



Developing Equity Leadership  
through Training and Action

## 2015 Cohort Bio-sketches



**Sarita Amaya**  
**Oregon Dept. of Ed, Early Learning**

Sarita provides support to local communities and Early Learning Hubs as they plan services for children who are culturally and linguistically diverse. She also assists in application of the Equity Lens and coordination of educational opportunities for children and provides leadership on culturally related issues to close achievement and opportunity gaps.



**Marina Barcelo**  
**Oregon Foundation for Reproductive Health (OFRH) and NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon (NPCO)**

Marina Barcelo serves as the Director of Equity & Community Engagement at the Oregon Foundation for Reproductive Health (OFRH) and NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon (NPCO), where she manages equity, inclusion, and reproductive justice initiatives. Marina is also a member of Western States Center's We Are BRAVE coalition, advocating for abortion rights alongside racial justice, immigrant rights, and tribal sovereignty with 30 other leaders of color. Prior to her time at NPCO, she served as the Organizer for NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts, where she helped establish the Office of Health Equity in the Massachusetts State House. Marina has also served as the Development Director of Chicago Women's Health Center and as a member of the Oregon Foundation for Reproductive Health's Board of Directors. Marina holds a Master's of Social Work and a Master's in Women's and Gender Studies from Loyola University Chicago.



**Yesenia Castro**  
**Next Door Inc.**

Yesenia graduated from Oregon State University in 2013 with a B.S of Science in Public Health- Health Promotion & Health Behavior. Her work and volunteer history includes a lot of hours dedicated to helping eliminate health disparities in various countries including the USA, Mexico, Honduras, Dominican Republic, and India. I currently work with Nuestra Comunidad Sana a program of The Next Door Inc. She loves working for a non-profit as a Community Health Worker because, "I get to work directly with the most vulnerable populations." She was hired as a CHW and Mid-Columbia Health Equity Advocate and is working under a grant from the Oregon Health Authority's office of Equity and Inclusion. She is the coordinator for the grant called RHEC- Regional Health Equity Coalitions for the Mid-Columbia Hood River & Wasco County. She is a Public Health practitioner because she wants to improve the health of respective communities and use the skills learned to eliminate health disparities, promote health, and inspire healthy living.



**Peter Davis Jr.**  
**Marion County Health Dept.**

Peter Davis Jr. is the Rural and Prevention Services Supervisor for Marion County, a position which he has held since 9/14. Peter received his Masters in Health Education and Masters in Medical Anthropology from Idaho State University, his Masters in Social Work from Northwest Nazarene University and his Doctorate in Behavioral Health from Arizona State University. Before his current position, Peter worked as a bilingual child and family therapist for Marion County, as well as a research assistant for an NIH grant and an Americorp/Healthcorp member in a migrant farmworker clinic in Southeast Idaho. Peter has extensive experience in both Public and Mental Health, with work focusing on Migrant Health, LGBT health, co-occurring disorders, gang issues, substance abuse, HIV prevention and chronic disease. In addition, Peter is a licensed clinical social worker and certified drug and alcohol counselor II; he is also fluent in Spanish. Peter is committed to social justice and equality and views Dr. Paul Farmer as his Public Health Hero.



**Chris DeMars**  
**OHA Transformation Center**

Chris DeMars is the Director of Systems Innovation at the Oregon Health Authority Transformation Center, which is the hub for health system innovation and improvement in Oregon. At the Transformation Center, Ms. DeMars manages a team that supports the success of Oregon's coordinated care organizations while also working to spread the coordinated care model to other payers. Ms. DeMars recently spent over eight years as a Senior Program Officer at the Northwest Health Foundation, where she managed the Foundation's health care reform work, including support for Oregon's delivery system reform and health reform advocacy organizations. Prior to joining the Foundation, Ms. DeMars was a Senior Health Policy Analyst for the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), where she authored numerous reports for Congress on Medicaid, Medicare and private health insurance payment policy. Ms. DeMars has held positions at various health-policy consulting firms in the areas of public health, managed care and reimbursement systems, and she began her career as a Policy Analyst at Indiana's Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning. She holds a Master of Public Health degree from the University of Michigan School of Public Health and a Bachelor's degree in English Literature from the University of Michigan. Ms. DeMars lives in Portland with her husband and two sons.



