

# Letters of Support

Community Engagement

Advisory Board

2025

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry # 6657**

**Name**

Denise Forte

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Josh Pollack

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

I am pleased to offer my strongest recommendation for Josh Pollack, Network Advisor at StriveTogether, to serve on the California Cradle to Career Data System Community Engagement Advisory Board. At StriveTogether—a national network of nearly 70 communities improving cradle-to-career outcomes—Josh supports partnerships in California and nationwide to transform systems using data and community voice to drive continuous improvement and advance economic mobility. Josh is a skilled, equity-driven systems leader with experience in classrooms, school districts, national policy, and nonprofit strategy. He brings valuable perspective on how stakeholders across systems access and use data. In his current role, he supports communities in analyzing root causes, aligning around shared strategies, and tracking progress to improve outcomes. Previously, as Executive Director of Special Projects for Stockton Unified School District, Josh launched the city's first Children's Cabinet, a \$4.6 million childhood savings program, and a districtwide digital equity initiative—all grounded in student data and community input. He is also an active member of the California Cradle to Career Coalition, a network of thirteen regional partnerships serving over one million youth and families statewide. Josh combines a statewide lens with deep local implementation experience. He is collaborative, insightful, and deeply committed to equity. As a member of the Community Engagement Advisory Board, he would help ensure the CA C2C Data System is transparent, actionable, and rooted in community priorities.

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [050625\\_Letter-of-Recommendation\\_Josh-Pollack-C2C-Data-CAB.docx](#)

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6656**

**Name**

James Alva

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Nina Torres

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

To Whom It May Concern,

It is with immense pleasure and without reservation that I recommend Nina Torres to be selected for the Community Engagement Advisory Board position. I have had the privilege of knowing and working alongside Nina for nearly two years as a consultant and core member of my consulting firm, Adelante Partners, where she serves as our Director of Strategic Communications and Initiatives.

While her title suggests a specific focus, Nina's contributions to Adelante Partners are multifaceted and far-reaching. She is an invaluable asset, readily taking on diverse roles to support and elevate the firm's work, demonstrating a remarkable adaptability and collaborative spirit.

Nina's commitment to community is evident and consistently evident in her work, whether she is contributing to client projects or participating in internal strategic discussions. Her growth mindset is truly exceptional; she embraces challenges, learns quickly, and adapts seamlessly to evolving circumstances. This, combined with her extensive experience and strong background in nonprofit leadership and educational program management, makes her an ideal candidate for the advisory board.

Her expertise has been instrumental in driving positive outcomes for our nonprofit clients. Nina's leadership qualities and unwavering commitment to social justice are deeply ingrained in her work ethic and are reflected in all her endeavors. She possesses a rare combination of being able to adapt with various nonprofits with their different needs.

Therefore, I offer my strongest endorsement for Nina Torres. She has my highest recommendation. I am excited to witness the impact she will undoubtedly make in the field of education, and I am confident she will be a valuable addition to the Community Engagement Advisory Board.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,  
James Alva  
CEO  
Adelante Partners Inc.

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6654**

**Name**

Sbeydeh Viveros-Walton

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Vincent Rasso

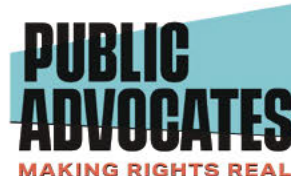
**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [2025.05.27-Vincent-Rasso-C2C-Community-Engagement-Advisory-Board-Support-Letter.pdf](#)





Cradle-to-Career Data System Governing Board  
Office of Cradle-to-Career Data  
400 R Street, Suite 351  
Sacramento, California 95811

Dear Cradle-to-Career Governing Board Members:

On behalf of Public Advocates, I write to express my strong support for Vincent Rasso to the Cradle-to-Career System Community Engagement Advisory Board.

Public Advocates is a civil rights legal and advocacy organization committed to eliminating disparities in opportunity for marginalized communities and ensuring that all students have access to a quality education. We have been at the forefront of advocating that the Cradle-to-Career System fulfills its mission to connect students, parents, and institutions to the information they need to improve educational data systems.

The Community Engagement Advisory Board ensures that access to the data system is accessible, equitable, and supports evidence-based decision-making by providing strong feedback loops. Mr. Rasso has dedicated his professional career to ensuring that the voices of students and community members are directly heard by their institutions. He has extensive experience in implementing and reforming equity-based policies at the local, state, and federal levels. In his current position, Mr. Rasso oversees the state and federal policy agenda on behalf of over 230,000 UC students. He has a track record of engaging with communities most impacted in underrepresented regions throughout California to uplift and strategize their ideas, concerns, and suggestions.

Advisory board members will play a crucial role in shaping a successful C2C system that encourages the public to utilize it to make decisions about their future. Our Education Equity Team has partnered with Mr. Rasso in various roles he has held to ensure that the voices of college students are centered and prioritized in policies and systems that support them. As Director of Government Relations at the University of California Student Association and former Senior Manager of State and Student Affairs at The Campaign for College Opportunity, Mr. Rasso will leverage his deep and long-standing statewide community partnerships and expertise to continue shaping the implementation of the Cradle-to-Career System. Mr. Rasso consistently demonstrated a commitment to improving educational access and quality for California's students and will bring that valuable experience to the Community Engagement Advisory board. Mr. Rasso promises to bring a fresh perspective and enthusiasm to the work during this pivotal time.

Thank you for your leadership and persistence as you ensure this historic data system develops in a way that helps Californians achieve their academic and career goals. **We respectfully request that you consider Mr. Rasso's nomination to the C2C Community Engagement Advisory Board.** I believe he will be an excellent addition and connect communities across California to C2C. If you have any questions or would like to discuss my support further, please contact me at [REDACTED]. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
Sbeydeh Viveros-Walton  
Director of Higher Education

CC: Mary Ann Miller Bates, C2C Executive Director;; Sydney Armendariz, C2C Board Liaison

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6653**

**Name**

Linda Collins

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Shaghayegh "Sherry" Shojaei

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

Please see the attached letter of support.

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Recommendation-for-Shaghyegh-Sherry-Shojaei-to-the-C2C-Community-Engagement-Advisory-Board.docx](#)

Linda Collins  
Founder and Executive Director  
Career Ladders Project



May 27, 2025

Selection Committee for the  
Community Engagement Advisory Board  
Cradle-to-Career Governing Board

Dear Selection Committee Members,

I am writing to support the nomination of Shaghayegh “Sherry” Shojaei to be a member of the **Community Engagement Advisory Board** for the Cradle-to-Career (C2C) Governing Board.

I am the founder and executive director of the [Career Ladders Project](#) (CLP). We work statewide to improve college and career outcomes, with focus on under-resourced students and students from communities underserved in postsecondary education. We work in partnership with community colleges, their TK-12 and workforce partners, employers, the Community College Chancellor’s Office, the California Department of Education, and philanthropy to develop and implement high quality college and career pathways that include robust student supports, embedded dual enrollment and career connected learning. We utilize the non-profit fiscal services of the Foundation for California Community Colleges to support our organization.

Ms. Shojaei is a Director at CLP. She leads equity centered educational redesign and innovation efforts, including initiatives and partnerships focused on high quality pathways leading to careers with labor market value and family sustaining wages. Her college and career pathways work encompasses career connected learning, equitable student supports, dual enrollment and culturally affirming teaching and learning practices.

Over the last several years, Sherry has actively facilitated initiatives that have brought together community college and high school practitioners, workforce partners, students, community members and families. She works with them to co-design policies and processes that are student centered and that disrupt structural barriers to student success. She has lead redesign efforts at numerous college and high schools across the state as well as several large scale regional collaboratives. She did outstanding work with the [Cloud Computing Consortium](#) in concert with Amazon Web Services and 19 community colleges across the greater Los Angeles region funded by the Strong Workforce Program. She has supported expansion of College and Career Access Partnership (CCAP) programs focused on extending dual enrollment opportunities to students who wouldn’t otherwise go to college or who are underserved in





postsecondary education. And she is working with K16 Collaboratives to expand equitable career pathway design and implementation.

She is creative, agile and extremely effective in activating colleagues and partners to critically examine their practices and programs and redesign them with students at the center. She is an experienced field researcher, having conducted numerous student and practitioner focus groups and participatory action research projects. She is experienced at leading communities of practice and facilitating impactful workshops and professional development institutes that result in actionable plans.


In all her work, Sherry centers the use of data to inform student centered change. She is effective, focused on removing systemic barriers to student success and committed to catalyzing ongoing and sustainable change in our educational institutions.

Sherry's work is animated by her deep commitment to education as the practice of freedom. She understands the critical importance of postsecondary education in fostering economic mobility and social justice. And she is committed to ensuring the active inclusion of community members, families and students in institutional design processes.

Her own lived experience as a political refugee from Iran, an immigrant to this country and a first-generation college graduate grounds her deep understanding of the challenges faced by students—and her appreciation of the cultural wealth, assets and potential that California's community college and high school students bring to our educational institutions and regional economies.

I cannot recommend her highly enough. I know she is keenly interested in serving on the Community Engagement Advisory Board and is excited at the prospect of contributing to C2C's success.

Please feel free to call on me if I can be of further assistance in your deliberations.



Linda Collins



Cell

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry # 6652**

**Name**

Sarah Lillis

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Wendy Threatt

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

It is my pleasure to recommend Wendy Threatt as a member of the C2C Community Engagement Advisory Board. I believe that Ms. Threatt, a fourth grade teacher at Felicita Elementary School in Escondido and a Teach Plus Senior Policy Fellow, is a remarkable candidate for this important position. Her passion for her students and community, her commitment to breaking down barriers and fostering an inclusive and supportive teaching and learning environment, her drive to challenge herself and grow as a professional, and her dedication to dismantling educational inequities and shaping the system in which she works make her a unique candidate.

