

KEYNOTE SPEAKER BIO



Dr. Sade Burrell is a socially conscious leader with a deep commitment to diversity, access, and student success. She has dedicated over 15 years of her life and career to serving members of the community. With experience as a tenured faculty member and as an Associate Dean at Cuyamaca College, Dr. Burrell has inspired and empowered others through her own intersecting identities by using them to analyze her mindset and hone in on her skills and passions for serving others.

Dr. Burrell has continued to serve her community by serving on community Boards such as San Diego Youth Services where she provides insight as a person who experienced foster care. It is through her ongoing efforts to eliminate child abuse that she finds her passion and commitment to ensuring families and communities are provided with every opportunity to become successful.

SPEAKER BIOS



Amie Aguiar, BA, is the **Communications Specialist II**. She has progressive experience in communications, community outreach, and public relations, with a demonstrated record of developing innovative communication strategies that strengthen brand awareness. The majority of her work has been in the education and healthcare fields. She has always been passionate about finding ways to leave a lasting, positive impact through her work — especially in her local community. She is happy to be working toward advancing the mission of LABBN and is committed to showcasing all of the wonderful work the Network is doing. Amie earned her BA in Communication Studies from the University of California, Los Angeles.



Diana Careaga, MPH, MA is the **Director** of the Family Supports Team at First 5 LA. Ms. Careaga has over twenty-five years' experience in program planning, administration and public health. She received her Master of Public Health at University of California Los Angeles, with experience ranging from adolescent reproductive health programs to clinical research in women's health issues in Brazil. Since being at First 5 LA, she has worked with the Welcome Baby Pilot program since it began implementation. Currently, she oversees the First 5 LA's family strengthening strategies, with a focus on home visiting policy, advocacy and sustainability strategies geared toward supporting a unified and coordinated

system of home visiting countywide.



Helen Chan, BS is a **Data Analyst**. Prior to joining LABBN, Helen was a research assistant in a microbiology lab studying the effects of a drug against several bacteria at the University of Rochester in upstate New York. In undergrad, she had the opportunity to volunteer in Honduras with Global Brigades to build a clean water system and a latrine for local villagers in the rural part of the country. She is passionate about serving the underserved population through evidence-based findings.



Monica Charles, MPH is the **Senior Data Analyst** with LA Best Babies Network (LABBN). She earned her Master of Public Health from George Washington University. Before joining LABBN, she worked at the Peace Corps Headquarters Office of Health Services on electronic medical record implementation, training, evaluation, and reporting. In her graduate work she focused on improving health outcomes in underserved populations in the Washington, DC, metro area. Monica is passionate about utilizing IT innovations and data to find evidence-based solutions to public health issues.



Diane Gaspard is the **Community Health Services Chief** at South Los Angeles Health Projects, which is a community services unit of Lundquist Institute. She is a Registered Dietitian and has over 25 years of experience working with agency programs such as Black Infant Health, Immunize LA Families, Best Babies Collaborative, and others. She currently manages the Healthy Families America (HFA) home visiting program and is working on strengthening SLAHP partnerships through the HFA Community Advisory Board and other community coalitions. For fun, Diane pursues photography; she also enjoys hiking, and has completed six marathons.



Anna Ghukasyan, MPH, is the **Policy Research Associate**. Anna earned her Master of Public Health from the University of Southern California, with an emphasis in Health Services and Policy. In her graduate work, Anna focused on improving access to healthcare services for underserved populations in Los Angeles County through policy and advocacy efforts. Anna is passionate about decreasing rates of adverse childhood experiences among children in Los Angeles County.



Sharlene Gozalians, DrPH, MPH, CHES is the **Director** of LA Best Babies Network. She earned her Master of Public Health (MPH) in Health Education and Promotion at the University of Southern California. She continued to earn her Doctorate in Public Health (DrPH) at Loma Linda University. Her professional background includes working in the field of home visiting, trauma informed care, maternal and child health, healthy food access and the built environment issues in Los Angeles County, creating healthy and empowered communities, youth empowerment and advocacy, corner store conversions, program planning and evaluation and teaching. Her volunteer experience includes working in Tanzania, Brazil and Armenia addressing prevention, health education and maternal and child health issues. Sharlene’s passion for public health addresses the needs of underserved and vulnerable populations.