**LaKeesha Dumas**  
**Urban League**

LaKeesha is a Community Health Worker and a Peer Support Specialist in her Community. She works with the Health Resiliency Program as part of the HOPE team at her Local Clinic. LaKeesha is the Chair of The Traditional Health Workers Commission and also the Policy Vice-Chair for the Oregon Community Health Workers Association. Her Passion and Drive is in helping others get the appropriate resources needed to help them Empower themselves to become healthier. LaKeesha is the 2014 recipient of the Oregon Public Health Association Emerging Leader Award. She is a true advocate for policy and health disparities in her community.



**Corey Falls**  
**Jackson County**

Corey Falls was elected Jackson County Sheriff and began his term in January of 2015. Prior to being elected as Sheriff Corey was a Deputy Chief of Police for the City of Ashland Police Department. Corey has held various roles during his career to include Lieutenant, Patrol Sergeant, Detective and Sheriff's Deputy. Corey started his law enforcement career in the Greater Puget Sound area of Washington State where he worked for a medium size suburb city police department and large county sheriff's office. Corey is currently completing a Doctorate of Business Administration degree. He holds a Masters Degree in Organizational Management, has a Graduate Certificate in Criminal Justice Education, and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Health and Human Performance. Corey is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, has completed the International Association of Chiefs of Police; Leading Police Organizations Course and attended the Senior Management Institute for Police Course conducted by the Police Executive Research Forum. Corey has an Executive level Certification through the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training and is a member of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives.



**Tamara Falls**  
**Advantage Dental**

Tamara Falls is the Regional Manager-Community Liaison for Advantage Dental. Advantage Dental provides dental coverage to over 200,000 Oregonians who are members of the Oregon Health plan. Tamara's role with Advantage involves community outreach in Jackson and Josephine counties, with a primary focus of increasing preventative oral health care for pregnant women and children ages zero to five, and improved oral health overall for the community. Tamara is a member of the Southern Oregon Early Learning Services (SOELS) Hub, a Healthy Families Advisory Board member, and participates in the Primary Health, Jackson Care Connect, and AllCare CAC meetings. She is also a member of the Allcare payment methodologies task force for dental as well as a member of the Southern Oregon Equity Coalition, and Data and Analysis committee. Prior to her work at Advantage, Tamara served as the Program Manager for the Southern Oregon Healthy Families Program, a child abuse prevention program focused on strengthening the family system and reducing the number of children in foster care. She has also worked for the Department of Human Services as a Child Welfare Case Worker, where she gained invaluable experience working with children and families with severe trauma histories, helping to strengthen parenting skills, and work within a system of services that is often inequitable and difficult to navigate. Tamara holds a B.A. in Psychology and an M.S. in Human Services, with an emphasis in social and community services.



**Giovanna Frezza**  
**FamilyCare, Inc.**

Giovanna grew up in a multicultural family. A product of Italian grandparents, a Brazilian father, and a mother from Beaverton, OR, her parents traveled frequently which provided her and her brothers with a diverse understanding around religion, culture, and food- the best part! She spent most of her childhood growing up in the small farm town of Culver, Oregon, where she

was a 5<sup>th</sup> generation graduate at the high school. After high school she moved to the big city of Portland where she was challenged with trying to find place and wanting to actually make a difference in the community. She lived in with very limited resources and was lucky to get my foot in the door at a local family practice office, even though she did not have any experience or background in healthcare. From there she has had the opportunity to work with FamilyCare and expand knowledge around the Medicaid system. She has been with FamilyCare for the past 11 years starting at the front desk of a clinic, to managing the Durable Medical Equipment benefit, and now as the Medicaid Program Coordinator and being able to be a part of a piece of Oregon's history- our healthcare transformation!