As California Executive Director of Teach Plus, I have had the opportunity to see firsthand the power of Wendy's leadership, compassion, and commitment to equity and meaningful community engagement. From the beginning of the fellowship, I was impressed with Wendy's determination and desire to better understand and make connections between wonky policy issues and the experiences of teachers, students, and families. I was also struck by Wendy's openness in her own journey as an educator, learner, and leader.

Wendy emerged as an unassuming leader in her cohort, consistently questioning and pushing her working group to explore not only advocacy for improving the teacher preparation pipeline, but also tools to help translate and implement existing programs for educators and prospective educators. Having distinguished herself as a fellow, I recruited Wendy to serve as a senior fellow for two years. With Wendy's experience, insight, and commitment to educational equity, she was instrumental in establishing an open and supportive climate within our new cohort.

Wendy's role as a trusted messenger and a translator of complicated policy to her fellow educators, her students and their families would make her a great addition to the community engagement advisory board. While I have worked with many excellent educators over the years, Wendy has truly distinguished herself as a leader with her personal commitment, empathetic nature, intellectual curiosity, and motivation. An unwavering commitment to ensuring that we have an educational system that reaches and engages every child, she has been unafraid to wrestle with challenging educational issues.

Moreover, with more than twenty years as an educator, Wendy has unique insight into what educators, students and families need. As a teacher-leader in Escondido, she brings unique insight about the assets and challenges facing today's students and educators.

I believe that Wendy Threatt would make an exemplary addition to the C2C advisory board. Wendy demonstrates the mindset that systemic problems facing students and school districts cannot be solved in isolation, but must stem from an authentic



collaboration of partners from across the community. She is a thoughtful and committed educator and leader, and I wholeheartedly endorse her for this role.

Sincerely,

Sarah Lillis

Executive Director, Teach Plus California



**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Threatt\\_Wendy\\_LOR-May-2025.pdf](#)

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6651**

**Name**

Katrina Linden

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Vincent Rasso

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

May 27, 2025

Members, Cradle-to-Career Data System Governing Board

400 R Street, Suite 351

Sacramento, California 95811

RE: Support for Vincent Rasso's Application to the  
Cradle-to-Career Data System Community Engagement Advisory Board

Dear Governing Board Members:

It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of Vincent J. Rasso's appointment to the Cradle-to-Career Data System Community Engagement Advisory Board. I have had the pleasure of working alongside Mr. Rasso over the last five years as both a student leader and advocate for young folks across the state.

As a life-long resident of the Inland Empire, Vincent demonstrates what it means to lead a community from within and to truly know the community one serves. His experience as a Latinx resident of the IE provides much needed representation to the C2C community engagement advisory board. Vincent is immensely intentional about creating opportunities for young people and truly understanding their dreams and needs, as evidenced by his role in founding the FIRST Mentorship Program and serving as a mentor with Kid City Hope Place. He is committed to being a mentor and friend to dozens of students over the years, providing hands-on support as they navigate their life journeys.

His direct engagement with the students the Data System aims to serve puts Vincent in a unique position to blend his direct engagement work with his background in qualitative and quantitative data collection in his work. Over the years, he has been pivotal in gathering research on student experiences and needs, especially as it relates to various minoritized communities throughout California education systems.

Vincent is well positioned to serve on the community engagement advisory board, as community engagement is core to all that he does. Evidenced by his deep relationships with students, college leaders, coalition partners, and beyond, Vincent centers community voice at every level of his work. He is highly skilled at identifying who is missing from the decision-making table and ensuring they have a space at the table and are included in important discussions. In his role with the University of California Student Association he also plays an important role as a leading voice within the organization, coordinating with

state and university offices and governing boards.

Vincent possesses all of the qualities necessary to make a quality advisory board member. I am confident he will be an asset to the Community Engagement Board. It is my honor to offer my recommendation for him and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,  
Katrina M. Linden

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry # 6648**

**Name**

Jennifer Blatz

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Josh Pollack

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

Dear Selection Committee,

I am pleased to offer my strongest recommendation for Josh Pollack, Network Advisor at StriveTogether, to serve on the California Cradle to Career Data System Community Engagement Advisory Board. At StriveTogether—a national network of nearly 70 communities improving cradle-to-career outcomes—Josh supports partnerships in California and nationwide to transform systems using data and community voice to drive continuous improvement and advance economic mobility. Josh is a skilled, equity-driven systems leader with experience in classrooms, school districts, national policy, and nonprofit strategy. He brings valuable perspective on how stakeholders across systems access and use data. In his current role, he supports communities in analyzing root causes, aligning around shared strategies, and tracking progress to improve outcomes. Previously, as Executive Director of Special Projects for Stockton Unified School District, Josh launched the city's first Children's Cabinet, a \$4.6 million childhood savings program, and a districtwide digital equity initiative—all grounded in student data and community input. He is also an active member of the California Cradle to Career Coalition, a network of thirteen regional partnerships serving over one million youth and families statewide.

Josh combines a statewide lens with deep local implementation experience. He is collaborative, insightful, and deeply committed to equity. As a member of the Community Engagement Advisory Board, he would help ensure the CA C2C Data System is transparent, actionable, and rooted in community priorities.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Blatz

President and CEO, StriveTogether

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [JB-LOS\\_CA-C2C-Committee\\_JoshPollack.docx](#)

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6647**

**Name**

Jennifer Blatz

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Megan Lowery

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [JS-LOS\\_CA-C2C-Coalition\\_MeganLowery.docx](#)



**StriveTogether  
Board of  
Directors**

**Russell Booker**  
Spartanburg  
Academic Movement

**Connie Ballmer**  
Ballmer Group

**Robert Blaine**  
National League  
of Cities

**Tomi Hiers**  
The Annie E. Casey  
Foundation

**Sue Lehmann**  
Student Success  
Network

**Michael McAfee**  
PolicyLink

**Sam Mellerson**  
Haywood Burns  
Institute

**Andi Phillips**  
Maycomb Capital

**Tony Pipa**  
Brookings Institution

**Richard Raya**  
Marin Promise  
Partnership

**Rob Watson**  
EdRedesign;  
Harvard Graduate  
School of Education

**David Williams**  
High Opportunity  
Neighborhood  
Partners

**Todd Williams**  
The Commit  
Partnership

**Jennifer Blatz**  
StriveTogether  
President and CEO

**StriveTogether**<sup>®</sup>

Every child. Cradle to career.

Jennifer Blatz  
President and CEO  
StriveTogether

May 27, 2025

Selection Committee  
California Cradle to Career Data System Community Advisory Board

Dear Selection Committee,

I am writing to offer my strongest recommendation for Megan Lowery, Director of the Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership at the Stanislaus County Office of Education, to serve on the California Cradle to Career Data System Community Advisory Board. Megan is a trusted leader within the StriveTogether Network, a proud product and representative of northern California, and a respected voice in California's broader cradle-to-career movement. Her leadership driving equitable systems change and using shared data to catalyze community-informed action make her an exceptional candidate for the Community Advisory Board.

As Director of the Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership, Megan leads cross-sector efforts in Stanislaus County to improve outcomes across education, health, and workforce systems. She brings stakeholders together, aligns strategies, and ensures decisions are shaped by actionable data and the priorities of the communities most impacted. Her innovative leadership earned her selection to the inaugural cohort of the Harvard EdRedesign Lab's Cradle to Career Fellowship, a national initiative supporting collaborative, place-based solutions for youth and families. In addition to her role in Stanislaus County, Megan is an active leader in the California Cradle to Career Coalition, comprised of sixteen regional networks working to improve cradle to career outcomes and systems statewide. The coalition's networks serve over one million CA youth and families across the developmental continuum—from birth through college and career. As part of the Community Advisory Board, Megan could activate the coalition's network, to ensure recommendations to the commission are community-informed and tools produced by the CA C2C Data System receive wide distribution and use in service of cradle-to-career system improvement.

At StriveTogether, a network of nearly 70 communities working to advance cradle to career outcomes, we understand the importance of timely, actionable, and accessible data to driving evidence-based decision-making. Megan would bring not

only a practitioner's lens, but also the ability to activate statewide networks and ensure the state's C2C data system is accessible, actionable, transparent, and community-responsive. Thank you for considering this exceptional leader. I would be happy to provide additional information in support of Megan's candidacy.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Blatz  
President and CEO, StriveTogether

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6646**

**Name**

Caroline Nguyen

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Durriya Ahmed

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [LOR-Durriya-Ahmed.pdf](#)



Dear Selection Committee:

It is with great enthusiasm that I write to recommend Durriya Ahmed for a position on the Community Engagement Advisory Board. I have had the privilege of supervising Durriya over the past year in her capacity as the Campus Climate Appointed Officer on the Board of Directors for the UC Student Association (UCSA), where she has been an invaluable leader, collaborator, and advocate on behalf of the UC system's 230,000+ undergraduate students.

Durriya's commitment to student-centered and community-driven work is not just a personal value—it is embedded in her approach to every policy initiative and organizing effort she undertakes. Her work on campus safety and accountability is a prime example of this. Recognizing the barriers many communities face in engaging with data-heavy resources, Durriya led efforts to translate UC policing dashboard data into accessible formats for stakeholders with varying levels of data literacy. She proposed a legislative bill to institutionalize campus police accountability boards, advocating for the inclusion of disaggregated dashboards to help impacted community members more meaningfully interpret policing trends. These efforts show a deep understanding of the ways data must be contextualized and democratized for communities to meaningfully engage with it—an insight that will be critical to advancing the mission of the C2C system.

Durriya has also consistently worked to embed intersectionality in her advocacy. Her initiatives reflect a sharp awareness of how systemic issues uniquely affect marginalized populations, and she ensures that those most impacted are not only included but centered in decision-making processes. She has demonstrated this through coalition-building and mass mobilization efforts, working with student organizers across racial, socioeconomic, and ability-based lines to elevate underrepresented voices. Whether facilitating strategy sessions for campus stakeholders or representing student interests to UC leadership, Durriya prioritizes listening to, and acting with, those closest to the issues.

