

Community Engagement Advisory Board

Durriya Ahmed (she/they), Social Justice Learning Institute



Durriya Ahmed is a first-generation Bangladeshi-American from Anaheim, California, and a recent graduate from the University of California, Los Angeles with a degree in History and Geography and a minor in Public Affairs. Currently, Durriya is a Youth Justice Fellow with the Social Justice Learning Institute based in Inglewood, California, examining the intersections between labor and educational access for low-income communities of color. While in undergrad, Ahmed was a 2023-2025 Obama-Chesky Voyaged for Public Service, EdTrust Higher Education Data and Policy

Implementation Intern, UC Student Association Campus Climate Officer, and GENup Chief of Media and Director of Higher Education Policy.

Omar Butler (he/him), New Door Ventures



I am Omar Butler, a proud native of San Francisco's Bayview Hunters Point community and first-generation college graduate. I serve as Chief Executive Officer of New Door Ventures, a Bay Area nonprofit supporting Transition-Age Youth on their path to economic mobility. I have over 20 years of leadership experience in college access and success and workforce development landscape. I also serve on the board of directors for College is Real, a Richmond-based nonprofit supporting first generation college students and the San Francisco Children's Council which believes every San

Franciscan's deserves quality early care and education so they can reach their full potential. I hold a BA degree in Black Studies from California State University, Long Beach.

Abigail Grattidge (she/her), California Polytechnic State University, Humboldt



Residing in the most northern region of California, Abby serves as the Career Advisory for students in the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences at Cal Poly Humboldt. In this role, she is dedicated to guiding students as they explore diverse career pathways, define their goals, and pursue purposeful opportunities. She is especially committed to advocating for students as they navigate institutional barriers, the hidden job market, and the unique economic challenges of rural communities. A proud first-generation four-year college graduate, she earned her Bachelor of Arts in

Communication from Humboldt State University. She is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Public Sociology, with scholarly interests in rural sociology, economic sociology, and community development.

Juliet M. Maestas, EdD (she/her), Hoopa Valley Tribe



I am Juliet McKinnon Maestas, I currently serve as the Executive Director for the Hoopa Valley Tribe. I hold a Bachelor of Arts in Native American Studies from the University of California, Davis, as well as a Master's in Higher Education Leadership and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from California State University, Sacramento. My research examines the intersection of settler colonialism and boarding schools on present day postsecondary aspirations among California Native American high school students, centering tribal culture and community values.

Danielle McCullough-Carmesin (she/her), Ferndale Unified School District



Danielle Carmesin serves as Superintendent and Principal of Ferndale Unified School District, where she has led for three years, focusing on student success, teacher support, and strong community partnerships. With over 18 years in education, she brings experience as a teacher, instructional leader, school administrator, and private business owner, dedicating to improving systems and creating safe, thriving schools. Under her leadership, Ferndale Elementary was named a California Distinguished School in 2025. Mrs. Carmesin is honored to serve on the California Cradle-to-Career

Advisory Board, supporting statewide efforts to strengthen educational equity and opportunity.

Vincent J. Rasso (he/him), University of California Student Association



Vincent J. Rasso is a Community Engagement Advisory Board Member and the Director of Government Relations at the University of California Student Association (UCSA). He manages the state and federal policy agenda on behalf of over 230,000 undergraduate UC students across the state. He formerly managed statewide student affairs and system policy engagement at the Campaign for College Opportunity, graduated first generation in his family from the University of California, Riverside, and was an elected statewide officer for UCSA during the COVID-19

pandemic, responding to a multitude of emerging crises while bridging students into policy advocacy. Vincent was born in Riverside and raised in the Inland Empire, where he has championed regional community engagement efforts across multiple affiliations and was even awarded 30 under 30 by Senator Eloise Gomez-Reyes.