Dr. Melissa R. Franklin, Ed. D., is the **Director** of Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Programs, L.A. County Department of Public Health. She is a public health leader with over 25 years of experience in organizational development and communications and engagement strategy for both public health and public education sectors. Dr. Franklin was appointed Director of Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health, for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health’s Health Promotion Bureau in November of 2022, making her the first Black woman Director of the Division for LA County. In this capacity, she oversees programs that support the health and well-being of pregnant individuals, infants, and children, including the African American Infant and Maternal Mortality Prevention Initiative (which she helped launch in 2018 as a Pritzker Fellow), Black Infant Health Program, Asthma Coalition, Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, Help Me Grow, Home Visitation Programs, and Positive Youth Development.



Whitney S. Hammock has worked in her community as an **active leader** and **advocate** for the past six years. She started out as a parent and family advocate with First 5 LA’s Best Start Region 2, sitting on their leadership board for two years. For the following two years, she served as a Local Representative for First 5 LA’s Best Start Compton’s Regional Task Force. For the last two years, Whitney has been a Community Navigator for Rising Communities (formerly Community Health Councils), and she has no plans of stopping anytime soon.



Helen Kontorosis, BS is a **Communications Specialist**. Helen comes from a journalism background, with seven years of experience working in the television news industry, most recently in Sacramento. She has worked behind-the-scenes as a producer, covering crime, politics, health, environmental, entertainment, and community-focused stories. She is excited to help further LABBN’s mission and uses her storytelling skills to showcase the work LABBN is doing. Helen earned her BS in Telecommunication from the University of Florida.



Karla Pleitéz Howell, BA, JD, is the **Executive Director** at F5LA. [Appointed by First 5 LA's Board of Commissioners](#) on Nov. 10, 2022, Karla Pleitéz Howell serves as the organizations executive director. Karla has been a relentless advocate to ensure ALL children have the opportunity to thrive. Through community partnerships and innovative strategies, she has helped to increase resources and targeted programs to those most burdened and furthest from equitable opportunities. Karla has a relentless focus on justice and equity. Karla launched her advocacy for communities furthest from opportunity as an attorney. She also worked as the Directing Attorney for El Rescate Legal Services, a nonprofit focused on assisting families with immigration legal issues. Karla was the Supervising Attorney for Public Counsel's Early Care & Education Law Unit in Los Angeles County. Here she led a coalition in the Southeast cities to increase green space and educational opportunities for young children. As an attorney providing legal services for families stuck in the cycle of poverty, Karla saw patterns of systemic injustices and transitioned to work on policy advocacy. She joined Advancement Project California (now Catalyst California) in 2014. She had the privilege to serve as Director of Education, Managing Director and Chief of Policy and Programs. As an advocate, Karla worked to bring coalitions together to increase childcare facilities funding, improve quality in Transitional Kindergarten programs and increase access to child care for California's youngest learners. In partnership with audacious community partners, Karla has helped direct billions of dollars in investments for low-income communities. Karla earned her BA from UCLA and holds a J.D. from UC Hastings.



Alina Moran, MPA, is the **President** of Dignity Health – California Hospital Medical Center (CHMC) and leads the overall direction, strategy, and operation of the hospital. Moran served as chief executive officer for NYC Health + Hospitals/ Metropolitan, a 338-bed acute care facility in East Harlem, NY, as well as chief patient growth officer for the NYC Health + Hospital's system. A veteran health care executive with more than 20 years of experience, Moran is a seasoned, dynamic leader with a diverse background in hospital administration. She has a remarkable record of achievement, having demonstrated success in initiating culture change with a focus on decreasing readmission rates, improving safety measures, and implementing strategic initiatives. Her work led Metropolitan to be recognized for meeting the highest national patient safety standards, while achieving distinction for high performance in COPD, heart failure, and stroke care. Moran holds a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree from Baruch College and a Bachelor of Science from Brown University. Additionally, Moran is an active community leader and was involved in the establishment of the Rhode Island Political Action Committee and Brown University Latino Alumni Council. Moran was also named to the inaugural list of "Notable Women in Health Care" by Crain's New York Business in 2018 and has been honored by a variety of prestigious national organizations.