Durriya also brings a sophisticated understanding of how data systems and public engagement can intersect to drive equity-focused policy. Her meeting with UCLA's





Associate Vice Chancellor of Campus Safety, in which she pushed for fiscal transparency regarding security contracts, exemplifies her insistence on holding institutions accountable through quantitative and qualitative data analysis. She skillfully navigates conversations with high-level administrators while remaining grounded in community needs—precisely the kind of leadership that will enhance the C2C’s community engagement strategy.

In every facet of her work, Durriya demonstrates the principles at the heart of the Cradle-to-Career system: inclusive engagement, equity-driven data access, and student-informed policy development. She is uniquely positioned to contribute to the advisory board's mission to inform the development and interpretation of data tools, especially as the C2C seeks to bridge gaps in educational and workforce outcomes across California.

Durriya brings not only policy acumen and leadership experience but also a moral clarity that centers justice, equity, and long-term systemic change. I recommend her without reservation and am confident she will be an asset to the this Board.

Sincerely,

Caroline Nguyen  
Policy Director  
University of California Student Association



**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6645**

**Name**

Gwen Chodur

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Vincent Rasso

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [VRasso.pdf](#)

May 27, 2025

To the Advisory Board Selection Committee:

I write in strong support of Mr. Vincent Rasso's nomination to the Cradle to Career System Advisory Board. I first came to know Vincent in 2020, when he was serving as the External Vice President of UC Riverside's Student Association and the Council Chair of the UC Student Association. Because of my role as UC Graduate and Professional Council President, I worked closely with Vincent to ensure collaboration across our organizations. Having witnessed Vincent's effectiveness and professionalism as an undergraduate, it was not surprising to watch him transition into a professional role with the Campaign for College Opportunity and I was ecstatic when he moved into his current position with the UC Student Association, as it meant that we have the opportunity to work together again to support student basic needs for undergraduates in the UC system.

Vincent is deeply invested in ensuring student access to and success in higher education within California's public colleges and universities. He possesses a unique portfolio of experiences as a student leader and through his public policy work both with CCO and UCSA. He is a gifted communicator and has an impressive grasp of how data can be used to address challenges facing college students. Lastly, Vincent is a fantastic team member and a pleasure to work with. I continue to be deeply grateful for him and his work and I have no doubt that he would be an incredible asset to the Board. He has my strongest recommendation and I would be thrilled to answer any questions that may arise about his candidacy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

Gwen Chodur, PhD MSPH  
Postdoctoral Researcher, Center for Economic Justice and Action  
University of California Graduate-Professional Council President 2020-2022

[Redacted Contact Information]

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6644**

**Name**

Christopher Sweeten

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Angelique Singh

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

Dear Selection Committee,

I am writing with great enthusiasm to express my strong support for Dr. Angelique Singh's candidacy for service on the Community Engagement and/or Data and Tools Advisory Boards for the California Cradle-to-Career (C2C) Data System. Dr. Singh's extensive cross-sector experience, commitment to equity, and data-informed leadership make her an exceptional fit for this vital statewide initiative.

With a recently conferred Doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Southern California, Dr. Singh brings over a decade of impact across nonprofit, education, and corporate settings. Her leadership reflects a profound understanding of the systemic barriers faced by students and families across California, particularly among first-generation college attendees and underrepresented communities. She has consistently designed inclusive learning and data tools that center the lived experiences of diverse populations.

In her current role as Curriculum & Assessment Specialist for School on Wheels, Dr. Singh developed a bilingual English/Spanish chatbot and a CAASPP-aligned assessment system to support over 1,000 volunteer tutors, demonstrating both her technical expertise and her cultural responsiveness. She also authored an AI ethics policy and leads the development of data dashboards to monitor student progress and regional impact, illustrating a keen understanding of how to leverage analytics for actionable insight.

Her previous leadership role at Glidewell Dental, as Program Manager for Learning & Development, exemplified her project management acumen, with measurable outcomes that included a 15% increase in internal promotions and a 95% on-time delivery rate for training initiatives. Notably, she designed analytics dashboards that tracked training impact and workforce retention skills directly relevant to the Data and Tools Advisory Board's mission of delivering actionable and transparent information.

Dr. Singh's long-standing commitment to student equity is further evidenced by her role at California State University, Los Angeles, where she led a tutoring redesign initiative that increased student performance by 35% and implemented early alert systems for 3,600 students in equity-risk courses. She has served on the CSU Student Success Analytics Committee and held multiple advisory and board roles, including Pathways Early College Academy and the South Pasadena Education Foundation.

Her technical competencies, ranging from AI integration and dashboard development (Power BI, Tableau, Looker) to curriculum design (ADDIE, UDL, Rise360), equip her to engage with both the data and the people who need to interpret it. She is precisely the type of necessary bridge-builder to realize C2C's vision of a responsive, transparent, and equity-driven statewide data system.

I have complete confidence that Dr. Singh will be a dedicated, insightful, and strategic contributor to the Cradle-to-Career Data System Advisory Boards. Her record of results-driven innovation, paired with a compassionate commitment to equity and lifelong learning, aligns powerfully with the values and responsibilities of the C2C initiative.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require additional information or support.

Christopher T. Sweeten  
Vice President of Student Services  
Santiago Canyon College

President  
Chief Student Services Officers Association

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Singh-Letter-of-Support-Craddle-to-College.pdf](#)



**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry # 6641**

**Name**

California Cradle to Career Coalition

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Megan Lowery

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

Members of the California Cradle to Career Coalition support Megan's application for the Community Engagement position. (see attached letter of support for more details of our support) Please see member organization's below:

Bright Futures Monterey County  
Chula Vista Promise Neighborhood  
Cradle to Career Fresno County  
Cradle to Career Sonoma County  
Corning Promise Neighborhood  
El Monte Promise Foundation  
Hayward Promise Neighborhood  
Marin Promise Partnership  
Mission Promise Neighborhood  
Oakland Promise  
San Diego Promise Neighborhood  
Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Letter-of-Recommendation-Megan-Lowery.pdf](#)





May 27th, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the California Cradle to Career Coalition, made up of 13 organizations and serving 1.4 million youths statewide, we are writing to offer our wholehearted recommendation for Megan Lowery as a candidate for the Cradle to Career Database Community Advisory Board position. We have had the privilege of working alongside Megan for 5 years through our statewide coalition focused on cradle-to-career, anti-poverty, placed-based initiatives policy work across California. Her leadership, strategic thinking, and commitment to equity have been pivotal to our collective success.

In her role as Director of the Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership at the Stanislaus County Office of Education, she has led cross-sector coordination efforts aimed at improving outcomes in health, education, and workforce development. Her work ensures decisions are shaped by local data, grounded in community voice, and focused on sustainable systems change. She is a connector—bringing together diverse stakeholders to design strategies that are not only evidence-based but also outcome driven.

Megan has been instrumental in building the foundation of our coalition, shaping its strategic direction both at the statewide level and within underserved communities in the Central and San Joaquin Valley. Her ability to center equity while advancing policy and systems work has made her a trusted leader in our network.

Megan has also contributed significantly to our statewide “It Takes a Village” multi-year bill and budget campaign, helping to align local efforts with broader policy goals. Her insight and leadership have strengthened both our policy development and our advocacy strategy.

If selected for the Community Advisory Board, we have no doubt that Megan would bring the same level of dedication, collaboration, and expertise to the role. Her unique ability to operate at both the grassroots and systems level makes her an ideal advisor for any effort seeking to advance equitable outcomes through community-driven and data-outcome solutions.

Please feel free to contact Emmerald Evans at [REDACTED] directly if you have any questions or need further information. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**Members of the California Cradle to Career Coalition**

Bright Futures Monterey County  
Chula Vista Promise Neighborhood  
Cradle to Career Fresno County  
Cradle to Career Sonoma County  
Corning Promise Neighborhood  
El Monte Promise Foundation  
Hayward Promise Neighborhood

Marin Promise Partnership  
Mission Promise Neighborhood  
Oakland Promise  
San Diego Promise Neighborhood  
Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership  
United Way of San Diego County

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6640**

**Name**

Alvin Lee

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Durriya Ahmed

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

To the Advisory Board Selection Committee:

It is my sincere pleasure to compose this letter in active endorsement of Durriya Ahmed's candidacy to serve on the Cradle to Career Community Engagement Advisory Board. As Executive Director of GENup, one of California's largest student-led education policy organizations, I have had the honor of serving with Durriya in a leadership role for several years. Her work with GENup has been characterized by a strong commitment to student voice, community-driven advocacy, and inclusive coalitions aimed at informing policy from the ground up.

Durriya has always brought to the work we do with a keen, equity-focused eye. During a period when student wellbeing and justice-driven education policy too often fall between the cracks, she led the charge to make sure that our campaigns were grounded in the actual lived experience of the most impacted communities. It was Durriya, three years ago, who pushed GENup to take on harm reduction as a key issue—way before it even became a mainstream conversation in student advocacy. Her foresight and conviction led to the development of a student harm reduction policy platform rooted in lived experience, empathy, and data.

Beyond her policy acumen, Durriya is a coalition builder at heart. Whether she is leading SVSH policy work or co-developing statewide campaigns, she brings students and allies into the fold with humility, intention, and care. She's not just someone who advocates for student voice; rather, she creates spaces that meaningfully include and amplify it. Her ability to translate student experiences into actionable policy recommendations helped GENup grow into a more responsive, intersectional organization.

Durriya is precisely the kind of person who should help mold the C2C system. She understands that data is no longer just about numbers but about people. It is building trust with communities, asking the right questions, and designing systems that reflect the realities and aspirations of the Californians they're meant to serve.

I strongly advise Durriya for this advisory board. She will bring the same clarity, compassion, and courage to this position that she has always represented in her work at GENup and in her other work in the cause of education equity.

