



2024 Media Availability Speaker Bios

Sue Bloom, CEO, Boys and Girls Clubs of Salem, Marion & Polk Counties

Sue has been with the Boys & Girls Club for 15 years; serving as CEO since 2014. She is responsible for the overall success of the organization to positively impact the nearly 7,000 youth served through 8 Clubhouses, a Health & Dental Services Center, teen workforce development program, peer court, athletics and community outreach.

She is an executive board member and past president of the Oregon Alliance of Oregon Boys & Girls Clubs, the advocacy arm of the Club's statewide work. She serves on the executive committee of the Community-Business and Education Leaders Collaborative, and trustee for Maps Credit Union Community Foundation. Prior service includes President of the Rotary Club of Salem and Children & Families Commission executive committee. Sue received the Salem-Keizer Chamber's Distinguished Service award in 2006.

About the Boys and Girls Clubs

Local Boys & Girls Clubs provide afterschool and summer programs, during the hours when kids are out of school and most in need of a safe, nurturing environment with enrichment programs and impactful opportunities that help young people pursue great futures.

Oregon Boys & Girls Clubs serve youth at 47 Clubs in 22 communities. In 2023, 41,120 youth were served by 2,800 staff and volunteers. Last year Clubs across Oregon served 435,445 meals and 185,000 snacks.

Across Oregon, Clubs support youth success and grow student engagement, sharing the message that community-led afterschool & summer programs are critical partners in youth success. Expanded learning programs cultivate dynamic engagement that supports student improvement and the development of 21st century workforce skills youth need to be productive community members.

Jesus Mendoza, Jr., Regional Administrator, USDA Food and Nutrition Service, Western Regional Office

Jesus became Western region administrator in 2014. In this position, Jesus oversees 15 nutrition assistance programs in Alaska; California; Hawaii; Idaho; Nevada; Oregon; Washington; the Pacific Territories of American Samoa, Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; and Indian Tribal Organizations in several western states. These programs include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Food Distribution Programs, and other food assistance and nutrition programs.

Jesus began his career with FNS WRO in 2002 as a Program Specialist with the Special Nutrition Programs (SNP) and served as SNP Section Chief and Regional Director and Deputy Regional Administrator prior to his current position. Before joining FNS, Jesus served as Program Officer for

International Planned Parenthood and worked for the World Wildlife Fund, Latin America and Caribbean Region offices. In addition, Jesus served in the Peace Corps in Ecuador and Morocco and the U.S. Army.

Fariborz Pakseresht (he/him), Director, Oregon Department of Human Services

Fariborz became the Director of the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) in September 2017.

Fariborz came to ODHS from the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) where he was responsible for the state's juvenile corrections agency. During his time at OYA, he was honored with the Outstanding Administrator Award from the Council of Juvenile Corrections Administrators for his leadership and contributions in the field of juvenile justice. Earlier in his career, he served eight years with ODHS in a variety of leadership roles. He also spent 11 years with the Oregon Department of Administrative Services.

Sammi Teo (she/her), Public Policy Advocate, Oregon Food Bank

Sammi became an anti-hunger policy advocate in 2022, after becoming an attorney and graduating from Lewis & Clark Law School where she focused on food systems and environmental justice. During law school, Sammi clerked for an Oregon lawmaker, provided free legal aid services, supported national litigation cases related to regenerative food systems, authored sections for the first legal coursebook comprehensively addressing eco-centric law, and advocated for policies supporting watershed restoration in Oregon, California, Idaho, Colorado, and on the national level.

She has served on the Board of Directors for Farmers Market Fund, an organization administering the Double Up Food Bucks program to increase access to nutrient-dense foods, and Beyond Toxics, an environmental justice organization doing groundbreaking advocacy, research, and community engagement in the fight for clean air, water and soil.

Dr. Charlene Williams (she/her), Director, Oregon Department of Education

Dr. Williams has led the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) since July 2023.

Dr. Williams developed deep ties to the Pacific Northwest during her 30-year career as a teacher and public schools administrator. She has served as an administrator in Southwest Washington public school districts, receiving the Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) Award for promoting access, equity, and social justice for students. She also spent seven years at Portland Public Schools in leadership roles, earning multiple state and national awards for improving student achievement. Dr. Williams arrived in Oregon in 1999 to become a math instructor, program coordinator and curriculum developer at Portland Community College (PCC). From 2002 to 2009, she served as the Director of Education and later principal at Rosemary Anderson High School, an alternative school that is part of the Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center (POIC).