Steve Nish, MA, is the **Manager of Communications and Outreach**. With 20 years of experience in the communications field, he has led national and global communications campaigns in education, corporate ethics, and community building. Prior to working with LABBN, he was Senior Editor of the Los Angeles-based Josephson Institute, where he focused on sustainability and ethics in business, and on character development in schools and youth service programs. He did his undergraduate work at University of California, Santa Barbara, and has a master's from Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.



Supervisor Hilda L. Solis represents the **First supervisorial district of Los Angeles County - Supervisorial District** which is home to nearly two million people. The district covers 268.57 square miles and stretches from Silverlake and Eagle Rock east to the San Bernadino County line. The 1st supervisorial district includes portions of 20 cities and 23 unincorporated communities and 25 neighborhoods in the city of Los Angeles. Supervisor Solis accelerated the County's efforts to combat homelessness and allocated funding to build thousands of affordable housing units in her district and around the County. She authored the groundbreaking Measure A to invest in communities without green space, expand open and recreational park space in their neighborhoods, and protect water quality.

She led a coalition advocating for communities facing environmental injustices near the Exide recycling plant and helped to clean up poisonous lead in thousands of homes. Supervisor Solis is leading the effort to reimagine public safety in Los Angeles County and prioritize expanding healthcare and jobs instead of mass incarceration, leading the effort to cancel a \$1.7 billion contract to build a new jail. She pushed to fully fund a \$20 million dollar workforce and job training program for disadvantaged young people and authored more than 40 motions defending immigrant communities during the previous (Continued) federal administration. Most recently, she also met the Biden White House's call to action to address the humanitarian crisis at the southern border, by setting up an emergency intake site in her district for thousands of unaccompanied children.



Delisa Young, MA, is the **Manager of Data and Evaluation** at LA Best Babies Network. Delisa earned her master's degree in Experimental Psychology from California State University, San Bernardino. Her professional background includes working as a Research Specialist at Five Acres, a child welfare agency that promotes permanency, safety, and well-being for children and families. She supported continuous quality improvement efforts by partnering with the IT department to make the electronic health record system useful for all staff to meet the agency's mission goals, and by providing useful reports to senior leadership to make data-informed decisions. Delisa also has experience conducting health disparities research, which has helped frame her interpretation of data when examining underserved populations. Delisa is passionate about eliminating disparities in health and education and wants to contribute to this cause by using her research and data skills.

FAMILY STRENGTHENING OVERSIGHT ENTITY



First 5 LA is a leading early childhood advocate organization created by California voters to invest Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues. In partnership with others, First 5 LA strengthens families, communities and systems of services and supports so that all children in Los Angeles County enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and life.



LA Best Babies Network (LABBN) is dedicated to achieving healthy pregnancies and births in LA County by providing the infrastructure, programs, advocacy and support to increase the capacity of community partners to succeed in these efforts. Through the Network’s trainings, technical assistance and advocacy work, perinatal providers and advocates across the County unite to increase access to quality perinatal care and inter-conception care, create a safety net of resources for at-risk families, create community driven forums to disseminate best practices and find solutions and advance policies that promote healthy deliveries. LABBN is a community benefit program of **California Hospital Medical Center**; a member of the **Dignity Health system of hospitals**.



Work2Live Well’s mission is to empower individuals and organizations through mindfulness, strengths-based positive psychology, alternative modalities, and cognitive behavioral transformation to enhance the quality of life to the level of flourishing in all key areas. In addition to being one of the oversight entities for the First 5 funded Welcome Baby and Home Visiting programs in L.A. County, we provide coaching, training and development to the staff implementing those programs. Through leadership coaching, team workshops, conflict resolution/mediation, leadership development retreats and multi-media education, our aim is to enhance and maintain team cohesion, while supporting individual staff members delivering direct services, so that they can achieve overall well-being and success. This results in increased productivity, reduced burn-out and compassion fatigue and, through the parallel process, improved outcomes for both staff and clients. In addition to our work with Welcome Baby and Home Visiting programs, Work2Live provides trainings to nonprofit and school-based programs, conducts workshops for parents and individuals in disadvantaged communities, provides mindfulness training and curriculum development to clients in the U.S. and Canada, and offers certification programs in both leadership and professional coaching. Work2Live also produces a highly rated mental health podcast, A Mindful Moment™, in both English and Spanish.



