



CALIFORNIA WORKING FAMILIES POLICY SUMMIT 2003 BIOGRAPHIES

Speakers

Autumn Arnold is Director of Food Stamp Advocacy for California Food Policy Advocates (CFPA), a private nonprofit dedicated to improving the health and well-being of low-income Californians by increasing their access to nutritious and affordable food. Prior to joining CFPA, she developed the San Francisco Food Bank's interactive Hunger 101 curriculum and led the Food Bank's public education and advocacy efforts on hunger issues.

Sally Covington directs the California Works Foundation, a nonprofit organization founded by the California Labor Federation to promote more equitable economic development in California through applied research, policy development, coalition building, and constituency education. She has worked for over 15 years in various capacities to support social change/social justice organizations at the local, state, and national levels. Previously held positions have included Executive Director of the National Center for Schools and Communities, a university-based center offering technical assistance to parent and community groups organizing for school reform, and Director of the Democracy and Philanthropy Project, a national initiative dedicated to increasing the responsiveness and accountability of private grant-making foundations to low-income and other historically disenfranchised constituencies.

Lupe Diaz is the Senior Policy Advocate and Sacramento Lobbyist for the Children's Advocacy Institute (CAI), a nonprofit advocacy organization. Ms. Diaz advocates for children before the courts, government agencies, and the Legislature and focuses on child abuse and neglect, child care and development, health and safety issues, and efforts to improve the government's delivery of children's services. She also participates with the California Children and Families Commission Advisory Board on Diversity and the California Coalition for Children's Safety and Health, and she chairs the Children's Advocates Roundtable. Prior to working at CAI, Ms. Diaz was the State Fiscal Analyst for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF). She received a Master's Degree in Public Affairs from the University of Texas and a B.A. in Political Economy and History from UC Berkeley.

Francisco Estrada is a Senior Policy Analyst in the Sacramento office of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), where he works on educational and land use issues. He represents MALDEF on the Steering Committee of the California Futures Network. Before his employment at MALDEF, Mr. Estrada was a long-time staff member to Congressman Bob Filner. At the local and federal government level, Mr. Estrada has worked on a number of issues including water, wastewater, transportation infrastructure projects, immigration, energy, and environmental protection.

Angela Gilliard joined Western Center on Law and Poverty in February 2002 and specializes in health care issues. She was formerly a Senior Policy Consultant to the California State Assembly where she advised members on the Health Committee and other Assembly leadership offices on various health care issues. Prior to joining the Legislature, Ms. Gilliard worked as a policy analyst for the Department of Health Services. In 1992, she assisted with the development of a multidisciplinary and multiethnic mental health practice in Los Angeles, California, where she procured contracts from managed care companies and city governments in support of the practice. Ms. Gilliard graduated from McGeorge School of Law in 1992.

Lenny Goldberg is Executive Director of the California Tax Reform Association (CTRA) and directs his public interest lobbying firm, Lenny Goldberg and Associates. He has been involved in state tax policy issues for the past 15 years emphasizing the need for fair taxes to maintain a healthy public sector. He advocates regularly before the Legislature's Revenue and Taxation Committees, the Board of Equalization, and the Franchise Tax Board, and is currently a member of the California Commission on Tax Policy in the New Economy. He has written extensively about Proposition 13, and is on the board of Citizens for Tax Justice in Washington, D.C. His lobbying firm works on a range of issues, including child support reform, child abuse prevention, and mental health services. He has a B.A. from Williams College and an M.A. in Economics from UC Berkeley.

Stefan Harvey is the Assistant Director of the California Center for Public Health Advocacy (CCPHA). CCPHA is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization founded by the California Public Health Association-North and the Southern California Public Health Association. Ms. Harvey joined the Center in January 2002. Prior to that, she was a national advocate for the WIC program for 30 years. Ms. Harvey serves on the board of the California WIC Association.

