

House Bill 2235 Workgroup Committee Members

- Diane Benavides Wille
 - Committee Position: Representative of an Association of Behavioral Health Provider Organizations
 - Work Title: VP Equity, Inclusion & Workforce Development
 - Organization Affiliation: LifeWorks NW
 - City/County/Area: Portland, Tri-County area
 - Bio: Diane Benavides Wille, MA, LPC, CADC I has been with LifeWorks NW since 2005 where she began as a student intern. As a woman of color, Diane is invested in organizational equity, inclusion, and belonging, not only from a client and service delivery perspective, but also experiences of our workforce. She is invested in making services and our work environments welcoming, respectful and inclusive of all.
- Belindy Bonser
 - Committee Position: Peer Mentor
 - Work Title: Health Care Navigator
 - Organization Affiliation: Columbia Care
 - City/County/Area: Jackson County
 - Bio: My desire to join the efforts of the HB 2235 workgroup is because, as a state, we are currently facing a crisis in behavioral healthcare professionals. This shortage severely affects individuals seeking mental health and addiction treatment. I want to be part of the solution.
- Kelli Bosak
 - Committee Position: Non-Community Mental Health Program Director Designee
 - Work Title: Lead Behavioral Health Therapist

- Organization Affiliation: Three Rivers Health Center
- City/County/Area: Coos and Curry counties
- Bio: Kelli Bosak is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker practicing as a Behavioral Health Consultant (BHC) in primary care on the Southern Oregon Coast. She is currently serving as Lead Behavioral Health Therapist at Three Rivers Health Center. Prior to joining the team at Three Rivers Health Center, she served as Co-Director of Integrated Behavioral Health at North Bend Medical Center where she oversaw management, mental health and substance use treatment partnerships, and strategic initiatives within integrated care at NBMC's central and satellite rural health clinics. Kelli has been a BHC since 2014 and is passionate about the primary care behavioral health model because of its ability to increase patient access, decrease stigma, and improve overall health by making primary care medicine more compassionate and meaningful for individuals and families.
- Mario Cardenas
 - Committee Position: Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (Non-Management)
 - Work Title: Latinx Recovery KSA Program Specialist Latino/a/x Communities
 - Organization Affiliation: Multnomah County Health Department
 - City/County/Area: Multnomah County
 - Bio: Coming soon
- Cheryl Cohen
 - Committee Position: Representative of a Coordinated Care Organization
 - Work Title: Traditional Health Workforce Manager
 - Organization Affiliation: PacificSource Health Plans
 - City/County/Area: Central Oregon, Columbia Gorge, Marion & Polk, Lane
 - Bio: Cheryl is the Traditional Health Workforce Manager supervising the PacificSource Traditional Health Worker (THW) Liaison Team and acting as the THW Liaison for PacificSource in the Columbia Gorge. She has worked in the Medicaid-funded behavioral health system for 25 years, both as a provider and within health plans. She is a non-practicing Licensed Professional Counselor, Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor I, and Peer Wellness Specialist. Cheryl is passionate about developing and implementing workforce strategies that support and expand the behavioral

health workforce, as well as increase the cultural and linguistic diversity of the health care workforce. She has lived experience managing behavioral health conditions and is the parent of a youth with special healthcare needs. Cheryl also serves as a member of the Central Oregon Behavioral Health Consortium, Mid-Valley Behavioral Health Consortium, and Healthcare Industry Consortium.

- Melinda Del Rio

- Committee Position: Non-Community Mental Health Program Director
- Work Title: Licensed Clinical Social Worker & Director of Outpatient Psychotherapy Services
- Organization Affiliation: Portland Mental Health & Wellness
- City/County/Area: Portland
- Bio: Melinda has spent her life advocating for people and navigating systems. Currently, Melinda is the Licensed Clinical Social Worker & Director of Outpatient Psychotherapy Services at Portland Mental Health & Wellness. She received a double major BS in Criminology & Criminal Justice and Psychology at Portland State and received her MSW with a focus in trauma and interpersonal violence at Simmons University. Melinda has had extensive experience working with various non-profits within the Portland-Metro area and for the state as a public service frontline staff working with populations experiencing homelessness, incarceration, abuse, and addiction. Melinda's passion for helping others originated from her lived experience and has flourished into serving the community.

