



## Workshop Panelist Bios

### **Jessica Bartholow, Legislative Advocate**

#### **Western Center on Law and Poverty**

Jessica Bartholow has over a decade of experience working with low-income communities, as an advocate and program manager. She works at the Western Center on Law and Poverty as a legislative advocate focusing across multiple public benefit programs. Before joining Western Center last year, while employed at the California Association of Food Banks, she partnered with federal, state and county partners to build a statewide CalFresh outreach and access improvement program and a food bank nutrition education program that draw down federal match funding for these activities at community based organizations across the state. Jessica is an established CalFresh advocate with a deep knowledge of the program and is the author of many screening tools and training guides. She is considered a leader in the advocate community for her knowledge of benefit application and delivery modernization, having co-authored the Advocates Guide to Electronic Benefits Transfer and served on national committees to review and discuss online public benefit application systems. Jessica holds a bachelor's degree in government and economics from Mills College and has a master's degree in political science from the University of New Mexico.

### **Frances Chacon, Principal Consultant**

#### **California State Assembly Human Services Committee**

Ms. Chacon has been a policy consultant to the California State Assembly for nine years, helping to shape statewide policy. She has staffed three policy committees—Local Government, Transportation, and, now, Human Services—and served under six committee chairs. Ms. Chacon also has worked in several state departments, including the Department of Social Services and the Employment Development Department, as an analyst, and, more recently, the Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board, as its Legislative Director.

Currently, she serves under the Human Services Committee Chairperson, Assemblymember Jim Beall, focusing on legislation and policy related to asset-building for low-income Californians, CalWORKs (the state's welfare program), CalFresh, and elder issues.

Ms. Chacon has a double-degree in Government and Spanish from the California State University, Sacramento and a Certificate in Personal Financial Planning from the University of California, Davis.

### **Gwendy Donaker Brown, Director of Policy and New Initiatives**

#### **Opportunity Fund**

Gwendy Donaker Brown is Director of Policy and New Initiatives at Opportunity Fund, a leading provider of micro-savings and micro-loans in the SF Bay Area. In her role, Gwendy helped develop and launch groundbreaking savings products including Start2Save emergency savings, Saving for Citizenship and customized products for foster youth and single mothers. She also serves as an economic justice fellow with the Women's Policy Institute, a project of the Women's Foundation of California, working to expand access to CalFresh benefits through legislation. She holds a BA in Economics & Public Policy from Pomona College and an MPA in Nonprofit Management from New York University.

## **Opio Dupree, Senior Consultant**

### **California State Assembly, Assemblymember Sandré Swanson**

Opio Dupree is a Senior Consultant for Assemblymember Sandré Swanson (AD-16; Oakland, Alameda and Piedmont). His specific areas of focus are Human Services, Higher Education, Business & Professions, Labor & Employment, Housing & Community Development, Public Safety, Elections & Redistricting, and Economic Development. Prior to working with the California Assembly, Opio worked for the County of Alameda as the Assistant Director for the Bay Area JusticeCorps Program, a program that staffs Self-Help Centers in various courthouses with volunteers to empower individuals to have their cases heard in front of a judge. Opio has taught special education in the public schools in a variety of settings, to all grade levels.

Opio earned his Bachelor of Science in Environmental Policy and Assessment from Western Washington University and his Master of Education from the University of Washington. He is currently finished with his coursework in his Ph.D. program at the University of Washington, studying Educational Policy with specific emphasis on access and equity for students of color and low-income students to higher education.

## **David Ginsburg, MPH, Director**

### **UC-Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program (UC-FSNEP)**

Mr. Ginsburg is the director of the UC-Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program (UC-FSNEP). He has over 25 years experience working in public health and has been with UC for two years. He recently left the California Department of Public Health/Health Services (CDPH) where he was the chief of the program development section and assistant chief of the *Network for a Healthy California*. While at the *Network*, he oversaw the local programs, media and communications, training and conferences, and regional operations. Mr. Ginsburg also serves on the Land Grant SNAP-Ed Program Development Team and is a past chair for the Association of State Nutrition Network Administrators (ASNNA).

