

Lived Experience Advisory Board Member Biographies



Annalee Trujillo

Annalee Trujillo has over 30 years of experience providing professional support for the Pala Band of Mission Indians. She serves as the Executive Director of Pala Housing Resource Center with 27 years of expertise in Indian Housing. As an advocate for Tribal Housing, Annalee represents Indian Country as the Vice-Chair for Nevada/Cal Indian Housing Association, serves on the Board of Directors for the California Coalition for Rural Housing, and is on the Equity Policy Advisory Board and Tribal Housing Action Taskforce for California Housing Partnerships. In addition, she continues to lead the action for change within the State by working with partners, hosting roundtables, and providing input for resolution.

Annalee was raised by her grandparents on the Pala Indian Reservation. Her people are the Cupeno's, originally from Warner Hot Springs. Annalee's great and great-great grandmother were amongst those forcefully removed from their homelands and relocated to Pala, the "Trail

of Tears”. Essentially the first people of California were the first to experience the epidemic of homelessness by action of the State.

She is very passionate about helping her people, including other Tribal communities throughout Indian Country. She grew up experiencing housing insecurities as well as witnessing some of the highest rates of drug and alcohol addiction among youth and adults within her Tribe. Annalee was married for 17 years to someone who struggled with alcohol use, whom at the age of 42 died from liver failure, leaving her with 4 children to raise on her own. Her only brother passed away from an overdose at the age of 27.

Annalee is committed to helping her community, focusing on the youth by developing the Pala Youth Development and Investment Program—a program designed to assist youth become responsible adults. The program, in collaboration with Pala Social Services, provides resources for suicide prevention, drug and alcohol addiction, housing insecurities, and other pertinent resources.



Melanie Robledo

Melanie is an advocate for the humanity of all people experiencing homelessness. She leverages her lived experience to bring awareness, bridge community resources, and encourage policy change.

Melanie spent five consecutive years battling homelessness, mental health, trauma, addiction, and institutionalization in the criminal justice system. These experiences were formative for developing her commitment to providing comprehensive supportive services that meet system-impacted individuals where they are at.

Currently, Melanie is the Housing Project Manager at the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO), a national re-entry organization. She was initially connected to CEO during her last incarceration. Through this program, Melanie successfully overcame adversity and secured housing and employment upon release. In her current role, Melanie combines her passion for supportive services and wisdom from her lived experience to deliver effective housing navigation to individuals embarking on their re-entry journeys.

Melanie has a passion for supporting her community, and offering her volunteer services to street outreach teams. When she's not working or volunteering, you can usually find her at the soccer field, enthusiastically cheering on her two teenage children. Melanie's long-term goal is to obtain a degree in Public Health.



Marjorie Beazer

Like the proverbial diamond, Marjorie Beazer is a woman whose form, grid, and hue have been hewn, shaped, and reshaped by the pressures, hills, and valleys of her extraordinary journey. She is a mother of seven, grandmother of five, an honorably-discharged soldier, and emerging local and international social change, health & wellness, violence prevention, trauma-informed entrepreneur with a focus on life and business coaching. Marjorie describes her experience this way: "They say what don't kill you makes you stronger...but I'm still on the fence on that one. What I can agree to is that it brings with it opportunities to

take the pressure and transform into that diamond that will grow, shine, and thrive."

Marjorie is committed to policy development with a lens of harmonization, reform, and sustainability. She is a passionate advocate for families, youth, justice, leadership, accountability, and transparency. She is committed to doing her part to create places and spaces where people can enjoy just being.

Marjorie is vice chair of Sacramento County's Persons with Lived Experience Committee, as well as a community leader with SacACT's Housing Federation. She was a member of the SacACT Team that was instrumental in passing Senate Bill 567, which strengthened tenant protections against evictions. She also served as Chair of Jamaica's award-winning Correctional Services Technical Committee (TC) in 2023. The TC, which includes 25 local, regional, and international experts, is focused on developing innovative, first-ever correctional services standards for the country.

Marjorie is a life-long lover of learning, storytelling, and knowledge sharing. She holds a BA in Communication Studies with a minor in Government from CSU Sacramento. She also has embarked on her journey to add a Master of Arts degree in Human Development to that accomplishment.

