



FOURTH ANNUAL
SYMPOSIUM ON FAIRNESS AND EQUITY ISSUES
IN CHILD WELFARE TRAINING

SPEAKERS AND PRESENTERS

James R. Bell, J.D., has been the Director of the W. Haywood Burns Institute for juvenile justice fairness and equity since 2001. He and his colleagues at the institute work with systems and community stakeholders to reduce disproportionality of youth of Color in the juvenile justice system in many jurisdictions throughout the country. Mr. Bell also has 20 years of experience as a litigation attorney at the Youth Law Center in California.

Susan Brooks, M.S.W., Director of the Northern California Training Academy, has nearly 25 years of extensive experience in social services, specializing in substance abuse, child welfare services, collaboration, team building, and supervision. For seven years, Ms. Brooks supervised the multi-disciplinary team for children's services in San Mateo County. She was the founder and executive director of the non-profit San Mateo County Perinatal Council, a non-profit community collaborative.

Soledad Caldera-Gammage, M.S.W., is the Curriculum, Program, and Evaluation Specialist of the Central California Training Academy at CSU, Fresno, with duties that include the coordination and oversight of curriculum development. Ms. Caldera-Gammage also coordinates Central Academy's training and mentoring evaluation projects and the recruitment, development, and evaluation of all academy trainers. Additionally, Ms. Caldera-Gammage is a Trainer and Curriculum Developer for the Specialized Foster Parent Training project at CSU, Fresno.

George Del Rio is a former foster youth who was taken into kinship care at age 5. He was placed in Gay Lesbian Adolescent Social Services (G.L.A.S.S.) group homes when he was 15 and emancipated at age 17. He now lives in Laguna Beach, where he is in his second year of community college and also working toward certification in Drug and Alcohol Counseling.

Jamie Lee Evans, B.A., is a 39-year-old foster care system survivor and long-time community builder and organizer for social justice. She is an M.S.W. candidate at San Francisco State University and the director of the Y.O.U.T.H. Training Project.

Regina Goree, M.S.W., an Assistant Regional Administrator for Los Angeles County DCFS, feels blessed to have the opportunity to share and partner with families and grass roots organizations. She embraces change and looks forward to pioneering such great work.

Darryn Green, age 21 and gay, is an undergraduate at CSU Bakersfield majoring in psychology and minoring in philosophy and gender studies. From ages 14 to 18, he was in care in foster homes, kinship care, and a group home. Mr. Green has been a member of the California Youth Connection Kern County Chapter since entering foster care.

Oscar Haynes, B.A., Standard Secondary Teaching Credential, is recently retired after 34 years teaching high school social studies, specializing in government and economics. Prominent in his thoughts are notions of vision and achievement through commitment, cooperation, and collaboration.

Hon. Marlene Hertoghe, J.D., began working in the juvenile justice system in 1991 while attending the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law. Following graduation, she continued that work, providing legal representation to parents, children, foster parents, and relatives in both dependency and delinquency proceedings until she was appointed to the bench in 2004.

Phyllis Jeroslow, M.F.A., MFT, Training and Curriculum Specialist at CalSWEC, has coordinated the fairness and equity training symposium since 2004. She also orchestrates the development and revision process for California's standardized common core curricula for new child welfare workers with the Regional Training Academies. Ms. Jeroslow has explored culture and gender identity issues as a documentary filmmaker, thesis researcher, and clinical counselor in a multi-cultural community healthcare setting.

Barrett Johnson, LCSW, Regional Training Academy Coordinator at CalSWEC, has worked extensively on major statewide training initiatives related to the Federal Child and Family Services Review, AB 636, and the CWS Improvement Activities. He has a long-time interest in cross-cultural clinical social work practice, and has focused CalSWEC's attention on issues of fairness and equity within California's Child Welfare System.

Susan Manzi is a survivor! Her experiences have empowered her to make radical shifts in the foster care system. In Humboldt County, she is a trainer for the foster and kinship care education program; co-chair of the California Youth Connection chapter; and co-chair of Transition Age Youth. She also plays a vital role in the Family to Family initiative and the youth transition action team. Ms. Manzi plans to make history on the frontlines of progressive change in the foster care system.