**Brett Hamilton**  
**FamilyCare, Inc.**

Brett Hamilton joined the FamilyCare, Inc. team in July 2013 as the Community Development Coordinator. Hamilton is now Health Policy and Program Manager and is the staff lead for FamilyCare's Community Advisory Council. Hamilton joined FamilyCare after serving four years as the executive director of the Tobacco Free Coalition of Oregon, Inc. where he engaged the state, county, city and local community members in the fight against the harms of tobacco. Prior to becoming the executive director of the Tobacco Free Coalition of Oregon, Inc. he was Managing Director of Public and Professional Education at the Oregon Dental Association where he advocated for improved oral health care. Hamilton is currently on the executive committee for Allies for a Healthy Oregon and serves on the City Club of Portland's Advocacy and Awareness Board. Before joining FamilyCare Hamilton served on the steering committee for Healthy Oregon Partnership for Equity (HOPE now known as OHEA) and Healthy Kids Learn Better Coalition. Hamilton received a Masters of Public Administration from The Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs at University of Washington where he is focused on Urban Affairs after returning from Senegal where he served as small business development volunteer with the U.S. Peace Corps.

**Kyna Harris**  
**HealthShare of Oregon**

Kyna L. Harris is currently a Project Manager II with Health Share of Oregon. Kyna received her Master's of Business Administration from Concordia University in 2007. In 2013, she received her Community Health Worker certification as part of the Urban League of Portland and the Multnomah County Capacitation Center's, "We Are Health Movement African/African-American Community Health Worker Training". Kyna is an Oregon native and was born and raised in NE Portland. She has several years of experience outreaching and advocating for low to moderate income families and communities of color (particularly the African-American community). From 2010-2013, she assisted families seeking to obtain Healthy Kids Insurance. Her passion for health equity comes from her personal experiences with family members and friends who have experienced severe and persistent mental health issues, substance abuse, and chronic disease.

**Katie Hennis**  
**OHSU Knight Cancer Center**



**Sarah Keefe**

**Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence (OCADSV)**

Sarah came to the Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence (OCADSV) after seven years of building community engagement in a variety of Oregon-based social justice nonprofit organizations, including work in the reproductive health field at Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette, the child welfare system through the National Indian Child Welfare Association, and the domestic violence prevention and intervention movement through Domestic Violence Resource Center. Over the years she also worked for and served on the Board of Directors of TransActive Gender Center, an organization that works with transgender and gender non-conforming children, youth, and their supportive families. Sarah graduated from the University of Iowa as an English major with a concentration in writing.



**Steve Lesky**

**Cambia Health Foundation**

Steve has a diverse background in the philanthropy, nonprofit and local government fields. In his role at the Cambia Health Foundation, he directs strategy and implements plans to help transform population health through a lens of innovation and equity. Steve manages funding initiatives that support nonprofits, emphasizing collaboration and mission-related investing to help create an economically sustainable health system focused on positive outcomes. Prior to joining the Cambia Health Foundation, Steve was a member of the philanthropy team at The Colorado Health Foundation, where he secured approval of more than \$20 million in grants supporting the work of a wide range of health and human service organizations. Prior to his work in philanthropy, he held various positions in child welfare services and policy development. Steve continues to be committed to this work through volunteer activities in the community. He considers his community-based work both a privilege and a valuable ongoing learning opportunity.



**Kathryn Lueken**

**Willamette Valley CCO**

Dr. Kathryn Lueken is the Chief Medical Officer for WVP Health Authority. After completing her residency at the Mayo Clinic, Dr Lueken has spent the past decade serving residents of Marion and Polk counties. One of her primary responsibilities at WVP is overseeing the Emergency Department Interventional Team (EDIT) and working to ensure community members have the knowledge and resources necessary to receive services in the most appropriate setting possible. Dr. Lueken is a strong advocate of healthcare transformation and believes that the innovative programs such as EDIT Program are a critical component of improving the health of all Oregonians.