Previously Mr. Ginsburg was the chief of the health education section of the Office of Family Planning. There he coordinated the Partnership for Responsible Parenting – Pregnancy Prevention Media Campaign and the male involvement and information and education community intervention projects. Prior to coming to the Office of Family Planning, Mr. Ginsburg was Chief of the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCC) in the Department's Cancer Detection Section. In this program Mr. Ginsburg oversaw the largest breast and cervical cancer screening program in the nation in terms of women served, numbers of procedures provided, and diversity of women served. David first came to the California Department of Health as a result of the passage of Proposition 99. Many of you will recall Prop 99 created the anti-tobacco education program. Through his 20 years in working with the Department in Chronic Disease Programs Mr. Ginsburg provided leadership, and worked with many staff in the development and implementation of important public health initiatives. His other professional positions activities included: Executive Director of the American Cancer Society, Tulare County; and Health Education Specialist, Migrant Education, Merced County.

He received an international fellowship to study Hospices and terminal care institutions in Great Britain, was recognized as the Father of the Year in 2000, and received his Bachelors degree from Occidental college in psychology and biology and Masters in Public Health from San Jose State University.

He and his wife Barbara have two sons and he is very active in their lives and activities.

## **Alexis Fernández, Nutrition Policy Advocate**

### **California Food Policy Advocates**

Alexis works to develop and implement policies aimed at improving CalFresh access and participation. She works at the state and county levels on CalFresh-related initiatives such as the implementation of telephone interviews, semiannual reporting, and efforts geared toward verification simplification. Prior to joining CFPA, Alexis was a kinship case manager and support group facilitator in Chula Vista, CA. She received her Master of Social Work with an emphasis on Management and Planning from the University of California, Berkeley and earned a B.A. in Ethnic Studies from the University of California, San Diego. She began with CFPA as a graduate student intern in September 2009 and joined the staff in May 2010.

## **Maria Leech, Program Manager CalFresh Outreach,**

### **Network for Healthy California**

Maria Leech is a program manager with the *Network for a Healthy California* assigned to *Cal Fresh* Outreach Unit. She has many years experience in community health. She is committed to preventing and ameliorating chronic disease by promoting healthy eating and good nutrition. She is particularly interested in bringing *CalFresh* to the most vulnerable populations. Maria holds master degrees in clinical psychology and public health and is a native of Ireland.

## **Matthew Marsom, Director of Public Health Policy and Advocacy**

### **Public Health Institute**

As PHI's first director of public health policy and advocacy, Marsom is responsible for monitoring and influencing public health policy, legislation and regulations that affect PHI projects and interests. "This new role is about moving strategically and acting as a voice for PHI on state, federal and global public policy issues that support our larger mission," Marsom said. "Given the changes in Washington, this is an opportune and exciting time to enhance our role." Marsom positions PHI to cultivate understanding and support for public health, primarily at the state legislative and administrative levels, but also as appropriate with Congress, federal agencies and community organizations. Previously, he was chief of the Policy, Partnerships and Planning Unit of the Cancer Prevention and Nutrition Section of the California Department of Public Health, providing support for policy development, legislative analysis and external relations. He also oversaw the policy and partnership activities of the Network for a Healthy California. Marsom, originally from the United Kingdom, was an advocate for community-based child care organizations and an advisor for policy and strategy within the Early Years and Childcare Unit for the Department of Education and Skills in London. He received his bachelor's degree with First-Class Honors in political science from the University of Stirling in Scotland and postgraduate certificates in Russian and research methods from the University of Glasgow in Scotland.

## **Wendy Peterson, Director**

### **Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County**

Wendy Peterson has worked in the field of aging policy and services for fourteen years, after leaving the computer industry where she managed technology development start-ups for 15 years. Ms. Peterson served as Marketing and Development Director for Center for Elders Independence, a Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly in Oakland, California. She served as Interim Project Director for LifeLong Medical Care's East Bay Benefits Initiative, helping to prepare that community health center for the launch of Medicare's Prescription Drug Benefit, and conducting a series of teleconference trainings that shared LifeLong's best practices with safety net providers throughout California.

Since 2002, Ms. Peterson has directed the Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County, representing providers of healthcare and supportive services for seniors throughout the county. The Coalition and its members advocate for policy changes that improve the lives of vulnerable older adults. Together, Coalition members serve over 25,000 seniors. In 2009, Ms. Peterson was honored for her work with the Coalition, when she was named Woman of the Year for the 9<sup>th</sup> Senate District by State Senator Loni Hancock.