Carol Liu took office to represent the 44th Assembly District on December 4, 2000. Assemblywoman Liu sits on the prestigious Assembly Rules Committee, in addition to the Assembly Committees on Education, Governmental Organization, Higher Education, Transportation, and Water Parks & Wildlife. As a Member of the Assembly, Ms. Liu's number one priority is to restore California's public education system to be among the very best in the nation. She is also committed to providing quality child care services. Liu was born in Berkeley and raised in Oakland. She graduated from San Jose State College in 1963. She earned a lifetime teaching credential from the University of California, Berkeley School of Education in 1964 and returned for her administrative credential in 1978. Liu is married to Mike Peevey, a businessman and entrepreneur. They have three grown children and three grandchildren.

Leslie Mikkelsen, M.P.H., R.D., is Managing Director of the Prevention Institute, an organization dedicated to placing prevention in the center of efforts to improve community health and well-being. As a founding member of the Strategic Alliance for Healthy Food and Activity Environments, she is organizing to make healthy options more accessible. Before joining the Prevention Institute, she worked for the Alameda County and New York City Food Banks, where she directed a continuum of programs to address hunger and mobilize community support for anti-hunger policies. She is a board member of the national Community Food Security Coalition.

Sherry Novick serves as Executive Director of the California Children and Families Association, which represents the Children and Families Commissions of California's 58 counties. Until recently she worked in the Legislature where she was Chief Consultant to the Assembly Human Services Committee and Chief of Staff to Assemblywoman Dion Aroner. During her 15 years with the State Assembly, Ms. Novick specialized in issues related to child and family services, child care and development, income support programs, and disability. She staffed the CARES legislation to improve compensation for child care providers and worked closely with the Legislative Women's Caucus on its child development agenda. Ms. Novick holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the Kennedy School of Government.

Deborah Ortiz was elected to the 6th State Senate District in November 1998. Senator Ortiz's strong interests in education, health and the environment are reflected in her Senate committee assignments. She is the Chair of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and is also a member of the Education, Budget, and Natural Resources committees. As a member of the Senate Education Committee, Senator Ortiz is deeply involved in shaping public education reforms. One of her main priorities is improving the situation for low-performing schools. She continues to lead the effort for statewide universal pre-kindergarten programs, as well as expansion of successful after-school programs. Last year she authored legislation to provide emancipated foster youth the training and employment they need to successfully transition into independent living. Born and raised in Sacramento, Senator Ortiz attended UC Davis and graduated from McGeorge School of Law.

Maryann O'Sullivan is State Director for Fight Crime: Invest in Kids *California*, an organization of law enforcement leaders and crime survivors advocating for prevention programs for California's young people. Prior to joining Fight Crime, Ms. O'Sullivan served as the Consumer Education Officer for the California HealthCare Foundation's Quality Initiative. She was the founding Executive Director of Health Access, a statewide consumer coalition, and served as Director of Special Health Initiatives at Children Now. She also worked as an advocate for Consumers Union, California Common Cause, and Women Against Gun Violence. Ms. O'Sullivan has served as a lecturer at San Francisco State University teaching health policy and is a member of the California Bar.

Julie Spezia is the State Issues Director for the California Futures Network, a coalition of over 80 organizations working towards smart growth policy reform at the state level. Ms. Spezia's responsibilities include facilitating the Rural Dialogue aimed at developing consensus around a smart growth agenda for non-urban places. In addition to experience in the private sector, she has an extensive background in water, natural resource, and agricultural policy. Ms. Spezia has worked for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Mid-Pacific Region, the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts, and the UC Agricultural Issues Center. She has a B.A. from the University of Southern California and a Master's Degree from UC Davis, and she is a member of the California Agricultural Leadership Program.

Nancy Strohl is Executive Director of the Child Care Law Center that uses legal tools to make high quality child care accessible to every child, family, and community. Previously, she served as the Director of the Public Interest Clearinghouse, Contra Costa Legal Services, and the Alameda Volunteer Lawyer Program. A working parent who raised three children, she has personal experience with the challenges of the child care system and the critical importance of quality child care.