## **Pepper McColgan**

### **Northeast Oregon Network (NEON)**

Pepper McColgan comes to us after a career in Emergency Services as a Paramedic, Fire Fighter, EMS Coordinator and EMS educator. She has also been active as a community CPR and First Aid instructor, Basic and Winter Wilderness Survival instructor and a Search and Rescue Search Manager. Pepper has worked in the Emergency Departments of three hospitals, including time spent as an Interim Tech Supervisor at Rogue Valley Medical Center and providing a training program for the new position of Paramedic tech. As a young woman Pepper began her human services work as a VISTA volunteer and community organizer in Oklahoma. After moving to the Rogue Valley, Pepper worked with children in a variety of organizations including Boy Scouts, Jackson County CASA, and Jackson County Drug Endangered Children task force. Pepper has worked extensively with children and adults with developmental disabilities after being certified through the Oregon Department of Human Services, Mental Health and Developmental Disability Services Division. Pepper is currently certified as a Community Health Worker Master Trainer through the Woman's Health Leadership Institute as well as being coordinator of NEON's state approved CHW training program. Pepper is active on the Willamette County Community Advisory Committee and the state Traditional Health Workers Commission. She is active, both on a state and national level, in the recognition and establishment of Community Health Workers as a valued part of any health care team.



## **Larissa Medina**

### **White City Community Health Center**

Larissa was born in Culiacan, Sinaloa Mexico. She and her family immigrated to the United States when she was four years old. They originally lived in Redwood City California, and moved to Medford, Oregon, when she was 12. The Rogue Valley is where she calls home. She graduated high school in 2003 from North Medford, then attended RCC, and graduated from Oregon Health & Science University in 2011. She has been involved in many community based activities that have promoted education, immigration reform, and health equity. She is currently a steering committee member of the Southern Oregon Health Equity Coalition (SO HEALTH-E), and a board member of Jackson County Health Advisory Board. started working at Community Health Center on 7/1/13, currently I am the RN Supervisor for the White City Clinic. Throughout my journey I have experienced many health disparities and barriers to access to care: as a member of a minority population, being Hispanic, a Woman, and undocumented for 26 years of my life. My passion is to help bridge the gap between the Latino population and our health care system. A quote that has been helpful for me during my trials and periods of ups and downs has been: Success is not final, failure is not fatal, It is the courage to continue that counts...Winston Churchill.



## **Pam Phan**

### **1000 Friends of Oregon**

Pamela N. Phan is a 2014 graduate of the Masters of Urban and Regional Planning program at Portland State University. She has over 17 years experience working in the Portland region with immigrants, refugees, and youth of color, helping create political space around issues of racial and economic justice. She joined the staff of 1000 Friends in July 2014, starting the "Hub and Spoke" program to connect technical planning and legal capacity to community organizations. She focuses on collaborative planning techniques such as community based action research, co-produced plan-making and planning education. She brings a collaborative approach from her experiences as a community grassroots organizer as well as serving with local and regional governments to support "equity" planning efforts.



**Adrianna Rickard**  
**Home Forward**

Adrianna Rickard is a recent addition to Home Forward (the new name for the Housing Authority of Portland) in her role as Program Coordinator for the Congregate Housing Services Program (CHSP). CHSP is a healthcare connected housing program for people who are aging and/or experiencing disability that need assistance to continue living independently in their homes within our public housing communities. Her personal experience as a service user in which she experienced difficulty navigating the complexity of social and medical service systems has heavily inspired her professional endeavors. While working as the Family Support Specialist under a contract with Multnomah County Addictions and Mental Health, Adrianna was a founding member of the Latino Learning Academy as well as the Latino Leadership Academy. Adrianna's career path has included working on and developing projects and programs focused on equity, inclusion, and access for communities of color, people experiencing disability, poverty and other inequalities. Her work has included partnering with organizations such as Wraparound Oregon Early Childhood Program, Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA), National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Native American Rehabilitation Center (NARA), Nak-Nu-Wit (Native specific Wraparound grant through SAMHSA) Department of Human Services Child Welfare, CareOregon, Family Care, Multnomah County Education Service District (MESD), Independent Living Resources (the Center for Independent Living for the tri-county area) and more.