- Shanako DeVoll

- Committee Position: Non-Community Mental Health Program Director
- Work Title: Practice Owner
- Organization Affiliation: Healing Tides Counseling, LLC
- City/County/Area: Portland
- Bio: I've been working in mental health and addictions since the early 2000s across a range of community agencies, primarily serving marginalized communities. I began my career as a QMHA and CADC, eventually becoming a licensed therapist and earning my CADC III. Over the past decade, I've focused on supporting and building programs in Portland, and transitioned to private practice in 2018. My core mission is creating safer, more supportive spaces for therapists to thrive in this work.

I believe that uplifting and mentoring the next generation of therapists is essential to building a more just and sustainable behavioral health field.

- Jose Luis Garcia
 - Committee Position: Representative of a Substance Use Disorder Consumer Organization
 - Work Title: Executive Director
 - Organization Affiliation: Juntos
 - City/County/Area: Portland
 - Bio: José Luis García is currently the Executive Director and founder of Juntos. Juntos is a community-based organization whose mission is to increase access to behavioral health systems that have an impact on Latino/a/x/indigenous communities through outreach, education, and mobilization. Juntos utilizes the concept of recovery capital, which includes providing resources that meet a person's basic needs, such as their health, medical care, financial resources, clothing, food, safe and livable housing, and transportation. We believe that when a person does not have to worry about basic needs or their living situation, they have a better chance of recovery. Jose Luis was born in Colima, Colima, Mexico, and has lived in Oregon for over 30 years. José Luis has worked for more than 20 years in behavioral health, providing culturally specific services in the areas of substance use, gang prevention, employment, and housing, with a focus on the Latino/a/x/indigenous and Spanish-speaking communities. Jose Luis has worked for various agencies, including Multnomah County, HomeFoward, El Programa Hispanos, Morrison Center, and DHS. José is also an ethics investigator for MHACBO and the Metro Plus Association of Addiction Peer Professionals (MAAPPS). In 2018, José Luis collaborated with Bridges to Change and Central City Concern's (CCC) Puentes program to open the first culturally specific clean and sober housing program for Latino men in Multnomah County, and in 2020, as the current NW Instituto Latino (NWIL) President, he collaborated with Bridges to Change, 4th Dimension, and CCC Puentes to open the first transitional housing program for Latina women and children who use substances. He also helped NWIL open the first Spanish-speaking Latino Recovery Center in the state. José Luis has a bachelor's degree in psychology and has the following certifications: Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC) II, Qualified Mental Health Associate (QMHA) Certification, Certified Recovery Mentor (CRMII), Peer Support Specialist (PSS), Certified Gambling Recovery Mentor (CGRM), Peer Wellness Specialist (PWS), and is also a certified suicide prevention QPR trainer.

- David Geels
 - Committee Position: Community Mental Health Program Director
 - Work Title: Behavioral Health Director
 - Organization Affiliation: Coos Health and Wellness
 - City/County/Area: Coos County
 - Bio: David has been a part of the Community Mental Health Program in Coos County for the past 20 years, 10 years as Director and previously as manager for both the quality improvement and community support programs. Current roles include Board member and former chair of the Coos Bay School District Board of Directors, current chair of the local Systems of Care executive council and member of the local Homeless response effort created by HB4123. David has also chaired the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs committee on Workforce since its inception, helping guide some of the recent legislative and funding efforts related to Workforce stabilization.
- Qurynn Hale
 - Committee Position: Representative of a Coordinated Care Organization
 - Work Title: Behavioral Health Manager – Children Youth and Families
 - Organization Affiliation: CareOregon/Columbia Pacific CCO
 - City/County/Area: Columbia, Clatsop and Tillamook counties
 - Bio: In my current role with CPCCO I facilitate collaboration and barrier breaking among behavioral health providers, schools, juvenile justice, community partners and children, youth and families to identify and implement ways to better serve care. Prior to my work with CPCCO, I've worked in psychiatric residential treatment, transitional living programs, school based mental health and counseling, shelters, emergency departments and supported in-home therapy settings all within the realm of children and youth. I love working with youth because of the profound resilience and hope that comes from being young. Young people are the most innovative and inspiring people, having the creative insight and passion that is imperative to create real change. And one thing that's true about all of us is that we all of the lived experience of being young! It is so amazing to tap into that lived experience and remember what it was like navigating youth systems and I encourage more system partners and policy makers to do the same!
- Tammy Harty