Best,

Alvin Lee



**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6639**

**Name**

Shimica Gaskins

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Josh Pollack

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

We are in strong support of Josh Pollack. Please see letter detailing our support.

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Josh-Pollack-Letter-of-Recommendation\\_Josh-Pollack-C2C-Data-CAB.docx.pdf](#)





Shimica Gaskins  
President/CEO  
End Child Poverty California  
[Redacted]

May 27th, 2025

Selection Committee  
California Cradle to Career Data System Community Advisory Board

Dear Selection Committee,

I am pleased to offer my strongest recommendation for Josh Pollack, Network Advisor at StriveTogether, to serve on the California Cradle to Career Data System Community Engagement Advisory Board. At StriveTogether—a national network of nearly 70 communities improving cradle-to-career outcomes—Josh supports partnerships in California and nationwide to transform systems using data and community voice to drive continuous improvement and advance economic mobility.

Josh is a skilled, equity-driven systems leader with experience in classrooms, school districts, national policy, and nonprofit strategy. He brings valuable perspective on how stakeholders across systems access and use data. In his current role, he supports communities in analyzing root causes, aligning around shared strategies, and tracking progress to improve outcomes. Previously, as Executive Director of Special Projects for Stockton Unified School District, Josh launched the city's first Children's Cabinet, a \$4.6 million childhood savings program, and a districtwide digital equity initiative—all grounded in student data and community input. He is also an active member of the California Cradle to Career Coalition, a network of thirteen regional partnerships serving over one million youth and families statewide.

Josh combines a statewide lens with deep local implementation experience. He is collaborative, insightful, and deeply committed to equity. As a member of the Community Engagement Advisory Board, he would help ensure the CA C2C Data System is transparent, actionable, and rooted in community priorities.

Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]  
Shimica Gaskins  
President/CEO of End Child Poverty CA

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6638**

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Josh Pollack

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6637**

**Name**

Edgar Zazueta

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Thoibi Rublaitus

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [5.27.25\\_Thoibi-Rublaitus\\_C2C-Community-Advisory-Board-Recommendation-Letter-.pdf](#)



**officers**

**president** Rafael Plascencia **president-elect** Daryl F. Camp, Ed.D. **vice president** Rene Rickard, Ed.D.

**vice president for legislative action** Gina Potter, Ed.D. **past president** Parvin Ahmadi **executive director** Edgar Zazueta, Ed.D.

May 27, 2025

Cradle to Career  
Selection for Advisory Boards Committee  
400 R St, Suite 304  
Sacramento, CA 95811

**RE: Recommendation of Thoibi Rublaitus to Community Engagement Advisory Board**

On behalf of more than 18,000 education leaders in our state, the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) takes great pleasure in recommending Dr. Thoibi Rublaitus to the Cradle-to-Career (C2C) Community Engagement Advisory Board. Dr. Rublaitus is a distinguished educator and administrator in the state of California and is currently serving as the Principal of Adult Education for the Corona-Norco Unified School District. Her expertise in adult education training programs, which help immigrant and low socio-economic-status families integrate into society, would be particularly beneficial to C2C's Advisory Board.

While her office is in Riverside County, Dr. Rublaitus has supported teachers and administrators throughout the state and is recognized as a connector and resource among her peers. In her leadership as President of ACSA's Council of Adult Education Leaders for the last three years, Dr. Rublaitus has led numerous professional development sessions at multiple ACSA events, facilitated thoughtful discussions with state agencies and adult education leaders, and provided critical implementation expertise regarding statewide policy proposals. Most impressively, Dr. Rublaitus continuously draws upon her expertise with English Learners and newcomers to advance initiatives that are best for students.

As a member of the C2C Community Engagement Advisory Board, Dr. Rublaitus would be primed to offer her expertise on the Board's charge to create strong feedback loops with data users to support evidence-based decision making, analytical capacity, and equitable access to actionable information. Adult education opens doors and provides lifelong educational opportunities, and Dr. Rublaitus' knowledgebase and skill set leave her uniquely qualified to help build a statewide longitudinal data system that provides tools to help students reach their goals and delivers information and workforce outcomes.

California would be well served by Dr. Rublaitus' participation on the C2C Community Engagement Advisory Board, and I encourage your consideration of her appointment.

Sincerely,

Dr. Edgar Zazueta  
ACSA Executive Director

cc: Thoibi Rublaitus, Principal, Adult Education, Corona Norco USD



**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6635**

**Name**

Josh Davis

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Megan Lowery

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

**\*\*This is a duplicate to ensure the correct Advisory Board was selected for Megan.**

Josh Davis

Vice President, Policy and Partnerships

StriveTogether



May 23, 2025

Selection Committee

California Cradle to Career Data System Community Advisory Board

Dear Selection Committee,

I am writing to offer my strongest recommendation for Megan Lowery, Director of the Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership at the Stanislaus County Office of Education, to serve on the California Cradle to Career Data System Community Advisory Board. Megan is a trusted leader within the StriveTogether Network, a proud product and representative of northern California, and a respected voice in California's broader cradle-to-career movement. Her leadership driving equitable systems change and using shared data to catalyze community-informed action make her an exceptional candidate for the Community Advisory Board.

As Director of the Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership, Megan leads cross-sector efforts in Stanislaus County to improve outcomes across education, health, and workforce systems. She brings stakeholders together, aligns strategies, and ensures decisions are shaped by actionable data and the priorities of the communities most impacted. Her innovative leadership earned her selection to the inaugural cohort of the Harvard EdRedesign Lab's Cradle to Career Fellowship, a national initiative supporting collaborative, place-based solutions for youth and families. In addition to her role in Stanislaus County, Megan is an active leader in the California Cradle to Career Coalition, comprised of sixteen regional networks working to improve cradle to career outcomes and systems statewide. The coalition's networks serve over one million CA youth and families across the developmental continuum—from birth through college and career. As part of the Community Advisory Board, Megan could activate the coalition's network, to ensure recommendations to the commission are community-informed and tools produced by the CA C2C Data System receive wide distribution and use in service of cradle-to-career system improvement.

At StriveTogether, a network of nearly 70 communities working to advance cradle to career outcomes, we understand the



importance of timely, actionable, and accessible data to driving evidence-based decision-making. Megan would bring not only a practitioner's lens, but also the ability to activate statewide networks and ensure the state's C2C data system is accessible, actionable, transparent, and community-responsive. Thank you for considering this exceptional leader. I would be happy to provide additional information in support of Megan's candidacy.

Sincerely,

Josh Davis

Vice President, Policy and Partnerships

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [JD-LOS-V2\\_MeganLowery1.pdf](#)

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6634**

**Name**

Josh Davis

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Megan Lowery

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

Josh Davis  
Vice President, Policy and Partnerships  
StriveTogether

[REDACTED]

May 23, 2025

Selection Committee  
California Cradle to Career Data System Community Advisory Board

Dear Selection Committee,

I am writing to offer my strongest recommendation for Megan Lowery, Director of the Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership at the Stanislaus County Office of Education, to serve on the California Cradle to Career Data System Community Advisory Board. Megan is a trusted leader within the StriveTogether Network, a proud product and representative of northern California, and a respected voice in California's broader cradle-to-career movement. Her leadership driving equitable systems change and using shared data to catalyze community-informed action make her an exceptional candidate for the Community Advisory Board.

As Director of the Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership, Megan leads cross-sector efforts in Stanislaus County to improve outcomes across education, health, and workforce systems. She brings stakeholders together, aligns strategies, and ensures decisions are shaped by actionable data and the priorities of the communities most impacted. Her innovative leadership earned her selection to the inaugural cohort of the Harvard EdRedesign Lab's Cradle to Career Fellowship, a national initiative supporting collaborative, place-based solutions for youth and families. In addition to her role in Stanislaus County, Megan is an active leader in the California Cradle to Career Coalition, comprised of sixteen regional networks working to improve cradle to career outcomes and systems statewide. The coalition's networks serve over one million CA youth and families across the developmental continuum—from birth through college and career. As part of the Community Advisory Board, Megan could activate the coalition's network, to ensure recommendations to the commission are community-informed and tools produced by the CA C2C Data System receive wide distribution and use in service of cradle-to-career system improvement.

At StriveTogether, a network of nearly 70 communities working to advance cradle to career outcomes, we understand the importance of timely, actionable, and accessible data to driving evidence-based decision-making. Megan would bring not only a practitioner's lens, but also the ability to activate statewide networks and ensure the state's C2C data system is accessible,

actionable, transparent, and community-responsive. Thank you for considering this exceptional leader. I would be happy to provide additional information in support of Megan's candidacy.

Sincerely,

Josh Davis

Vice President, Policy and Partnerships

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [JD-LOS-V2\\_MeganLowery.pdf](#)

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6633**

**Name**

Josh Davis

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Josh Pollack

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

Josh Davis  
Vice President, Policy and Partnerships  
StriveTogether  
[REDACTED]

May 23, 2025

Selection Committee  
California Cradle to Career Data System Community Advisory Board

Dear Selection Committee,

I am pleased to offer my strongest recommendation for Josh Pollack, Network Advisor at StriveTogether, to serve on the California Cradle to Career Data System Community Engagement Advisory Board. At StriveTogether—a national network of nearly 70 communities improving cradle-to-career outcomes—Josh supports partnerships in California and nationwide to transform systems using data and community voice to drive continuous improvement and advance economic mobility. Josh is a skilled, equity-driven systems leader with experience in classrooms, school districts, national policy, and nonprofit strategy. He brings valuable perspective on how stakeholders across systems access and use data. In his current role, he supports communities in analyzing root causes, aligning around shared strategies, and tracking progress to improve outcomes. Previously, as Executive Director of Special Projects for Stockton Unified School District, Josh launched the city's first Children's Cabinet, a \$4.6 million childhood savings program, and a districtwide digital equity initiative—all grounded in student data and community input. He is also an active member of the California Cradle to Career Coalition, a network of thirteen regional partnerships serving over one million youth and families statewide. Josh combines a statewide lens with deep local implementation experience. He is collaborative, insightful, and deeply committed to equity. As a member of the Community Engagement Advisory Board, he would help ensure the CA C2C Data System is transparent, actionable, and rooted in community priorities.