Mary M. Wiberg, Executive Director of the State of California Commission on the Status of Women, came to California in 2001 from Iowa where she was Equity Administrator for the State Department of Education. In addition to administering federal funds for promoting gender equity and services to single parents and displaced homemakers, she worked extensively on welfare reform, workforce development, and human rights issues. She has served appointments on the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, the Federal Committee on Registered Apprenticeship (U.S. Department of Labor), and as Co-Chair of the Gender Equity Expert Panel, U.S. Department of Education.

Patricia Wiggins represents the 7th Assembly District. In her first term, Assemblywoman Wiggins quickly emerged as one of the Legislature's most ardent champions of Smart Growth. She organized and chaired the 51-member Smart Growth Caucus to promote land use policies that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. Her leadership in this area led to her appointment as chair of the Assembly Local Government Committee, where she wrote and supported legislation to protect open space and agricultural lands, revitalize cities, and reform local finances for the benefit of taxpayers. Assemblywoman Wiggins now chairs the Banking & Finance Committee and is promoting a package of strong measures this session dealing with identity theft. She is a second-generation Californian and a resident of Santa Rosa since 1985. She is married to Mr. Guy Conner, a computer software engineer, with whom she has two stepsons.

SUMMIT LEADERSHIP AND STAFF

Kate Karpilow is the Executive Director of the California Center for Research on Women and Families (CCRWF). She is the Founder and Project Director of the California Working Families Policy Summit. At CCRWF, she also serves as the Project Director of the Primer Project and the CalWORKs/Child Welfare Partnership Project. Ms. Karpilow has developed and authored or co-authored policy research in the areas of welfare reform, child welfare, health care, child care, and working families. She has worked in a variety of positions in local and state government, including serving as the Executive Director of CEWAER from 1988-1996. Ms. Karpilow received a Ph.D. from Harvard University in Psychology and Social Relations. Her doctoral minor was in the area of program planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Catherine Murnighan is the Summit Coordinator. She is the owner of ACT Management, a nonprofit association-management and event-planning firm. She has been in business for 10 years and currently manages three nonprofit associations: Twin Pines Cooperative Foundation, Associated Cooperatives, and American Institute of Building Design – California Society, as well as managing several event-planning contracts. Ms. Murnighan graduated from UCLA with a B.S. in Political Science and a minor in Business.

Joni Pitel is a consultant for the California Working Families Policy Summit. She brings to the Summit over 10 years experience in children's policy. In addition, she has had direct experience in the state legislative and budget process through her work with the California Children's Lobby and was intricately involved in the development, passage, and implementation of a child welfare funding program. Ms. Pitel provides public interest advocacy and consulting services to a variety of government and nonprofit human service agencies. She also provides training and consulting on policy development and the legislative process strategy to various interested groups.

ABOUT CCRWF

The California Center for Research on Women and Families (CCRWF), established in November 2000, is a program of the Public Health Institute. The mission of CCRWF is to provide information, facilitation, analysis and policy options to help leaders improve the lives of women, families and children in our state and nation. In addition to its sponsorship of the California Working Families Policy Summit, CCRWF is home to the Primer Project and to the CalWORKs/Child Welfare Partnership Project that is working to coordinate county CalWORKs and child welfare programs.

To accomplish our mission, professionals at CCRWF typically work collaboratively with individuals from a wide variety of fields and backgrounds. Research, development of educational materials, facilitation, training and other convenings hosted by CCRWF often involve policymakers from all levels of government, academic scholars and other researchers, program managers, non-profit leaders, consumers, and community leaders.

In addition to our commitment to collaboration and broad-based information gathering, professionals at CCRWF also have a strong commitment to translating research into action and recommendations into policy. Work is not complete following publication of materials or conference proceedings. Assisting leaders with implementation and program evaluation are equally important aspects of CCRWF's commitment to social change.

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