- Committee Position: Qualified Mental Health Professional (Non-Management)
- Work Title: Therapist – Licensed Professional Counselor
- Organization Affiliation: Wellness Through Horses, LLC
- City/County/Area: Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake, Lane, Malheur and Washington counties
- Bio: Tammy is an LPC in a private and small group practice on a Wellness Ranch in a rural area of Central Oregon. She also supervises interns and Associates and teaches a model of Equine Facilitated Mental Health. She is the founder and executive Director of the nonprofit Central Oregon Wellness Ranch which provides Integrative Wellness Retreats for Veterans and Trauma survivors as well as teens at risk. Tammy's goal is to help make our jobs easier, spend more time supporting clients and less time doing paperwork and navigating the bureaucracy.
- Clark J. Hazel
 - Committee Position: Licensed Clinical Social Worker (Non-Management)
 - Work Title: Mental Health Therapist
 - Organization Affiliation: Health Allies Counseling
 - City/County/Area: Portland
 - Bio: Clark is a mental health therapist at Health Allies Counseling. Clark received their A.M. (Artium Magister) degree in Social Work at The University of Chicago and completed their practicum at UChicago Medicine in the Violence Recovery Program. Clark has a passion for working with LGBTQIA+ youth and adults and addressing systemic barriers to folks accessing gender-affirming care.
- Jenn Inman
 - Committee Position: Community Mental Health Program Director
 - Work Title: Jackson County Mental Health Division Manager
 - Organization Affiliation: Jackson County Health & Human Services
 - City/County/Area: Medford
 - Bio: Jenn is an experienced leader in healthcare policy and administration. She's been with Jackson County Mental Health since 2013, moving to Southern Oregon from Lane County where she worked in public administration, healthcare, and community-based health and

human service organizations. Jenn's early advocacy work was in peer-based approaches to domestic and sexual violence. She led two multi-disciplinary demonstration projects based out of PeaceHealth and Lane County's Children & Families and was recognized with PeaceHealth's Spirit of Peace Award for fostering a culture of safety, healing, and informed advocacy. Jenn settled into her professional home at Jackson County Mental Health where she strives to foster a trauma-informed and person-centered culture of recovery for clients in a workplace rich in opportunities for professional growth and caregiver wellness. When Jenn isn't working, she enjoys the Oregon outdoors, travelling, reading and backyard birding.

- Tony Lai

- Committee Position: Clinical Supervisor
- Work Title: Advanced Practice Behavioral Health Clinician
- Organization Affiliation: Yamhill County Family and Youth Programs
- City/County/Area: Yamhill
- Bio: Tony Lai is an Advanced Practice Behavioral Health Clinician at Yamhill County Family and Youth Programs, where he specializes in working with children, teens, and their families. Tony also oversees their internship program and supervises therapists pursuing LPC and LMFT licenses. Tony has chosen to live by the motto, "Be the change you want to see in the world," through his involvement and service. Highlights include: two terms as Governor-appointed member of Oregon Board of Licensed Professional Counselors and Therapists and past president of Oregon Association for Play Therapy. As a result of his dedication and commitment, Association for Play Therapy members elected him to serve as a member of their Board of Directors. The Oregon Counseling Association awarded Tony the Distinguished Service Award in 2018. When not at work, Tony enjoys defending his fantasy hockey league title. He also tries to be the human that his husky thinks he is and tries to salvage whatever time he has left with his two teenagers at home.

- Eric Martin

- Committee Position: Representative of an Association of Behavioral Health Provider Employees
- Work Title: Director of Policy & Legislation
- Organization Affiliation: MHACBO
- City/County/Area: Portland