Marjorie believes each person should have access to a quality of life and outcomes that match their wants and needs--the only limitation should be their desire to go for it! She wants to contribute in even some very small way to this vision of the future and wants others to be magnified and magnificent because of her work.



Robert Williams

Robert's advocacy is grounded in relationships and community. He deeply values the connections of trust he has built within the unhoused community in Humboldt County, in his work and in his personal life. He is excited to bring both

his lived experience and his professional experience to the work of the Cal ICH LEAB.

As an outreach worker with the County of Humboldt and the City of Eureka, and as a permanent supportive housing case manager for Arcata House Partnership, Robert's greatest successes have come from connecting with people. He invests time and effort into building trust, whether with unhoused community members or local service providers. This lets him connect people to the support and resources they need quickly, and with the best chance for success.

Robert is passionate about addressing the immediate and long-term needs of people living outside, preventing displacement of people living outside, and improving access to mental health care.



Audrey Pearson (AP)

Audrey Pearson is currently serving as a Team Lead/Case Manager at a South Los Angeles Homeless Outreach Agency in Service Planning Area (SPA) 6. In her 6-year tenure, Audrey continues to be a trailblazer and innovative outreach worker who utilizes her lived experiences and assets to approach her daily tasks as a beacon of light for the unhoused population. Audrey is also a mental health advocate, LGBTQIA++ activist, poet, and writer. She began her work in the LGBTQIA++ community 25 years ago and eventually became the first recognized female President of St. Louis Black Pride in 2011. Audrey received her Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Missouri, St. Louis in Psychology, with a Minor in Sociology and a Certificate in Women's Studies.

Audrey has worn many hats in her 30 professional years serving the community—supporting low-income families, youth in juvenile detention centers, adults and children with severe mental health challenges, and veterans. Audrey is a multi-dimensional visionary and community organizer who founded a community service organization,

InTheLyfe St. Louis, in 2013. The 100-person volunteer led organization cooked homemade hot foods, collected clothing, and provided unhoused individuals and families with entertainment organized by the community at large. Audrey is a strong believer in community involvement to combat the mental health and housing crisis.

Since moving to Los Angeles in 2017, Audrey has dedicated her time to helping end homelessness through housing vulnerable subpopulations. Audrey prides herself in her zeal and intentionality to help heal and be a catalyst for change, supporting those experiencing a lack of resources as they navigate systemic hurdles.

Audrey has been working to pursue her dreams as a screenwriter, while continuing to center her activism and working on the frontlines with LA's unhoused population. During the pandemic, Audrey attended a Film Certificate program through the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) Extension Program to harness her craft. Audrey is currently working on a few projects and is looking forward to someday having her scripts and documentaries shared with movie goers.



Monique Guerra

Monique, a 25-year-old with an inspiring story of resilience, faced the challenges and housing instability well into college., Monique overcame homelessness by reaching out for resources, finding employment, and eventually securing transitional housing while leveraging loans for stability during college.

Graduating from the University of California Riverside with dual majors in Education and Spanish, Monique engaged actively with various organizations

such as California Youth Connections, Youth Teaching Project, EAOP, and UCR Guardian Scholars. Interning with the City of Riverside's Homeless Solutions Department, she gained insights into the multifaceted challenges faced by homeless individuals.

As an AmeriCorps VISTA for United Way of the Inland Valleys, Monique aided foster youth in achieving economic mobility. Presently, she serves as the Homelessness Youth Coordinator at the Housing & Workforce Solutions - Continuum of Care Division. Her role involves running and managing the Youth Action Board (YAB), aiming to empower members with lived experiences of homelessness to advocate for change and increased youth participation within the Continuum of Care. Monique's mission is to pave the way for her siblings and enable them to follow a positive trajectory.

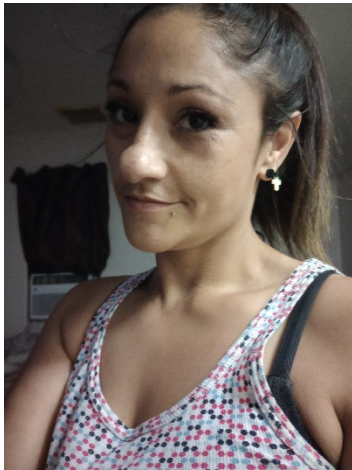


Pixie Popplewell

Pixie Popplewell (they/them) grew up in Texas as an out queer human, ultimately leading to their first experience of homelessness due to discrimination. Even after several more instances of housing insecurity, they were able to obtain a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Human Services from William Penn University and a Masters of Social Work degree from California State University, Sacramento.