Pamela Marques, Ph.D., LCSW, teaches in the M.S.W. program at CSU, Stanislaus and is a clinical supervisor, working with children, adolescents, and their families. Dr. Marques develops curriculum and provides training in cultural competency in child welfare and mental health services. She also trains supervisors to use supervision to develop multicultural competence with their supervisees.

Monica McCurdy, M.S.W., has been a Training Coordinator with the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Service's Training Section since 2001 and with DCFS since 1994. She assisted in the development and implementation of training on Civil Rights, Team Decision Making/Family Group Decision Making, Substance Abuse, Concurrent Planning, the Transitional Independent Living Plan, Structured Decision Making, and Disproportionality in Child Welfare. Ms. McCurdy also worked in the Adoption Division's Placement and Recruitment Unit and with the specialized recruitment program One Church One Child of Los Angeles.

David Meyers, J.D., is an attorney with the Center for Families, Children & the Courts. His responsibilities include curriculum development and training facilitation for attorneys engaged in juvenile dependency practice. Mr. Meyers has been practicing dependency law since 1995, and has represented parents, children, and Child Protective Services in California and Arizona. He is also licensed to practice in the Pascua Yaqui Nation.

Lisa Molinar, M.A., is Co-Director of California Consulting. She started in child welfare in Australia in 1987 as a child welfare social worker. For seven years, she was a Staff Development Specialist in Contra Costa County designing the New Worker Training Unit, writing and monitoring the county System Improvement Plan, and facilitating the Comprehensive Assessment Tool work group. Ms. Molinar co-developed several innovative systems to address disproportionality in child welfare, including two series, “Cross Cultural Communications” and “Engaging Families Through Fairness and Equity.”

Barbara Needell, Ph.D., is a Research Specialist at the Center for Social Services Research at the University of California, Berkeley and Principal Investigator of the Performance Indicators for Child Welfare Services in California/California Children’s Services Archive project funded by the California Department of Social Services and the Stuart Foundation. She has worked extensively with statewide and county-specific administrative data and currently provides technical assistance to states and counties as they implement the Family to Family Initiative developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

John Owsley, B.S., is the CEO of the Pomona Valley Youth Employment Services, created more than two decades ago to serve the growing needs of a community experiencing major demographic changes. Mr. Owsley is a visionary with a passion for families in the community, a focus on rectifying inequity and injustice, and a commitment to lifelong community service.

Sandy Perez-Diaz, B.A., has been working for Los Angeles County DCFS since 2001 as an Emergency Response and Family Preservation social worker. She is also interning with the Training Section. She has a certificate in Child Maltreatment and Family Violence and is completing her M.S.W. at California State University, Los Angeles.

Elizabeth Quinnett, M.S.W., is the Program Coordinator at the Public Child Welfare Training Academy of the Academy for Professional Excellence. Her previous experience includes more than 20 years in child welfare as a social worker, supervisor, and manager. She currently trains on a variety of subjects, including cultural competence in the child welfare system, Team Decision Making, Family Group Decision Making, and family engagement.

Michael Roosevelt, M.S., Education Specialist, Administrative Office of the Courts, develops and provides programs for judges, court administrators, and staff on fairness, bias, and access to justice in the State of California.

Claudia Thompson, A.A., was asked one Christmas 23 years ago to foster children for the holidays. This marked the beginning of her life-long journey to nurture the children she has been blessed to care for, including those requiring one-on-one services in specialized programs and those in a small bed-home. She also cares for moderately delayed children under the auspices of the Regional Center.

Kevin West is a former foster youth from Santa Cruz County. He works in retail to pay the bills, but his heart lies in social work and empowering foster youth. Mr. West is president of his Independent Living Skills Program (ILSP) club and volunteers for many non-profit organizations. He aspires to become a psychologist and work with foster youth.

Shannan Wilber, J.D., is the Executive Director of Legal Services for Children, a non-profit organization providing legal and social work services to children and youth in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Leslie Zeitler, LCSW, Training and Evaluation Specialist, coordinates and implements CalSWEC's statewide training and evaluation efforts, and provides technical assistance to California's Regional Training Academies and counties. She is currently investigating the development of ways to measure change in trainees' attitudes, beliefs, or values as a result of training. Prior to joining CalSWEC, Ms. Zeitler provided direct social work services for six years to low-income children and families through the San Francisco-based Legal Services for Children.