- Bio: **Coming soon**
- Lucia Mendoza-Meraz
 - Committee Position: Non-Community Mental Health Program Director
 - Work Title: Executive Director
 - Organization Affiliation: Fortaleza Atravez Barreras
 - City/County/Area: Keizer
 - Bio: Lucia Mendoza is a dedicated healthcare professional with a profound commitment to advancing mental health equity and cultural sensitivity within the medical field. Her journey began in 2016 when she embarked on her medical career as a Medical Assistant, marking the inception of her passionate dedication to improving the lives of underserved populations. Since then, she has achieved significant milestones in her career, earning her THW certificate as an Adult Mental Health and Family Support Specialist in 2017, followed by additional certifications as a QMHA-R and CRM in 2023. Lucia is currently pursuing her CADC1 certification, furthering her expertise in the field of mental health and addictions. As a child of migrant parents, she intimately understands poverty, barriers to accessing healthcare, and the challenges many face in obtaining culturally responsive care. This personal experience fuels her determination to advocate for underserved communities and bridge the gaps in healthcare access. She advocates for greater inclusivity and accessibility in healthcare education and services. She firmly believes that everyone, regardless of their language or cultural background, should have access to the resources and support they need. This led her to establish Fortaleza Atravez Barreras (Strength Through Barriers), a nonprofit organization with a mission to serve underrepresented populations, with a particular emphasis on the Hispanic/Latinx community, Chicano, Latino, BIPOC Veterans, LGBTQIA individuals, and Indigenous persons of all ages who identify as having lived experience with emotional, behavioral, and/or physical health issues. FAB's educational curriculum is being designed to promote culturally responsive and linguistic, trauma-informed mental health services and wellness activities, including peer support.
- Shyra Merila
 - Committee Position: Community Mental Health Program Director
 - Work Title: Deputy Director
 - Organization Affiliation: Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare
 - City/County/Area: Clatsop County

- Bio: I am a Licensed Professional Counselor born and raised on the Oregon Coast. I have been working in Oregon Community Mental Health for nearly eight years and currently serve as Deputy Director to Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare.
- Tara Sanderson
 - Committee Position: Clinical Supervisor
 - Work Title: Owner, Licensed Psychologist
 - Organization Affiliation: Dr. Sanderson and Associates
 - City/County/Area: Washington County
 - Bio: Dr. Sanderson is a cis/het/white/female licensed psychologist in the states of Oregon and Hawaii. She is a group practice owner and supervisor for students, associates and Psychologist Residents. Her work includes helping other group practice owners build ethical practicum and internship sites and healthy business practices. She works directly with the Oregon Mental Health Group Practice Association and Center for Mental Health CE's. She is passionate about building a Behavioral Health workforce that is less stressed and more trained. In her personal life she loves geocaching and riding motorcycles.
- Shari Selander
 - Committee Position: Community Mental Health Program Director
 - Work Title: Chief Executive Officer
 - Organization Affiliation: New Directions Northwest, Inc.
 - City/County/Area: Baker County
 - Bio: Coming soon
- Trina Thomas
 - Committee Position: Qualified Mental Health Associate (Non-Management)
 - Work Title: Aid and Assist PSS
 - Organization Affiliation: Columbia Community Mental Health
 - City/County/Area: Columbia County, St. Helens
 - Bio: My name is Trina Thomas, and I currently work at Columbia Community Mental Health in St. Helens, which is located in Columbia County. I work in a rural area that struggles with resources compared to

larger counties. I joined the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) under House Bill 2235 to actively engage in the workforce and make a meaningful impact using both my professional expertise and personal lived experience

I have nearly 10 years of recovery and have transformed my life to become a productive and active member of my community. Over the past 8 years, I have worked in various roles within the recovery field across multiple counties. Currently, I serve the Aid and Assist population in Columbia County. I hold several certifications, including Peer Support Specialist (PSS), Certified Recovery Mentor Level 2 (CRM 2), Qualified Mental Health Associate (QMHA), and Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor Level 2 (CADC 2).

- Andi Walsh
 - Committee Position: Representative of a Mental Health Consumer Organization
 - Work Title: Senior Health Policy Advisor
 - Organization Affiliation: Children's Institute
 - City/County/Area: Eastern Oregon
 - Bio: Andi M. Walsh, JD, LL.M, MSW is the Senior Health Policy Advisor for the Children's Institute and lives in Eastern Oregon. Her passion - rooted in her multigenerational story of trauma, and poverty - is to promote healing for children and families, particularly those struggling with mental health challenges, through systems and policy change. Currently, her policy work is focused on supporting systems for early childhood behavioral health services as well as birth and postpartum doulas statewide. As an organization supporting young children and family consumers, as well as the providers that serve them, Children's Institute has noted limited engagement with this particular population in conversations around Oregon's behavioral health crisis. Andi was drawn to the HB 2235 workgroup in order to lift up that perspective. She holds a B.A. from NYU and a J.D. from Loyola University Chicago School of Law, where she was a Civitas ChildLaw Fellow and completed certificates in Child and Family Law and Public Interest Law. At Loyola, she also obtained her M.S.W. in Mental Health and a Master of Laws (LL.M) in Health Law and Policy.

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