Sincerely,

Josh Davis  
Vice President, Policy and Partnerships



You can upload your letter of support here

- [JD-LOS-V2\\_JoshPollack.pdf](#)

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6632**

**Name**

Denise Luna

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Vincent Rasso

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

May 26, 2025

Members, Cradle-to-Career Data System Governing Board  
Office of Cradle-to-Career Data System  
400 R Street, Suite 351 Sacramento, California 95811

RE: Support for Vincent J. Rasso to Cradle-to-Career System Community Engagement Advisory Board

Dear Cradle-to-Career Governing Board Members,

I am pleased to offer my highest recommendation for Vincent J. Rasso's application to the Cradle-to-Career System Community Engagement Advisory Board. Since June 2022, I have had the privilege of working closely with Mr. Rasso since his time at the Campaign for College Opportunity.

A common theme in his professional work experiences is his desire to serve and help communities of color, underserved communities, especially those who may have already been written off and ignored by others. From an early age, Vincent has demonstrated a deep commitment to educational equity by mentoring underserved high school seniors through the FAFSA process and guiding them in completing college and scholarship applications, particularly through his roles at Kid City and FIRST mentorship programs. Over the past decade, he has continued this work by mentoring dozens of students, providing hands-on support as they navigate their own educational and leadership journeys. Mr. Rasso's pursuit of joining the C2C Community Engagement Advisory Board will be well served by his strong instincts and a natural inclination towards educational equity and commitment to justice.

His strong qualitative research and data analytical skills, combined with his commitment to high-quality work, have been instrumental in his roles at the Campaign for College Opportunity and now at the University of California Student Association. One compelling example of Vincent's deep commitment to research, and to leveraging that research to support students in reaching their college and career goals, is his work conducting in-depth interviews with students to better understand their experiences with enrollment, degree pathways, campus belonging, and early academic outreach programs. He has thoughtfully translated these insights into actionable policy recommendations, using his findings to promote educational equity at both institutional and systemic levels. In addition, Vincent has provided strategic direction on policy solutions and worked closely with partners to advocate for increased financial aid for students who need it most.

Vincent has demonstrated intentional and impactful leadership in community engagement by building strong, trust-based relationships with students, policymakers, college administrators, and coalition partners. As a natural leader, he consistently centers student voices in his advocacy efforts at the local, state, and federal levels. He has developed and maintained ongoing relationships with numerous lawmakers and their staff through thoughtful, regular communication, ensuring that student perspectives remain a key part of policy discussions. Vincent has also cultivated meaningful partnerships with institutional leaders, including those in government relations, financial aid offices, and governing boards, to advocate for policies that prioritize student needs. In his role as lead representative for the University of California Student Association on multiple statewide advocacy coalitions, Vincent effectively elevates critical student priorities while distilling complex information for student leaders and advocates across the state. One particularly impressive example of his community engagement capacity is the student network he has built, comprising over 500 diverse student contacts across the UC, CSU, and community college systems. Through this network, Vincent has actively engaged students in events, communications, research, and advocacy efforts, amplifying their voices in meaningful and lasting ways.

In my view, Vincent's work ethic, high standards, eagerness to learn, and drive to improve student outcomes make him an outstanding candidate to the C2C Community Engagement Advisory Board. As impressive as his achievements are, Mr. Rasso's stellar personal qualities are equally worthy of praise. Vincent is composed, dependable, and focused under pressure, with a leadership style that is both impactful and inspiring.

I am confident that Mr. Rasso will be a tremendous asset to the C2C Community Engagement Advisory Board. It is my genuine honor to offer my strongest endorsement of his application. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Denise Luna  
Director of Higher Education Policy  
EdTrust-West

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Letter-of-Recommendation-for-Vincent-J.-Rasso-.pdf](#)

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6631**

**Name**

Gerrel Sayles

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Nina Torres

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Nina-Torres-Letter-of-Support-.docx](#)



Dear Community Engagement Advisory Board,

I am writing this letter of support for Ms. Nina Torres, as I currently serve as the Associate Director of College Access with the LA Promise Fund and Black College Success. I have had the pleasure of working closely with Nina for over a year, during which we collaborated on multiple projects aimed at expanding community engagement partnerships and enhancing program support for our students.

Through our shared efforts, we have successfully developed initiatives that not only provide holistic support for our students in both the nonprofit sector and higher education but also strengthen the nonprofits that support us. Nina has been instrumental in fostering these partnerships, demonstrating her exceptional ability to bridge connections between diverse stakeholders and create a thriving support system for our community.

Nina's impact has been so significant that it directly influenced the creation of a new role within our program—Director of Community Partner Engagement—underscoring her invaluable contributions to Black College Success. Beyond our work together, I have observed Nina's continued professional growth while maintaining her deep commitment to the communities we serve, particularly in supporting Black and underserved students.

Her leadership, determination, and collaborative spirit have been evident in her engagement with initiatives such as the Black Education Expo and the LA Urban League, among others. Nina possesses a rare combination of passion, strategic thinking, and the interpersonal skills necessary to connect with a diverse array of individuals and organizations to drive shared goals forward.

For these reasons, I wholeheartedly recommend Ms. Nina Torres for the community engagement advisory board. I am confident that her expertise, dedication, and innovative approach will make her an invaluable asset to the board and the broader community.

Sincerely,

Gerrel Sayles

Associate Director of College Access

LA Promise Fund | Black College Success

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6630**

**Name**

Jinann Bitar

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Durriya Ahmed

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

To the California C2C Data System Selection Committee,

It is my great pleasure to write in strong support of Durriya Ahmed's application to the Cradle to Career Community Engagement Advisory Board. As Director of the Higher Education Research and Data Analytics team at The Education Trust, I have had the privilege of working closely with Durriya as a member of our team. Her contributions consistently reflect the depth of her intellect, her commitment to equity, and her deep understanding of what it means to build data systems that earn the trust of the communities they aim to serve.

Durriya brings a student- and community-centered lens to every aspect of her work. She has conducted research with and for student parents, Indigenous students, rural learners, and students in the South—populations she is not personally a part of but engages with care, humility, and a clear dedication to elevating stories that are often overlooked. Her ability to build relationships across difference is not just commendable, it is essential for ensuring C2C's systems reflect the full diversity of California's educational landscape.

In addition to her research strengths, Durriya is deeply committed to making data accessible. She recently worked with our team to redesign our Anti-DEI dashboard to better serve stakeholders who may not be data fluent—prioritizing plain language, intuitive visuals, and human-centered context. She understands that for data to support evidence-based decision-making, it must be understandable, actionable, and trustworthy.

What makes Durriya especially compelling for this Advisory Board is her strong ethical reasoning and critical inquiry. She leads with questions like: Who is this for? What assumptions are we making? Who might we be leaving out? These are exactly the questions that should guide the work of building feedback loops, improving analytical capacity, and ensuring equitable access to information.

Durriya would be a tremendous asset to the C2C Community Engagement Advisory Board. I recommend her with the highest confidence.

Sincerely,

Jinann Bitar  
Director, Higher Education Research & Data Analytics

You can upload your letter of support here

- [Durriya\\_C2C\\_LOS.pdf](#)

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6621**

**Name**

Bertha Alicia Haro

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Nina Torres

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

California Cradle to Career Data System May 23, 2025  
400 R. St, Sacramento, CA 95811

Dear Advisory Board Nominations Committee,

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit this letter of support for Nina Torres and her candidacy for the California Cradle-to-Career (C2C) Community Engagement Advisory Board. Nina is a respected nonprofit leader with 15 years of experience in education, with a career spanning youth academic development, college access, and systemic equity—particularly for youth across Los Angeles County and the Bay Area.

In every role she has held, Nina has prioritized building cradle-to-career pipelines, working alongside school districts, postsecondary institutions, nonprofits, and elected officials. Her current and past leadership roles at organizations such as the Los Angeles Urban League, LA Promise Fund, Community Coalition, and College Track illustrate her deep commitment to access and opportunities. She has successfully led and scaled programs like Black College Success, developed strategic education partnerships across over 100 stakeholders, managed college readiness initiatives, and championed youth through case management and curriculum design.

In addition to her leadership roles, Nina most recently served as a Senior Writing Seminar Instructor at Loyola Marymount University. There, she taught an interdisciplinary writing course for Upward Bound scholars—creating a safe, student-centered environment that empowered students to thrive academically and prepare for college success. Her ability to bridge rigorous academic instruction with culturally relevant pedagogy makes her uniquely suited to advise on state-level initiatives.

Nina has spent her career helping to dismantle the barriers that prevent communities from fully accessing resources. Her efforts to ensure comprehensive college-going cultures in K-12 settings have resulted in significant scholarship wins, improved student data systems, and scalable college readiness tools. Her track record of using data to drive decision-making and improve program effectiveness aligns seamlessly with the C2C system's mission.

Nina's voice will be a crucial asset to the Advisory Board—grounded in real experience from the front lines of student support and backed by a network of partnerships across education sectors. Her expertise in managing regional initiatives, building multi-stakeholder collaborations, and most recently, overseeing partnerships with more than 90 organizations in the STEM community through the LA STEM Collective as the Program and Partnerships Manager, demonstrates her deep understanding of the systemic needs and opportunities within the region's STEM education ecosystem.

I strongly endorse Nina Torres's candidacy for the California Cradle-to-Career Community Engagement Advisory Board. Her leadership, vision, and commitment to student success will bring invaluable insight to the Advisory Board's work and help advance the mission of the California Cradle-to-Career system.