FAMILY STRENGTHENING OVERSIGHT ENTITY BIOS

First 5 LA

Diana Careaga, MPH, MA is the **Director** of the Family Supports Team at First 5 LA. Ms. Careaga has over twenty-five years' experience in program planning, administration and public health. She received her Master of Public Health at University of California Los Angeles, with experience ranging from adolescent reproductive health programs to clinical research in women's health issues in Brazil. Since being at First 5 LA, she has worked with the Welcome Baby Pilot program since it began implementation. Currently, she oversees the First 5 LA's family strengthening strategies, with a focus on home visiting policy, advocacy and sustainability strategies geared toward supporting a unified and coordinated system of home visiting countywide.

Marlene Cole, MPH is a **Program Officer** on the Family Supports Team at First 5 LA with over 25 years of experience working in the fields of maternal and reproductive health and youth development. Marlene oversees grants within the Family Strengthening Network. She is the internal point person for the Parents as Teachers program, provides programmatic guidance to the Stronger Families Database workgroup and serves as a co-lead for the Los Angeles County Perinatal and Early Childhood Home Visitation Consortium Referrals Workgroup. Before joining the Family Supports Team, Marlene worked as a Program Officer with the Best Start communities and with Healthy Births Initiative grantees. Prior to joining First 5 LA, Marlene was a Lead Area Manager for Essential Health Access, managing the Title X family planning program with community health centers and county health departments throughout California. Marlene has a BA in Sociology from UC Santa Cruz and an MPH from Emory University.

Ellaine Hartley-Polissky, MPH is a **Program Officer** at First 5 LA. She joined First 5 LA eleven years ago in May of 2012 starting with the Best Start Initiative then transitioned to Welcome Baby and Select Home Visitation under the Family Supports Team in 2015. Her professional background includes over 18 years working in health promotion and intervention programs targeting pregnant women and children; and includes programs such as the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Nutrition program and First 5 LA's Healthy Births Initiative. She joined the First 5 LA team to fulfill a passion of promoting healthy communities and increasing access to resources for pregnant women and children. She earned her Bachelors in Health Science with an option in Health Education, and her Masters of Public Health with an emphasis in Community Health Education from California State University, Northridge.

Karlo Herrera, M. Ed., is a **Program Associate** in the Family Supports department. He assists his colleagues with the initial review of Welcome Baby and Select Home Visitation invoices; and manages contracts others would die for. Karlo is a team player and helps his department in any way that he can to keep tasks moving along. He is a huge Dodgers fan, but above all he is the biggest fan of his two kids. Being an active and engaged father is his main drive to wake up every morning.

Karla Pleitéz Howell, BA, JD, is the **Executive Director** at F5LA. [Appointed by First 5 LA's Board of Commissioners](#) on Nov. 10, 2022, Karla Pleitéz Howell serves as the organizations executive director. Karla has been a relentless advocate to ensure ALL children have the opportunity to thrive. Through community partnerships and innovative strategies, she has helped to increase resources and targeted programs to those most burdened and furthest from equitable opportunities. Karla has a relentless focus

on justice and equity. Karla launched her advocacy for communities furthest from opportunity as an attorney. She also worked as the Directing Attorney for El Rescate Legal Services, a nonprofit focused on assisting families with immigration legal issues. Karla was the Supervising Attorney for Public Counsel's Early Care & Education Law Unit in Los Angeles County. Here she led a coalition in the Southeast cities to increase green space and educational opportunities for young children. As an attorney providing legal services for families stuck in the cycle of poverty, Karla saw patterns of systemic injustices and transitioned to work on policy advocacy. She joined Advancement Project California (now Catalyst California) in 2014. She had the privilege to serve as Director of Education, Managing Director and Chief of Policy and Programs. As an advocate, Karla worked to bring coalitions together to increase child care facilities funding, improve quality in Transitional Kindergarten programs and increase access to child care for California's youngest learners. In partnership with audacious community partners, Karla has helped direct billions of dollars in investments for low-income communities. Karla earned her BA from UCLA and holds a J.D. from UC Hastings. On weekends, Karla enjoys the outdoors with her husband and family and loves to listen to the latest humorous philosophical ponderings from their two kids.