**Naomi Sacks**  
**DHS – Aging & People with Disabilities**



**Chris Senz**  
**Tuality Health Alliance**

Chris is the Chief Operating Officer of Tuality Health Alliance, a Medicaid health plan which is part of the HealthShare Coordinated Care Organization. Chris has been working in healthcare, and specifically with Medicaid populations for nearly 20 years. Her work has included

oversight of Medicaid Managed Care Plans for the States of Washington and Oregon, creation of a national online learning collaborative for state Medicaid Directors, work in an Independent Review Organization, and health plan operations including leadership of Medical Management, Compliance, Quality, Utilization Management, and Case Management programs. She was recently elected to the Board of Directors of Centro Cultural in Cornelius, Oregon, and is co-chair of Tuality Healthcare's Diversity and Inclusion Committee which is currently embarking on a three-year strategic planning process. Issues of poverty and health disparities are important topics to Chris and she is passionate about leading organizations through change and building inclusive spaces for employees and patients. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and a Master's degree in Organizational Management.



### **Belle Shepherd**

#### **OHA Transformation Center**

Belle Shepherd is OHA's Innovator Agent for two CCOs, Primary Health of Josephine County and Jackson Care Connect. Belle's prior experience has been in Public Health for over 18 years, with her most recent positions as Jackson County's Public Health Division Manager and Josephine County's Public Health Director since 2011. Prior to that Belle served 5 years as the Public Health Administrator in Josephine County. Belle is a member of the Southern Oregon Regional Health Equity Coalition, and also worked with Jackson County's Latina Health Coalition. Belle has been the co-owner, with her husband of 21 years, Jeff, of three small businesses, including their current business, an award winning chocolate company. Belle and Jeff have a 16 year old daughter, Lillie, who thrives on her participation in local community theatre.

### **Lesli Uebel**

#### **OHA Reproductive Health**

Lesli Leone Uebel currently works as a Systems Development and Policy Specialist with the Reproductive Health Program within the Oregon Public Health Division where she coordinates the development of program policies, procedures and activities designed to increase access to RH services, strengthen delivery of culturally and linguistically competent services and contribute to reducing health disparities. She is a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) with over 25 years of public health experience, two of which included working as a Rural Health Educator with the Ministry of Health in Ecuador and Peace Corps. She has worked on a variety of state and local public health issues, including sexual and reproductive health, health care access for migrant and seasonal farmworker communities, and maternal and child health – always with a focus on striving to understand and respond to the needs of diverse and underserved communities. She holds a Masters Degree in Public Health from the University of Washington and a B.S. Degree in Community Health Education from Oregon State University.



### **Jennifer Ware**

#### **Health Care Coalition of Southern Oregon**

Jennifer hails from Philadelphia, PA where she studied Biology at Temple University. She has worked in healthcare since 1999 and has a passion for empowering community members to be self-advocates for their well-being. She is currently completing a second Bachelor's program in Sociology from Oregon State University and plans to continue to obtain her Master's in Public Health in 2015. Two years ago Jenn drove across the country with her husband and son to Southern Oregon for a more relaxed way of life. Soon Jenn was connected to the Health Care Coalition of Southern Oregon (HCCSO) and has been working for HCCSO since April 2014 as the Coordinator of the Regional Health Equity Coalition, SO Health-E. Jenn is responsible for convening community partners on the Steering Committee and smaller work groups to ensure that equity and inclusion is at the forefront of partner organization agendas as well as at the core of the coalition's work to reduce health disparities for the underserved populations in Southern Oregon through policy change and cultural agility trainings. Despite a busy professional life Jenn makes sure to enjoy the quality of life that brought her to Oregon in the first place with her husband and son. She travels whenever possible.



**Angela Weaver**  
**Oregon Office on Disability & Health**

Angela Weaver, M.Ed., has worked in the disability field for more than 25 years. She earned her Master's in Education, Special Needs Education, at Colorado State University. Angela is the Project Coordinator for the Oregon Office on Disability and Health and has been with the office since 1998. She works closely with her colleagues and multiple state and community partners to promote health and wellness and the inclusion and independence for Oregonians with disabilities. Angela is a Commissioner with the Oregon Disability Commission and the Governor's Commission on Senior Services, a Robert Wood Johnson Leadership Fellow, and a Master Trainer for the Healthy Lifestyles Program and for the Living Well with Chronic Conditions Program. Her professional interests and activities include: health promotion for teens and adults with disabilities; health care access for people with disabilities; and disability awareness and advocacy within public health.