If you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Sincerely,

Bertha Alicia Haro, MPA  
Executive Director, California

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6616**

**Name**

Linda Gleason

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Megan Lowery

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

As the Director of Fresno Cradle to Career, I am writing to offer my strongest recommendation for Megan Lowery, Director of the Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership at the Stanislaus County Office of Education, to serve on the California Cradle to Career Data System Community Advisory Board. Megan is a trusted leader within the CA Cradle to Career Coalition. She is a proud product and representative of the Central Valley and would provide essential representation for our region which is often underrepresented. Her leadership driving equitable systems change and using shared data to catalyze community-informed action make her an exceptional candidate for the Community Advisory Board.

As Director of the Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership, Megan leads cross-sector efforts in Stanislaus County to improve outcomes across education, health, and workforce systems. She brings stakeholders together, aligns strategies, and ensures decisions are shaped by actionable data and the priorities of the communities most impacted. Her innovative leadership earned her selection to the inaugural cohort of the Harvard EdRedesign Lab's Cradle to Career Fellowship, a national initiative supporting collaborative, place-based solutions for youth and families. In addition to her role in Stanislaus County, Megan is an active leader in the California Cradle to Career Coalition, comprised of sixteen regional networks working to improve cradle to career outcomes and systems statewide. The coalition's networks serve over one million CA youth and families across the developmental continuum—from birth through college and career. As part of the Community Advisory Board, Megan could activate the coalition's network, to ensure recommendations to the commission are community-informed and tools produced by the CA C2C Data System receive wide distribution and use in service of cradle-to-career system improvement.

Fresno and Stanislaus Cradle to Career are members of the national network StriveTogether representing two of the 70 communities working to advance cradle to career outcomes. Together we understand the importance of timely, actionable, and accessible data to drive evidence-based decision-making. Megan would bring not only a practitioner's lens, but also the ability to activate statewide networks and ensure the state's C2C data system is accessible, actionable, transparent, and community-responsive.

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [CA-C2C-DataSystem Letter-of-Support FresnoCA.pdf](#)

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6614**

**Name**

Victoria Williams

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Nina Torres

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter in support of Nina J.Torres's application to the California Cradle to Career Data System Advisory Board – Community Engagement Committee. As the founder of the Black Education Expo (BEE), I had the pleasure of working directly with Ms. Torres in her role as lead consultant through her firm, Justice Seeds, from August to January 2025.

During this time, Ms. Torres was instrumental in helping us expand our community impact by forging meaningful partnerships with educational institutions and nonprofit organizations. Her ability to connect the dots between data, student outcomes, and access to opportunity was not only strategic—it was transformative. Thanks to her leadership, BEE welcomed over 1,000 attendees, notably with an increase in student participation and she hosted a highly impactful scholarships workshop during our October 2024 event, empowering attendees with actionable information to pursue higher education.

Ms. Torres brings a rare combination of lived experience, professional expertise, and an unwavering commitment to equity. She stays current with statewide education policy trends, while also remaining deeply grounded in the needs of historically underserved students and families. She is a natural connector, consistently leveraging her network to uplift others—whether making introductions, mentoring young professionals, or advocating for policy change that centers community voice.

Her presence on the Community Engagement Committee would be a tremendous asset. I fully endorse her candidacy and trust she will serve with the insight, integrity, and community-first approach that this important work requires.

Sincerely,  
Victoria Williams  
Founder, Black Education Expo

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6613**

**Name**

Adele McClain

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Dr. Thoibi Rublaitus

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

Dr. Rublaitus has been a leader in community engagement in the field of adult education for the past 7 years. She is the recipient of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity grant for the Corona Norco School District. She also has a Workforce Development Department Grant and CalWorks. All of these grants require her to maintain community engagement for the success of her programs funded by these grant dollars. She serves on the California Adult Education Administrator's Council as the Vice President of Communications.

Dr. Rubliatus has excellent communication skills, successful project leadership, and the ability to build strong relationships, and has built many partnerships between employers and government agencies.

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Thoibi-Rublaitus-Recommendation.docx](#)





# *Apple Valley Unified School District*

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Rick Roelle • Amanda Buchanan • Maria Okpara • Renee Longshore • Anita Tucker

## SUPERINTENDENT

Trenae Nelson

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### Letter of Recommendation for Dr. Thoibi Rublaitus

It is with immense pleasure that I recommend Dr. Rublaitus for the California Cradle-to-Career Data System Advisory Board. For the past seven years, Dr. Rublaitus has been a leading force in community engagement within adult education, demonstrating an unparalleled commitment to leveraging data for program success and equitable outcomes.

As the recipient of significant Workforce Investment and Opportunity, Workforce Development Department, and CalWorks grants for the Corona-Norco School District, Dr. Rublaitus has consistently demonstrated her ability to build and sustain robust community partnerships – a crucial element for the success of any data system aiming to serve diverse populations. Her leadership extends to her roles on the board of the Association of California School Administrators and as Vice President of Communications for the California Adult Education Administrators' Council.

I've had the privilege of collaborating with Dr. Rublaitus on numerous projects, including initiatives with the workforce boards of San Bernardino and Riverside counties, the California Department of Education, and the American Institutes of Research. Notably, her work with the State of California's Outreach and Technical Assistance Network focused directly on aligning data metrics for program evaluation, a skill directly relevant to the Cradle-to-Career Data System. Her doctoral thesis, which focused on improving adult education learner performance and persistence through collaboration with local and state agencies to build capacity and align data, further underscores her expertise in this critical area.

Dr. Rublaitus possesses exceptional communication skills, a proven track record of successful project leadership, and an extraordinary ability to forge strong relationships and partnerships between employers and government agencies. Her deep understanding of data's role in improving educational and workforce outcomes, coupled with her dedication to community collaboration, makes her an ideal candidate for this advisory board.

Sincerely,

Adele McClain

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6609**

**Name**

Scott Kuykendall

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Megan Lowery

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Letter-of-Support\\_Lowery-Megan.pdf](#)

May 16, 2025

Selection Committee  
California Cradle to Career Data System Community Advisory Board

Dear Selection Committee,

I am writing to offer my strongest recommendation for Megan Lowery, Director of the Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership at the Stanislaus County Office of Education, to serve on the California Cradle to Career Data System Community Advisory Board. Megan is a trusted leader, serving as the StanC2C Partnership Director for the past seven years, active within the StriveTogether Network, a proud representative of the Central Valley, and a respected voice in California's broader cradle-to-career movement. Her leadership driving systems change focused on improved economic mobility and using shared data to catalyze community-informed action make her an exceptional candidate for the Community Advisory Board.

As Director of the Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership, Megan leads cross-sector efforts in Stanislaus County to improve outcomes across education, health, and workforce systems. She brings stakeholders together, aligns strategies, and ensures decisions are shaped by actionable data and the priorities of the communities most impacted. Her innovative leadership earned her selection to the inaugural cohort of the Harvard EdRedesign Lab's Cradle to Career Fellowship, a national initiative supporting collaborative, place-based solutions for youth and families. In addition to her role in Stanislaus County, Megan is an active leader in the California Cradle to Career Coalition, comprised of sixteen regional networks working to improve cradle to career outcomes and systems statewide. The coalition's networks serve over one million CA youth and families across the developmental continuum—from birth through college and career. As part of the Community Advisory Board, Megan could activate the coalition's network, to ensure recommendations to the commission are community-informed and tools produced by the CA C2C Data System receive wide distribution and use in service of cradle-to-career system improvement.

The Stanislaus County Office of Education supports our school districts with access to real time data to make informed decisions, through our integrated data system solution Stan STATS. This work was initiated early on by StanC2C, recognizing the need for an integrated data solution at the local level. This is cross-divisional work for SCOE, with StanC2C providing community perspectives in the work. Locally we understand the importance of timely, actionable, and accessible data to driving evidence-based decision-making. Megan would bring not only a practitioner's lens, but also the ability to activate statewide networks and ensure the state's C2C

data system is accessible, actionable, transparent, and community responsive. Thank you for considering this exceptional leader. I would be happy to provide additional information in support of Megan's candidacy.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Scott Kuykendall.

Scott Kuykendall  
Stanislaus County Superintendent



**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6604**

**Name**

Katie Ochwat

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Adam Ochwat

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

Dear Members of the Selection Committee,

It is my sincere pleasure to write this letter in support of Adam's application to serve as a Community Engagement Board Member for California Cradle to Career (C2C). In his ongoing involvement with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Orange Coast, Adam has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to youth development, education equity, and community collaboration values that are deeply aligned with C2C's mission.

Over the past several years, Adam has been an integral partner to our organization. His participation in both in-person and virtual workshops for our youth has provided invaluable guidance in resume building, interview skills, and college readiness. These workshops are often the first time our high school students receive personalized, practical insight on navigating their futures and Adam's sessions are always among the most requested and highly reviewed.

Beyond the classroom, Adam has served as an exhibitor at our College and Career Fair, engaging directly with students, families, and educators about post-secondary options. His presence and approachability help young people feel heard and supported, no matter where they are in their journey. Additionally, Adam has participated as a panelist for scholarship interviews — not only for students, but also for our part-time youth development staff seeking professional advancement. His ability to listen with empathy while also providing constructive encouragement exemplifies the kind of leadership C2C is cultivating.

I've also had the opportunity to witness Adam's commitment at key events, such as organizational breakfasts and public announcements, where he consistently shows up to celebrate milestones, engage with stakeholders, and advocate for long-term solutions that uplift underserved youth and their families. Whether speaking with students, parents, or fellow professionals, Adam leads with integrity, curiosity, and genuine care.

Adam has proven himself to be a dedicated, equity-centered leader who listens first and acts with intention. I have no doubt that he will contribute meaningfully to the work of the C2C Community Engagement Board and help foster systems that work for all Californians.

