

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Jon Ford – Director of Strategic Initiatives, Vitalyst Health Foundation

As Director of Strategic Initiatives, Jon leverages three decades of for-profit and non-profit experience to develop an expanded, innovation-centered network of stakeholders focused on all aspects of health and well-being. Key to his work is development of the Live Well Arizona movement and the Elements of a Healthy Community framework. Jon continuously engages influencers and partners in furthering policy and systems change, and is particularly focused on fostering relationships that engage new sectors and catalyze innovation. Working with the leadership team, he is responsible for crystallizing and developing new initiatives that further Vitalyst’s mission and goals. Jon also drives development and production of Vitalyst’s earned, paid, online and offline communications – including media outreach, publications, websites, podcasts, webinars and newsletters. [Contact Jon Ford.](#)

Terry Benelli – Executive Director, LISC Phoenix

After studying Political Science at Arizona State University Terry became involved in neighborhood issues and spent her volunteer time with community development organizations. As an entrepreneur who has started three businesses, she realized the significance of asset building through micro lending. That passion to help low-income entrepreneurs led her to Neighborhood Economic Development Corporation (NEDCO) where she served as Executive Director for eight years. She led the organization to become the prominent micro business lender in Mesa and the Valley. While growing NEDCO’s lending, Terry had the vision for a vibrant and connected Mesa, which led NEDCO to undertake community engagement. Now at LISC Phoenix, as Executive Director, Terry continues her leadership role in neighborhood revitalization.

In 2014 Terry was unanimously appointed to the Mesa, AZ City Council to fill an interim term. She remains active in the City of Mesa as a member of the Economic Development Advisory Board. As a Fellow of the Flinn Brown Civic Leadership cadre of future state leaders, she continually strengthens her skills to address Arizona’s long-term issues, with special interest in urban economic development strategies. [Contact Terry Benelli.](#)

Joselyn Cousins – Senior District Manager, Field Group; Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco

Joselyn Cousins manages the Community Development Field Group at the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, which partners with financial institutions, community-based organizations, and government agencies to address pressing community development needs impacting low-income neighborhoods and households. Joselyn also serves as the regional manager for Arizona and Nevada where she provides technical assistance and training on successful initiatives and programs addressing affordable housing, healthy communities, asset building, small business development, and access to financial services.



Joselyn has an extensive background in community development in the private and public sectors. Prior to joining the San Francisco Fed, Joselyn was the vice president of community development for United Way of Southern Nevada where she directed and managed the community impact team in developing strategies to address local issues in the areas of education, financial stability, and health. She has many years of banking experience working as a Community Reinvestment Officer for both small and large financial institutions in Nevada. Joselyn earned her bachelor's degree in administration from California State University, San Bernardino. [Contact Joselyn Cousins.](#)

Suzanne Pfister – President and CEO, Vitalyst Health Foundation

Suzanne Pfister is the President and CEO of Vitalyst Health Foundation. It is a \$120 million public foundation focused on Arizona health policy, technical assistance for non-profits and strength-based community engagement and systems change. She and her colleagues are working on a variety of projects, including support for the Cover AZ Coalition, which is focused on Medicaid and federal marketplace enrollment, assistance to cities in Arizona to integrate health into land use planning and community development, and promoting health innovation.

Prior to this, she was Vice President of External Affairs for Dignity Health Arizona. In this capacity she was responsible for federal, state, and local government relations and outreach to the business community for the Arizona market. She also was the Vice President for Marketing and Communications at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center for many years. Suzanne also served as a community relations consultant and partner for two small businesses for more than a decade, serving clients throughout Arizona. She also has worked with state, regional and local governments, managing diverse issues such as energy conservation, air quality, transportation, taxpayer services and higher education.

Suzanne has a Master's Degree in Public and Environmental Affairs from Indiana University and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science/Urban Studies from Occidental College.