Laura Hoyos Kainsinger, MPH is a **Program Officer** at First 5 LA. She received her Bachelor of Science in Physiological Science and a Master of Public Health in Community Health Sciences from the University of California, Los Angeles. Before joining First 5 LA, she was a program manager for Prevention and Aftercare, a comprehensive, strength-based program providing resources and activities to vulnerable children and families in Los Angeles County. Prior to this work, Laura was the Director of Community Outreach for Growing Great, where she built and maintained positive collaborative relationships with community partners and was responsible for the development, implementation, and evaluation of school-based nutrition programs. Her professional experience also includes working in the fields of parenting education, health access, and academic event planning. Laura has over 20 years' experience working with community-based programs that provide services to culturally diverse and at-risk families.

Alison Kellman, MSc is a **Program Officer** on the Family Supports Team with over 30 years of experience in Public Health. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Rhetoric and Communication from University of California, Davis and earned a Master of Science in Health Education and Promotion from South Bank University, London. Alison has partnered with many family-serving agencies to include spending ten years at a South Los Angeles agency supporting maternal and child health initiatives, including oversight of a Black Infant Health (BIH) Project. For the past eleven years, Alison has contributed her expertise at a neighboring health department establishing and cultivating collaborative partnerships with family and community health programs; as well as medical and health community stakeholders, to create and implement emergency preparedness plans, while ensuring compliance.

Vanessa Mendez, MA is the **Senior Program Officer** at First 5 LA. She joined First 5 LA and the Family Supports team in June 2021. Her focus is on systems change and optimization efforts. Vanessa has over 15 years of experience overseeing, implementing and evaluating community and school-based programs that serve children, youth and families in California, Minnesota and Michigan. Prior to her role at First 5 LA, Vanessa served as the Director of Community Services at Children's Bureau overseeing prevention programming in Metro Los Angeles. Her content knowledge is focused on early childhood development, child abuse prevention, parent-child attachment, family support and community involvement. Vanessa enjoys working collaboratively with partners to contribute to the development of impactful opportunities for families, particularly those with young children. She has a master's degree in Ecological-Community Psychology from Michigan State University.

Connie Preciado-Gonzalez, MA, AMFT, is a **Senior Program Officer** at First 5 LA joining the Family Supports team September of 2022. Her focus area is sustainability. Connie has over 20 years of experience working with pregnant people and families with children 0-5. She received her Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy with a specialization in working with Latino Families from Pacific Oaks College. She has a bachelor's degree in Social Ecology with a specialization in Clinical and Developmental Psychology from UCI. Prior to joining First 5 LA, Connie was a Director of Home-Based Services at a partner community-based organization overseeing 0-5 home visiting programs. She has experience providing clinical services with an emphasis on infant mental health as well as in the early childhood education realm as a primary provider for infants and toddlers.

Claudia Molina, MPH is a **Program Officer** at First 5 LA. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Pitzer College. She worked as a program coordinator for several years for a case management program serving high-risk families in South Los Angeles. She earned her Master's of Public Health at Boston University with a concentration on maternal and child health. Ms. Molina has over ten years of experience in program planning, implementation, and grantmaking. Since being at First 5 LA, she has worked on family-strengthening and sustainability strategies, including the Baby Friendly Initiative, the Targeted Case Management (TCM), and County-Based Medi-Cal Administrative Activities (CMAA) pilots.

John A. Wagner, MPA, MPP, is the **Executive Vice President** of First 5 LA's Center for Child and Family Impact (CCFI). In this role, John is responsible for leading the CCFI's systems change efforts to change policy and practice and build public will to prioritize and improve outcomes for young children in Los Angeles County. John first joined the early childhood advocacy and public grantmaking organization as Chief Operating Officer in December 2012, building on his nearly two decades of experience in running a number of state departments in the health and human services arena. In August 2016, John was promoted to the position of Executive Vice President. Prior to joining First 5 LA, John served as Director of the California Department of Community Services and Development from 2011-2012, and Director of the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) from 2007-2011. At CDSS, he oversaw a budget of over \$20 billion and programs affecting California's most vulnerable residents including foster children and youth; children and families receiving aid through the California Work Opportunities and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs); and children and adults in state-licensed community care facilities. John earned a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, a master's degree in Public Policy from Georgetown University and a bachelor's degree from Marquette University.