Please feel free to reach out if you would like any additional context or information. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,  
Katie Richmond  
Sr. Director of Human Resources

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6588**

**Name**

Mark Thompson

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Karin Aure

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

See attached letter

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Letter-of-Rec fr-M-Thompson for-C2C-board 25-05-19.pdf](#)



May 19, 2025

**Kirk Shrum**  
*Superintendent*

**Board of Education**

Joy M. Naylor, President

Todd Oto, Ed.D., Clerk

Paul Belt

Kenneth DeJonge

Jacqueline A. Gaebe

Walta S. Gamoian

Randy Villegas, Ph.D.

Dear Members of the C2C Advisory Board Selection Committee,

I am pleased to write this letter of recommendation for Karin Aure, who is applying to serve on the C2C Community Engagement Advisory Board. I have had the privilege of working closely with Karin for the past five years, during which she has served as our Director of Assessment and Technology for the past two years and as the Global Learning Charter Principal for six years. Karin's exceptional skills, dedication, and commitment to education make her an ideal candidate for this teaching role.

Karin's career trajectory has been characterized by leadership, responsibility, and excellence in education. Prior to joining our institution, she served as a school site principal for many years, where she demonstrated strong leadership and a deep commitment to student success. Her extensive experience in education has given her a comprehensive understanding of both the technical and human elements necessary for success in the classroom.

Karin excels at conducting quality research and presenting her findings with precision and clarity. She has a remarkable ability to synthesize complex information and make it accessible to others, which will undoubtedly be an asset in service of C2C's mission. Her research-driven approach to problem-solving ensures that she remains at the forefront of current trends in education and technology, enabling her to offer relevant and timely support to her colleagues.

In addition to her technical skills, Karin is an exceptionally hard worker who consistently meets deadlines and exceeds expectations. She is thorough, thoughtful, and highly organized, ensuring that every task she undertakes is completed to the highest standard. Karin's organizational skills extend beyond her own work, as she actively supports our school site leaders with both assessment and technology. She is always willing to lend a helping hand, providing thoughtful and effective guidance whenever needed.

What truly sets Karin apart is her ability to connect with people. She is well-liked and highly respected by her peers, and her warm, approachable demeanor makes her an outstanding collaborator. Karin's ability to build strong, positive relationships is invaluable, and I am confident that her engaging teaching style will allow her to connect with students, motivating them to reach their full potential.

Karin's unwavering commitment to providing a high level of service and her genuine willingness to assist others make her an excellent candidate for this



**I BELIEVE IN, I BELONG IN... I AM VUSD.**





**Kirk Shrum**  
*Superintendent*

**Board of Education**

Joy M. Naylor, President

Todd Oto, Ed.D., Clerk

Paul Belt

Kenneth DeJonge

Jacqueline A. Gaebe

Walta S. Gamoian

Randy Villegas, Ph.D.

teaching role. I have no doubt that she will bring the same level of dedication, enthusiasm, and expertise to your advisory board as she has to her current position. She will undoubtedly be a tremendous asset to the C2C community.

Please feel free to contact me if you require any further information or additional insight into Karin's qualifications.

Respectfully,

[Redacted signature]

Mark Thompson  
Assistant Superintendent

Email: [Redacted email address]

 [www.vusd.org](http://www.vusd.org)

[Redacted contact information]



**I BELIEVE IN, I BELONG IN... I AM VUSD.**

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6572**

**Name**

Jesse Melgar

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Vincent Rasso

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to offer my support for Vincent J. Rasso's appointment to the Cradle to Career Data System Community Engagement Advisory Board. Vincent is a dedicated and deeply respected advocate whose leadership, especially as a first-generation college graduate from the Inland Empire, exemplifies the values of equity, access, and impact that this advisory board strives to advance.

Vincent's lived experience and professional expertise make him uniquely qualified to serve in this role. As Director of Government Relations for the University of California Student Association, he represents more than 230,000 UC undergraduates, shaping state and federal policy on behalf of students across California. From leading systemwide student advocacy during the pandemic, to advancing Cal Grant reform, Vincent has consistently shown a commitment to ensuring underserved students get access to opportunity.

His regional roots run deep. A proud graduate of UC Riverside, Vincent began his journey in public service through Senator Connie Leyva's Young Senators Program, and quickly became a leader on school site councils, district boards, and county advisory bodies. He has since worked with statewide organizations like the Campaign for College Opportunity, mentored Inland students through Kid City Hope Place, and led meaningful conversations with policymakers, coalition partners, and campus leaders—all while championing equity in college access and success.

What sets Vincent apart is his ability to use data as a tool for community justice. Whether managing student databases, analyzing demographic trends, or conducting qualitative interviews with students across California's colleges and universities, he brings a data-informed lens to every space he occupies. His work has consistently elevated the voices of low-income, first-generation, and racially diverse students to ensure policies reflect lived realities.

Vincent understands the promise and potential of the Cradle to Career Data System because he has lived it—and he has worked tirelessly to make that promise a reality for others. He is trusted across sectors, grounded in community, and committed to collaboration. I can think of few individuals better suited to serve on this advisory board and advance its mission with integrity and impact.

Please accept this letter as my enthusiastic recommendation and support of Vincent J. Rasso.

Sincerely,  
Jesse Melgar  
Board Chair,  
Inland Empire Community Foundation

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6546**

**Name**

Sudha Venkatesan

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Chelsea Ramirez

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Cradle-to-Career-C.-Ramirez-Signed.pdf](#)





SAN BERNARDINO CITY  
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
*Making Hope Happen*

Mauricio Arellano  
Superintendent

May 19, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for Mrs. Chelsea Ramirez's application to serve as a Community Engagement Board member for the Cradle to Career initiative. As Workforce Development Coordinator at our institution, Mrs. Ramirez brings a rare and invaluable combination of experience, vision, and commitment to community betterment that makes her ideally suited for this role.

With over 15 years of experience as a classroom teacher and high school administrator, Mrs. Ramirez possesses a deep understanding of the educational pipeline and the real-world needs of students preparing to enter the workforce. Her leadership in the school system was always marked by innovation, compassion, and a fierce dedication to student success. In addition to her education background, she is also a successful business owner, uniquely positioning her to bridge the often-siloed worlds of education and industry.

In her current role, Mrs. Ramirez is spearheading efforts to bring local employers to the hiring table, directly connecting industry leaders with the region's future workforce. She has built authentic partnerships with local community and business owners that not only create pathways for students but also help employers understand the value of investing in local talent. Her work has been instrumental in aligning workforce development with economic opportunity, creating sustainable outcomes for both students and the broader community.

Mrs. Ramirez's passion for this work is evident in everything she does. Her dual perspective as both an educator and an employer bring a holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities in workforce development. She will be an absolute asset to the Cradle to Career board, bringing insight, energy, and a collaborative spirit. I fully endorse her candidacy and look forward to the impact she will undoubtedly make through this important initiative.

Sincerely,



Dr. Sudha Venkatesan  
Director



**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6540**

**Name**

Laura Smith

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Chelsea Ramirez

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Letter-of-Rec\\_Chelsea-Ramirez.docx](#)



May 17, 2025

Dear Members of the Community Engagement Advisory Board,

I am honored to recommend Ms. Chelsea Ramirez for appointment to the Community Engagement Advisory Board within the California Cradle to Career Data System. In her current role as Workforce Development Coordinator for the San Bernardino City Unified School District (SBCUSD), Ms. Ramirez has made remarkable progress in strengthening the connections between education and employment in our region. Within just one year in this role, her leadership has created a substantial and lasting impact, benefiting students, employers, and our wider community.

Ms. Ramirez is a model of community affiliation, bringing a deep-rooted commitment to the San Bernardino region. As both a dedicated educator and a former local business owner, she bridges multiple perspectives with authenticity and insight. She consistently demonstrates a tireless passion for enhancing community outcomes and is widely recognized as a true ambassador of our city and county.

One of Ms. Ramirez's greatest strengths lies in her ability to solicit input and communicate needs across diverse stakeholder groups. Whether engaging with employers, students, educators, or parents, she actively listens and builds consensus to move initiatives forward. Her inclusive leadership style ensures that all voices are heard and that collaborative solutions are developed to address workforce readiness and educational alignment.

In her work with SBCUSD, Ms. Ramirez has made innovative use of student and educator tools to market the certifications, technical skills, and hands-on experiences our students gain prior to graduation. Through strategic messaging and employer engagement, she has helped elevate the profile of our high school graduates, positioning them as competitive candidates for local employment opportunities.

Finally, Ms. Ramirez is highly effective in forging and nurturing community partnerships. Drawing from her business acumen and local ties, she has created invaluable connections with regional employers and workforce agencies. These partnerships are actively shaping curricula and offering students real-world opportunities that align with industry needs—resulting in a win-win for both our youth and our economic development.

Ms. Ramirez's leadership, dedication, and vision make her an exceptional candidate for the Community Engagement Advisory Board. Her contributions will undoubtedly support the Cradle to Career mission of using data to strengthen pathways to opportunity for all Californians. I give her my highest recommendation and am confident she will bring energy, insight, and collaborative spirit to your board.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
Program Specialist, Secondary Education/College and Career  
San Bernardino City Unified School District  
[REDACTED]

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6521**

**Name**

Beth Cutter

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Thoibi Rublaitus

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

Dr. Thoibi Rublaitus has a wealth of relevant experience that would make her an excellent addition to the California Cradle to Career Data System Community Engagement Advisory Board. Dr. Thoibi N. Rublaitus is a highly qualified candidate for the Advisory Board due to her extensive experience and deep commitment to equitable career education in California. Her background as an immigrant woman of color who has navigated diverse career paths gives her a unique understanding of the challenges faced by underserved communities. Her professional expertise in education leadership, policy advocacy, and student engagement, combined with her active participation in numerous statewide councils and committees, demonstrates her dedication to systems change. Dr. Rublaitus's focus on data-driven initiatives, her proven ability to engage with immigrant, English learner, and low-income adult populations, and her experience in developing successful educational pathways make her an ideal candidate to ensure transparent, inclusive, and impact-driven systems for Cradle to Career.