After becoming an MSW, Pixie led the effort to launch the first LGBTQ+ focused shelter and formal host homes program for youth experiencing homelessness in Sacramento. Pixie is acutely aware how fragile financial and housing stability can be as they experienced homelessness again during the first year of the pandemic, even after becoming a homeowner.

Pixie is currently the Project Director of the California Homeless Youth Project, a research and policy-based initiative of the California Research Bureau, implementing the first integrative data hub on the current state of youth homelessness. They are starting their Doctorate of Social Work program at the University of Southern California and hope that further pursuing their education, combined with the honor of being on the Cal ICH LEAB, will provide the ability to more strategically integrate their lived experience and profession to empower marginalized communities to create an inclusive pathway to healing and liberation.



Mary Maldonado

Mary grew up in a small town outside of Fresno called Raisin City, surrounded by countryside and grape growers. Her early life on a farm full of animals shaped her character by teaching her to value hard work and responsibility. She still loves the feeling of being out in open spaces, and the peace and quiet that comes with it.

She currently lives in an encampment community in Hanford, CA. She is proud of the way her community takes care of itself, keeping the encampment clean and sticking by each other. Her work with the Cal ICH LEAB is inspired by her own lived experiences and by the lives of the people around her. She sees an urgent need for resources and funding to help people find places to live inside, but also to protect those who are forced to live outside. She wants to work for dignity, respect, and basic needs like water, food, and safe places to be for people in encampments.



Caressa Smith

Caressa Smith is a graduate of the Human Services Program at SRJC and a Certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor. She served as the lead Case Manager for Women's Recovery Services in Santa Rosa for several years before moving to Lake County in 2020 to live closer to her family in Clearlake. Since then, she has served as the Case Manager at Hope Center before being promoted to Program Manager. A popular speaker on the power of second chances, she grew up surrounded by addiction, the wreckage it causes, but also recovery. She has experienced homelessness for many years and is now a Lake County homeowner. Caressa was formerly incarcerated, and her criminal record has been expunged. She is a member of the Lake County Continuum of Care. She has turned her pain into purpose and lived experience into lived expertise. She is passionate about helping people overcome barriers to living their best life. Caressa is a student at Woodland Community College Lake County Campus. Her goal is to transfer to Cal Poly Humboldt and to earn a degree in Social Work. Caressa is motivated to become a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.



Danielle Francisco

Danielle Francisco comes from Stockton, California and is currently majoring in Psychology two hours away at California State University, Monterey Bay. Danielle is passionate about working with vulnerable populations. Shortly after moving to Monterey County, she shifted from working with children with disabilities to working with the unhoused community.

She currently works as a Youth with Lived Experience Coordinated Assessment and Referral System Coordinator for the Coalition of Homeless Service Providers where she significantly redesigned the Youth Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT). The redesign aimed to create an equitable and accessible tool that connects unhoused youth and young adults (YYA) to appropriate resources quickly and in a trauma-informed manner. She also serves as a Youth Action Board member, advocating for YYA to improve systems and service delivery.



Jaylene Sanchez

Jaylene Sanchez received her bachelors in Global Health. Her current position is an Advocacy Program Manager at San Diego Housing Federation, a nonprofit that is focused on advocacy in increasing affordable housing and homelessness policy solutions. She manages two programs, the Homeless Experienced Advocacy and Leadership Network and the Residents United Network. The former is composed of lived experience individuals whose focus is to further develop and improve policy solutions on homelessness in the San Diego region, while the latter is focused on statewide advocacy to engage and empower residents for initiatives on affordable housing.

Jaylene experienced homelessness during her first year of college. Her family of 5 was evicted from their home and struggled to overcome the rental barriers to finding another place to live. During this time, she hopped from friends and family's homes and eventually started living in her car. She was also attending college when she experienced homelessness. However, this did not stop her from continuing her education. She was able to find her way out of homelessness and started a job near her university. Now she is able to use her lived experience to assist others in her work at the San Diego Housing Federation for advocacy on homelessness policy solutions.