LA Best Babies Network

Amie Aguiar, BA, is the **Communications Specialist II**. She has progressive experience in communications, community outreach, and public relations, with a demonstrated record of developing innovative communication strategies that strengthen brand awareness. The majority of her work has been in the education and healthcare fields. She has always been passionate about finding ways to leave a lasting, positive impact through her work — especially in her local community. She is happy to be working toward advancing the mission of LABBN and is committed to showcasing all of the wonderful work the Network is doing. Amie earned her BA in Communication Studies from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Helen Chan, BS is a **Data Analyst**. Prior to joining LABBN, Helen was a research assistant in a microbiology lab studying the effects of a drug against several bacteria at the University of Rochester in upstate New York. In undergrad, she had the opportunity to volunteer in Honduras with Global Brigades to build a clean water system and a latrine for local villagers in the rural part of the country. She is passionate about serving the underserved population through evidence-based findings.

Monica Charles, MPH, is the **Senior Data Analyst**. She earned her Master of Public Health from George Washington University. Before joining LABBN, she worked at the Peace Corps Headquarters Office of Health Services on electronic medical record implementation, training, evaluation, and reporting. In her graduate work she focused on improving health outcomes in underserved populations in the Washington, DC, metro area. Monica is passionate about utilizing IT innovations and data to find evidence-based solutions to public health issues.

Patrick Flippin-Weston, BA, is the **Public Health Research Associate and Training Coordinator**. With a degree in Psychology, he has worked in the social services field in northern and southern California. Prior to joining LABBN, he was an Outreach Caseworker at the Alameda County Community Food Bank, where he assisted with connecting individuals and families with federal nutrition programs. He also worked at the University of California, Los Angeles, as a Training Coordinator for the emerging California Hub and Spoke Program. There, he assisted with statewide training on the tools, medication, and resources needed to combat the opioid crisis. Patrick is a true believer that knowledge is power and passionately aims to connect individuals and communities with the resources they need to thrive.

Anna Ghukasyan, MPH, is the **Policy Research Associate**. Anna earned her Master of Public Health from the University of Southern California, with an emphasis in Health Services and Policy. In her graduate work, Anna focused on improving access to healthcare services for underserved populations in Los Angeles County through policy and advocacy efforts. Anna is passionate about decreasing rates of adverse childhood experiences among children in Los Angeles County.

Sharlene Gozalians, DrPH, MPH, CHES, is the **Director** for LA Best Babies Network. Sharlene earned her Master of Public Health in Health Education and Promotion at the University of Southern California; she continued her education to earn her Doctorate in Public Health at Loma Linda University. Her professional background includes working with healthy food access and the built environment issues in Los Angeles County, creating healthy communities, youth empowerment and advocacy, corner store conversions, program planning and evaluation and teaching. Her volunteer experience includes working in Tanzania, Brazil and Armenia addressing prevention, health education and maternal and child health issues. Sharlene's passion for public health addresses the needs of underserved and vulnerable populations.

Kathryn Hodges, BA, is a **Public Health Research Associate**. Kathryn serves as a part of the Training and Technical Assistance team supporting the Family Strengthening Oversight Entity leadership as they serve and train home visitors. She got her degree in History and dove into advocacy work as the Executive Assistant at a Postpartum Depression Foundation in Chicago. She managed a grant for the Family and Child Health Department in Pittsburgh, coordinating and supporting local strategic efforts to reduce racial inequities in maternal and infant health outcomes. She became a Certified Postpartum Doula and loves finding ways to make new parents feel supported and cared for as they navigate their new role! She is passionate about helping people and believes that parenting was never intended to be a solo sport. She is thrilled to be part of LABBN as they equip and support those who serve families.

Jennifer Jimenez, BS, is a **Public Health Research Associate**. Jennifer has centered much of her career on supporting the needs of families. Prior to joining LABBN, Jennifer worked as a Service Coordinator at Westside Regional Center, where she was responsible for the case management of over 100 bilingual families with children with disabilities. As a member of the LA Best Babies Network team, she is grateful to be part of such an impactful organization and to be able to support its mission to ensure families have the support necessary to thrive and create healthy and prosperous futures for their children. Jennifer received her Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Child and Adolescent Development and plans to pursue a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree.

Jonathan Jimenez, BA, is the **Database Trainer and Support Specialist II**. Prior to joining LABBN, he was a data analyst for a cloud-based POS company. With a background in volunteer work for immigrant groups and others in need, Jonathan says he is happy to be working for an organization whose mission comports with his passion for helping underserved communities. He earned his degree in Business Management from California State University, Northridge, and hopes to pursue an MBA in the healthcare field in the near future.