**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6496**

**Name**

Roberto Cardenas

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Nina Torres

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

Roberto Cardenas  
Associate Director of LMU Upward Bound Programs  
Loyola Marymount University School of Education

[REDACTED]

To California Cradle-to-Career Data System Committee,

I am writing to offer my strong support for Dr. Nina Torres. Last year, we had the privilege of collaborating with Nina through Loyola Marymount University, where she played an essential role in supporting our LMU Upward Bound 12th-grade students. Nina led a series of college and career readiness workshops for our high school seniors, creating a learning environment that was not only informative, but also affirming and inclusive. Her sessions helped students feel more confident in their college application journey, including work on personal statements and insight questions. Nina has a gift for connecting with students —she brings warmth, purpose, and a deep commitment to equity into every space she enters. Her culturally responsive and student-centered approach gave our youth the tools and mindset to trust in their own voice, their writing, and their academic potential.

Beyond her direct engagement with students, Nina brings a wealth of knowledge and leadership from the nonprofit and education sectors. Through her consulting practice, Justice Seeds, she has developed educational programs, built strategic partnerships, and supported a range of mission-driven organizations across California. She regularly mentors' leaders of grassroots nonprofits, offers guidance in fund development, and creates thoughtful communications strategies that elevate community-based work. Her efforts are always grounded in a deep belief in the transformative power of education, especially for historically marginalized communities.

What stands out most about Nina is her clear and consistent passion for educational access and equity. Her work is rooted in justice, and she brings a collaborative spirit to every project she takes on. I believe she would be an asset to the California Cradle-to-Career Data System—not only because of her experience and insight, but because she genuinely understands the stories behind the data. She is someone who listens deeply, thinks critically, and uplifts student voices. Her presence would strengthen the system's ability to center equity and community in a meaningful and sustained way.

We are grateful to have had the opportunity to work with Nina, and I fully support her continued efforts to empower students and the communities that serve them.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,  
Roberto Cardenas

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Letter-of-Recommendation-Nina-Torres.pdf](#)

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6490**

**Name**

Marcia Russell

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Cristine Chopra

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

I am writing to support Cristine Chopra for Community Engagement advisory board member. Cristine is an equity leader dedicating her career to supporting cradle to career access to ensure all students have access to post-secondary success in any form desired. Cristine has worked in this area for decades and is a true regional and statewide leader. As a county office leader she brings a broad perspective and also understands the importance of community input and engagement in this work.

Cristine leads are K-16 Collaborative and brings together a wide variety of educational partners to support this work. She would be an asset to this advisory board.

Sincerely,  
Marcia Russell, Ed.D.  
Associate Superintendent, Educational Services  
Santa Cruz COE



**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6437**

**Name**

Jason Borgan

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Cristine Chopra

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Community Engagement

**Share your support here:**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to offer my strongest support for Dr. Cristine Chopra's appointment to the Cradle to Career Community Engagement Advisory Board. Dr. Chopra is a visionary leader whose unwavering commitment to equitable college and career readiness has had a transformative impact throughout Santa Cruz County and the broader Bay Area region through engaging in feedback and ensuring equitable access to the most relevant tools and resources.

In her role as Executive Director at the Santa Cruz County Office of Education, Dr. Chopra has led numerous innovative initiatives aimed at improving postsecondary outcomes for all students. One of her most impactful contributions has been her leadership of the Santa Cruz County College and Career Collaborative, a countywide initiative focused on aligning K-12 education with workforce and higher education opportunities. Through this work, she has convened diverse stakeholders to co-design student-centered strategies that support seamless transitions from high school into meaningful postsecondary pathways as well as support and promotion of the state CCGI initiatives.

Dr. Chopra has also been instrumental in driving efforts to leverage longitudinal data to inform continuous improvement. She has built and nurtured a regional coalition focused on integrating and acting upon National Student Clearinghouse data to better understand and support students' postsecondary journeys. This has enabled educators and leaders to make data-informed decisions that are both timely and equitable.

In addition, Dr. Chopra plays a key leadership role in the Bay Area K-16 Regional Collaborative, a California-funded initiative focused on building and sustaining regional pathways that connect education and workforce. In her role overseeing coordination for this initiative, she fosters deep collaboration between K-12 districts, community colleges, four-year institutions, and regional employers, always centering equity and access in her approach.

As a current member of the Cradle-to-Career Data and Tools Advisory Board representing our region, I can personally attest to the importance of having thoughtful, equity-driven leaders at the table. As I near the end of my term, I believe Dr. Chopra is an ideal fit to continue this work and represent our region's interests with clarity, compassion, and strategic insight. Her extensive experience with data-informed practices and collaborative systems-building make her an invaluable asset to this work.

I wholeheartedly endorse Dr. Chopra's candidacy and am confident she will bring valuable insights, dedication, and collaborative spirit to the Cradle to Career Community.

Sincerely,



Jason Borgen  
Chief Technology & Innovations Officer  
Santa Cruz County Office of Education  
Member, California Cradle-to-Career Data and Tools Advisory Board

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Chopra-Rec.docx](#)

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6649**

**Name**

Elizabeth Estes

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Josh Pollack

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Data and Tools

**Share your support here:**

Please see attached Breaking Barriers letter of support. Thank you for your time and attention to this submission.

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [Josh-Pollack-Recommendation-Letter-CTC.pdf](#)



**Cradle to Career Data and Tools Advisory Board  
Letter of Support for Josh Pollack, Strive Together**

Breaking Barriers submits this letter in strong support for Josh Pollack's application to the Cradle to Career Data and Tools Advisory Board. Breaking Barriers is a nonprofit housed in the University of the Pacific-McGeorge School of Law. Its Executive Director Elizabeth Estes is a thirty plus year California children's lawyer with expertise in the development of supportive sustainable programs for cross system youth in California, including juvenile dependency, delinquency, students with disabilities, and youth failing into parallel systems. She also has been a gubernatorial appointee to California's Advisory Commission on Special Education. Breaking Barriers is a collaborative of thought leaders and subject matter consultants, who specialize in supporting multi-agency service design and implementation efforts toward the realization of an integrated ecosystem for California's children, youth and their families. Most recently, Breaking Barriers authored California's Behavioral Health Ecosystem Working Paper for HHS and is currently leading California's Transforming Together Initiative, along with being a member of California's State Technical Assistance Team for Community Schools Implementation.

For the past 8 years, Breaking Barriers has been consulting with Josh Pollack regarding his expertise in the development of effective, comprehensive, accessible and equitable integrated systems for California's children and youth, particularly including the concrete data and tools necessary to realize a cradle to career understanding of California's children, youth and their outcomes. In Breaking Barriers opinion, Josh is one of the most expert thought leaders in this work in California and would be an excellent member of the Cradle to Career Advisory Board. His work at Strive Together, along with his prior roles, have made him uniquely qualified to participate on this advisory Board as he has gathered decades of experience in communities and in the systems that serve them in not only how to build effective cradle to career ecosystems for California's children, youth and families, but how to build the tools and data necessary to consistently evaluate and capture that information. Josh is equally one of the most open, dynamic, and considerate experts in the space.

With pleasure, Breaking Barriers submits this letter of recommendation. For additional information, Elizabeth Estes can be reached at [REDACTED]

**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6615**

**Name**

Fabiola Gonzalez

**Email**

[REDACTED]

**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Megan Lowery

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Data and Tools

**You can upload your letter of support here**

- [F5FC\\_Letter-of-Recommendation\\_Megan-Lowery-C2C-Data-CAB.pdf](#)





May 22, 2025

Selection Committee  
California Cradle to Career Data System Community Advisory Board

Dear Selection Committee,

On behalf of First 5 Fresno County, a dedicated partner in the Fresno County Cradle to Career (C2C) Partnership, we are pleased to offer our recommendation for Megan Lowery, Director of the Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership, to serve on the California Cradle to Career Data System Community Advisory Board. As an active member of the Fresno County C2C Partnership, we at First 5 Fresno County know firsthand the critical role that timely, accessible, and actionable data plays in driving equitable outcomes for young children and families.

The California Cradle to Career Data System has the potential to transform how communities across the state align resources, measure progress, and respond to the needs of those they serve. Ensuring this statewide data system's advisory board is informed by community voices—especially from historically underrepresented regions like the Central Valley—is essential to its success.

Megan has been a strong and collaborative partner to the Fresno County C2C Partnership and will continue to do that for families across the state through this opportunity. Her commitment to equity, data transparency, and community engagement aligns with the values we uphold in our local work. Megan's participation on the Community Advisory Board would help ensure that the tools and recommendations developed by the state's data system are grounded in the realities of local implementation and responsive to the needs of families across California.

Thank you for considering this recommendation, which reflects our shared commitment to advancing the goals of the California Cradle to Career Data System through strong regional partnerships and a deep belief in the power of data to drive change.

Sincerely,

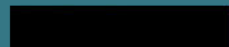


Fabiola González, MPA  
Executive Director

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Fabiola González

COMMISSIONERS  
Luis Chavez, Chair  
Kari Gilbert  
Hugo Morales

Sabrina Beavers  
Susan Holt  
Marcia Sablan



**2025 Advisory Board Letters of Support : Entry #  
6482**

**Name**

Artie Padilla

**Email**



**Name of Advisory Board Applicant**

Megan Lowery

**To which Advisory Board are they applying?**

Data and Tools

**Share your support here:**

I'm in full support of Megan being on the Advisory Board for C2C. Megan knows our valley communities well and would do an amazing job to speaking to the needs of our families, CBOs and Institutions. She's well versed in collective impact efforts and cross sector collaborative efforts. She'd bring great value to the overall voice of the Board.