became involved in community organizing in middle school and has been an organizer in her community for the past 13 years. Estefany is a first generation college graduate from UCLA and is the Alumni Organizing Coordinator with InnerCity Struggle (ICS). In the past 4 years with ICS, she has been an organizer at 2 high schools and is currently the founder of the Young Adult Component that trains college aged youth to get involved. Estefany has established restorative justice programs, been published on a report assessing higher education barriers, and co-led a statewide campaign to halt California State University admission changes that would have been an additional barrier for students of color. She is honored to develop the leadership of young people, as her mentors did growing up.