Helen Kontorousis, BS is a **Communications Specialist**. Helen comes from a journalism background, with seven years of experience working in the television news industry, most recently in Sacramento. She has worked behind-the-scenes as a producer, covering crime, politics, health, environmental, entertainment, and community-focused stories. She is excited to help further LABBN's mission and uses her storytelling skills to showcase the work LABBN is doing. Helen earned her BS in Telecommunication from the University of Florida.

Oswaldo Lopez, BS, is the **Database Trainer and Support Specialist I**. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Healthcare Administration/Management from California State University, Northridge. Previously, at Arroyo Vista Family Health Center, he conducted analyses of regional health care needs and participated in community outreach, social media, and strategic planning — all with the goal of educating underserved community members and connecting them to health care services. Oswaldo has a passion for education and public health, so he is glad to be part of a network that provides this support to mothers and families across Los Angeles County.

Larisa Malek, BS, is the **Manager of Operations and Grants**. Larisa studied accounting at California State University, Los Angeles, and is responsible for LABBN's financial budget. She works closely with the Director of Administration managing day-to-day operations. Larisa is an innovative and driven accounting professional who is eager to take on new challenges.

Lynnette Marquez, BA, is the **Policy Administrative Assistant**. Prior to joining LABBN, Lynnette worked as a Health Program Analyst at the L.A. County Department of Public Health and as a Health Educator at a nonprofit focused on lung health. She has experience overseeing the implementation of health education programs and coordinating partnerships with community organizations. She wants to continue to help advance public health outcomes, particularly for underserved and vulnerable communities in L.A. County. Lynnette earned her BA in Public Policy from the University of California, Riverside. She also plans to pursue a Master of Public Health degree.

Laurel Murray, BA, is the **Policy Administrative Coordinator**. Prior to joining LABBN, she worked as a coordinator in several acute units at California Hospital Medical Center. As a firm believer that the mission

of LABBN is incredibly important for the future of Los Angeles County and for the state of California, she feels fortunate to be part of a team with so much dedication to help the community. She is passionate about improving the quality of care and quality of life for the underserved population of Los Angeles County. She is a southern California native who received her BA in Psychology from Cal State Fullerton.

Steve Nish, MA, is the **Manager of Communications and Outreach**. With 20 years of experience in the communications field, he has led national and global communications campaigns in education, corporate ethics, and community building. Prior to working with LABBN, he was Senior Editor of the Los Angeles-based Josephson Institute, where he focused on sustainability and ethics in business, and on character development in schools and youth service programs. He did his undergraduate work at University of California, Santa Barbara, and has a master's from Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

Arcenia Ochoa Vega, MHA, is the **Administrative Coordinator**. Arcenia is a first-generation Latina college graduate who recently obtained a master's in health administration from the University of La Verne, with a concentration in Public Health. She graduated from California State University, Los Angeles with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology. Prior to joining LABBN, she worked as an Administrative Assistant at California Rehabilitation Institute. During her time there, she provided support to management and the Patient Experience team. She also volunteered at four non-profit hospitals during her time as an undergraduate student. She is passionate about giving back to her community and reducing health disparities.

Printess Pickens, MHA, MBA is the **Database Quality Assurance and Project Specialist**. Printess was born in Chicago, IL, where he spent most of his adolescent life. He later moved to Alabama, where he completed his Bachelor of Science in Biology Pre-Med from the University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH). He went on to earn his master's in health administration (MHA) and Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Maryland University College. He has always had a passion for helping others and improving health outcomes. Printess has done extensive work in the areas of Hospital Quality Management and Performance Improvement. He also has experience on the IT spectrum of healthcare, as an Epic Clinical Documentation & Quality Consultant. He enjoys using his diverse skill set to analyze problems and provide solutions that increase efficiency throughout organizations. He moved to Southern California in 2020, and really enjoys the warm weather and beautiful beaches.

Vanessa Reyes, BS, CHES is the **Public Health Research Associate**. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Health Science from California State University, Fullerton. She also recently became certified as a health education specialist. Prior to LABBN, she worked for a private university that focused on allied health occupations where she provided health education, data management, and administrative support. She is passionate about giving back to the community and providing high-quality resources and education to help people lead happy and healthy lives. Vanessa is thankful to have the opportunity to support families across LA County and to be a part of LABBN.