## **Carol Cheney** **Equity Manager**

Since 2010, Carol has served as the Equity Manager for the Oregon Health Authority Office of Equity and Inclusion. A graduate of the University of Oregon, Carol's field of study focused on women and people of color and her commitment to gender, racial, and LGBTQ justice. She has worked for the last 22 years in organizations promoting social change as case manager for survivors of domestic violence, health educator, fundraiser, and nonprofit organizational development consultant and trainer. Her public health experience includes administering grants to increase cancer screening rates for women of color and managing sexual health education programs. Carol was born in Seoul, South Korea and was adopted at 13 months with her twin sister. She grew up on a wheat and alfalfa ranch in Eastern Oregon, and her early adult work included working in the fields with Migrant Farmworkers. She loves adventure travel with her partner Kris, which has included bike touring through the Canadian Rockies, canoeing through the Canyonlands of Utah, and trekking to Mt Everest Base Camp. Closer to home, she likes to knit, bike, and knock out a few songs at a karaoke joint.

## **Leann R. Johnson** **Diversity, Civil Rights and Inclusion Manager**

Leann Johnson is the Diversity, Civil Rights and Inclusion Manager for the Oregon Health Authority in the Office of Equity and Inclusion. She holds a master's degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology with program focus in Multicultural Organizational Development and Indigenous Psychology. Leann also has a B.S. in Communications Management from the University of Portland. Leann has nearly 20 years of leadership experience developing equity, diversity and intercultural programs in the public and non-profit sectors. Past employers include Clark College, the City of Vancouver and the YWCA of Clark County. She has also served as a consultant to multiple agencies and organizations including the Vancouver Police Department, PGE, Bonneville Power Administration, Hewlett Packard and the Southern Poverty Law Center. Leann is also a Qualified Administrator for the Intercultural Development Inventory. In addition to her professional career Leann has dedicated years of service to the Girls Scouts, including five years as the volunteer director for Camp Julianna and was a CYO track and field coach for six years. More recently Leann completed seven years as a member of the Governor's appointed Washington State Arts Commission, serving as chair of that commission for two years. Leann is the mother of two grown daughters, one who attends Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma and the other who attends Emory University in Atlanta. In her spare time Leann enjoys theater, participating in a number of improvisational comedy theater troupes in Vancouver and Portland.

## **Anastasia Sofranac** **DELTA Coordinator**

Anastasia Sofranac coordinates the Developing Equity Leadership through Training and Action (DELTA) leadership development program. Prior to joining OEI, she was the Program Manager at Oregon Center for Nursing, overseeing collaborative leadership and diversity/inclusion programs, a podcast series, and other resources for nurses throughout the state. Anastasia has over 10 years of nonprofit program management experience at organizations including INROADS, the National Conference for Community &

Justice (NCCJ), and the Amity Foundation (in China). She received her Master's in Global Leadership & Nonprofit Management in the school of Public Administration at Portland State. Locally, she served on the boards of the Montavilla Food Co-op, Bridger Elementary School PTA and Save a Survivor's Smile (formerly the Council for Prostitution Alternatives). She originally hails from Phoenix, AZ, but also lived in Ohio, Finland, and China before moving to Portland in 2002.

## **Charniece Tisdale**

### **Equity and Inclusion Training Coordinator**

Charniece moved to Portland in October 2012 to work with as a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Prevention Specialist and was the Developing Equity Leadership through Training and Action (DELTA) leadership development program Coordinator. She completed her assignment with OEI on 10/12/14. In her role, she coordinated DELTA and helped provide technical assistance to health-related organizations throughout Oregon. Her previous experiences have included planning, implementing and evaluating public health research, programs and community-based initiatives in various settings including non-profits, hospitals, health departments and universities. Her desire to address equity stemmed from working on a critical race media literacy study in her undergrad work. From that point, she has tried to incorporate issues of disparities into all aspects of her work and personal life. For example, she completed the inaugural Portland African American Leadership Forum (PAALF) Leadership Academy in 2013, and she is a member of the City of Portland, Arts Education and Access Citizen Oversight Committee. Charniece is originally from Chicago and is has a master's degree from the University of Michigan, School of Public Health. Her personal interests include photography, blogging, event planning, volunteering, running, traveling and being a foodie.