Ms. Peterson currently serves as the President of the Board of the Adult Day Services Network of Alameda County, an organization that serves the providers of adult day care and the adults and families they serve. Ms. Peterson received a Bachelors degree (cum laude) in English from the University of California at Los Angeles.

**Julie Salley-Grey, Principal Consultant**  
**California State Assembly Appropriations Committee**

As Principal Consultant for the Assembly Appropriations Committee, Julie Salley-Gray, is responsible for the following policy areas: social services, nutrition and food policy, governmental organization, business & professions, agriculture, juvenile and family law, jobs and economic development

Julie has 15 years of public service experience including eight years with the Legislature. Julie has been with the Legislative Analyst's Office and moved to the Appropriations Committee in 2005. Her experience in state service began as a writer and editor in the executive office of State Controller Kathleen Connell. She moved to policy and fiscal work for the Department of Social Services, primarily handling welfare reform issues. Prior to her state service and work in the Legislature, Julie worked in development/fundraising for the Crane School in Montecito, California. Julie studied United States History and African American Studies at the University of California at Davis (BA), University of California at Santa Barbara (MA), and the University of Virginia.

**Matthew Sharp, Senior Advocate**  
**California Food Policy Advocates**

Matt works to develop and advance CFPA's advocacy agenda with local government and community partners in Los Angeles, while providing support to CFPA's federal and state policy work. He provides regular testimony to school board, city council and county board hearings, as well as coordinating the Los Angeles Office's nutrition policy campaigns with local coalitions, task forces and agencies to reduce food insecurity and obesity among low-income Angelenos. Matthew joined CFPA in 1997.

**Laurel Sutton, Partner**  
**Catchword Brand Name Development**

Laurel Sutton is a veteran naming strategist and co-founder of Catchword. Laurel has directed every imaginable kind of naming project - from simple product launches to intricate architectural systems - for clients such as Cisco, Roche, Adobe, Sony, and Allstate. Trained as a linguist, Laurel is scholar in the fields of etymology, sociolinguistics, and phonetics, and is well-versed in commercial names past, present and from around the world. For over ten years at Catchword, Laurel has been helping companies big and small develop great ideas into names that command attention and engage customers.

Catchword is a full-service naming company located in the Bay Area that advises Fortune 500 companies as well as startups.

**Frank Tamborello, Executive Director**  
**Hunger Action Los Angeles**

Born in a log cabin that he helped his father build, Frank Tamborello spent several years in the printing trade before getting involved in issues affecting low-income people.

He worked with Texans United on a successful campaign to prevent a utility rate hike in Houston (1989). Shortly thereafter, he spent nine months in Angola with Development Aid from People to People developing a school for street children (1991). He also worked with Houston and Dallas ACORN on a variety of campaigns. (1992-1993) and then worked on the Childhood Hunger Identification Project (1993) before migrating to Los Angeles.

Arriving with little more than the shirt on his back, Frank landed a career with the LA Coalition to End Hunger & Homelessness (1997 -2006) where he worked on hunger legislative issues, edited the "Peoples Guide to Welfare Health and Other Services", and helped develop the Hollywood Community Action Network. Beginning July 2006 this hunger related work was moved to a newly formed organization, Hunger Action L.A.

His current food and nutrition related work includes:

- Advocacy on state and city issues related to food and hunger including the city's new ordinance requiring municipal facilities to donate surplus food to charities
- Development of incentive programs allowing low income people to purchase more fresh fruits and vegetables
- Organizing and educating groups and individuals on outreach for the food stamp program, defense of the right of charities to feed hungry persons in public, promotion of farmer's markets and community gardens, and access to healthy food for schools

### **Kristen Golden Testa, Director**

#### **California Health Program**

Kristen manages TCP's California health program and directs its activities in the 100% Campaign. Before joining The Children's Partnership, she served as the Assistant Secretary for Program and Fiscal Affairs for the California Health and Human Services Agency, where she oversaw the policy and budget issues for the Healthy Families and Medi-Cal programs, among others. In addition, she served as an ex-officio member representing the Secretary on the Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board (MRMIB). Prior to her state political appointment, Kristen served as the lead for legislation on Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance (for the Ranking Member, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan). She received her undergraduate degree from Tufts University and her master's degree in Health Science from Johns Hopkins School of Public Health and Hygiene.