Terrie-May Ruiz, BS, is the **Public Health Research Associate and Training Coordinator**. She graduated from California Baptist University with a bachelor's degree in science and a concentration in Health Education. Prior to working at LABBN, she interned at Kaiser Permanente, Riverside, as a Diabetes Health Educator, helping patients maintain a healthy lifestyle by helping them develop a diabetic-friendly meal plan and by making sure they know how and when to take their medication. She also volunteered at Dignity

Health - California Hospital Medical Center in the postpartum, pediatrics and emergency trauma departments, where she enhanced her practical knowledge and experience in health care. She always wanted to have a career that enabled her to help people in need, and she is grateful to have that opportunity at LABBN.

Faith Soltero, BS, is the **Office Coordinator**. Faith Soltero received her BS in Public Health at California State University, Sacramento. While she was a student there, she served as the Associated Students Inc.'s Vice President of Finance. She is currently pursuing her Master's in Healthcare Management from California State University, Los Angeles. Prior to joining LABBN, she volunteered in the Maternity department at Providence Holy Cross Medical Center. She also interned at Kaiser Permanente, where she helped oversee business operations and project management. Most recently, she worked at the Department of Healthcare Services assisting staff analysts in the Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Program. Faith is passionate about serving her community and is particularly interested in reducing healthcare disparities. She is happy to be working at LA Best Babies Network as the Office Coordinator and supporting its mission.

Delisa Young, MA, is the **Manager of Data and Evaluation**. Delisa earned her master's degree in Experimental Psychology from California State University, San Bernardino. Her professional background includes working as a Research Specialist at Five Acres, a child welfare agency that promotes permanency, safety, and well-being for children and families. She supported continuous quality improvement efforts by partnering with the IT department to make the electronic health record system useful for all staff to meet the agency's mission goals, and by providing useful reports to senior leadership to make data-informed decisions. Delisa also has experience conducting health disparities research, which has helped frame her interpretation of data when examining underserved populations. Delisa is passionate about eliminating disparities in health and education and wants to contribute to this cause by using her research and data skills.

Work 2 Live Well

Teresa McKee, B.S.B.A., M.S., C.M.M.F., served for six years as the Welcome Baby Program Director for PAC/LAC, one of the Family Strengthening Oversight Entities, and has since continued as **CEO of Work2Live**, serving on the FSOE and providing staff training and leadership and team development. Teresa is a transformation coach and certified meditation facilitator. She brings over 30 years' experience in managing projects, organizations, programs and personnel to the program. Combining her experience with a B.S. in Business Administration and an M.S. in Psychology, specializing in Leadership Coaching, Teresa integrates behavioral science and complimentary alternative methods with results-oriented processes to help individuals and teams achieve their goals. In addition to her coaching and training work, she produces a weekly podcast on mindfulness and administers a coaching certification program. She is the Secretary/Treasurer for the My Stuff Bags Foundation and volunteers for Maternal Mental Health NOW. Her new book, *Dynamic Response Ability*, is set to be published in 2020.

Alison Merva is the **Administrative Assistant** for Work2Live Well. She brings experience in marketing, project management, and collaborating with various agencies and brands, including her previous roles at Blowfish Malibu and a startup focused on launching direct-to-consumer brands online. Alison earned her Bachelor of Arts in Communication from the University of California, Santa Barbara. In her current position, she is responsible for scheduling, registration processing, event planning support, social media

management, digital file organization, and other administrative tasks. Alison can be relied on to get the job done efficiently and with excellence. She is eager to continue developing her skills and is passionate about her work at Work2Live Well.

Melissa Sims is the **social media and Web Manager** for Work2Live Well. She is also one of our workshop contributors and a guest writer for our blog. She brings over 8 years of experience in social media management, and has written numerous guest pieces for various industries, including travel, real estate and yoga. Melissa is also a Certified Yoga Teacher, and sometimes brings yoga into our workshops. Melissa's focus is on mindful meditation, breath work, and asana. Melissa is currently exploring the many facets of yoga, including yoga therapy, the chakras, the application of sound energy, and the practice of pre-natal and post-natal yoga.