She currently serves on The Arizona We Want Institute's Board of Advisors, as well as the board of directors for the Friends of Public Radio Arizona, the Arizona Grantmakers Forum, Greater Phoenix Leadership, the Arizona Town Hall, and the Maasai Education, Research and Conservation Institute, USA. She also is a member of the Arizona Bioscience Roadmap Steering Committee, and the Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce's Healthcare Leadership Council. [Contact Suzanne Pfister.](#)

Serena Unrein – Director, Arizona Partnership for Healthy Communities

Serena Unrein serves as the Director of the Arizona Partnership for Healthy Communities, a statewide collaboration comprised of nonprofits, businesses, foundations, and government agencies from the housing, transportation, economic development, public health, and



community development sectors. The vision of the Partnership is that all communities in Arizona should be healthy places to live. Serena has led the Partnership since it launched in 2014. For the past 15 years, Serena has led nonprofit efforts to create change in Arizona and make measurable improvements in the health and livelihoods of Arizonans.

Prior to joining the Partnership, Serena worked for the Arizona Public Interest Research Group where she successfully built coalitions with nonprofits, small businesses, and elected officials. She also conducted research and wrote extensively about the changing transportation preferences of Arizonans. Serena began her career at the Arizona Students' Association, where she led successful efforts to increase state-based financial aid and to pass legislation improving college affordability. Serena graduated from Arizona State University with a bachelor's degree in Marketing. [Contact Serena Unrein.](#)

Melissa Jones, MPA – Executive Director, Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII)

She is passionate about creating the conditions that increase quality of life and makes life more fair for more people. Her work focuses on the intersection of social determinants of health, social inequity, and well-being. Her experience includes work in municipal government and non-profits, in the Bay Area's large and small cities. Melissa is an active community member in Oakland and also serves on the Association of Bay Area Government's Regional Planning Committee, which advises on regional planning issues.

Before joining BARHII, Melissa served as Senior Program Officer at Boston Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC), where she launched and ran Boston LISC's Resilient Communities Resilient Families (RCRF) Initiative. The initiative works to ensure that residents of Boston's Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan neighborhoods benefit from the rising tide of transit and other public investments. During her tenure, RCRF engaged several thousand residents and non-profits in neighborhood planning. The program has invested millions of dollars to fund affordable housing, leadership development, Family Financial Opportunity Center programs, and a local entrepreneurship pipeline program to ensure residents' financial lives are improving. She was awarded the LISC's President's award in 2014 for her work on comprehensive community development.

Melissa has additional experience funding and implementing programs focused on community economic development, family financial stability, education, and civic empowerment. Specifically, she has served in youth empowerment organizations, as Program Specialist for the City of Alameda, and as Program Analyst for the City of Oakland's Oakland Fund for Children and Youth. Early in her career, she served as Director of Professional Development for Partners in School Innovation where she trained staff to support school reform efforts in San Francisco Unified, San Jose Unified, and Oak Grove Unified school districts. [Contact Melissa Jones.](#)



Andrea Bell – Housing Integration Administrator, Mercy Care

Andrea oversees all housing programs for all of Mercy Care, including over 3,000 Permanent Supportive Housing subsidies. She leads the plan's homeless/housing efforts focusing on the Social Determinants of Health, increasing affordable housing to serve those with mental illness, and leveraging Medicaid covered services to support housing permanency. Throughout her career, Andrea has developed strategic plans targeted to end homelessness and implement efforts to increase housing supply, access to housing, and improve outcomes related to health and stability. [Contact Andrea Bell.](#)

Adrienne Z. Udarbe, MS, RDN – Executive Director, Pinnacle Prevention

Adrienne is the founder and Executive Director of Pinnacle Prevention, an Arizona-based nonprofit organization dedicated to growing healthy families and communities. She is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and has received numerous national and state recognitions as a nutrition leader. Adrienne's work in systems transformation is grounded in 15 years of experience working in the public sector, with a focus on population health. She is a social innovator fueled by a passion for advocacy and good food. [Contact Adrienne Udarbe.](#)

Emily Yetman – Executive Director, Living Streets Alliance

Emily is a native Arizonan and one of the founding members of Living Streets Alliance. She moved to Tucson in 1999 and received her Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Landscape Architecture degrees from the University of Arizona. Her Master's work focused on bicycle networks designed for different comfort levels and abilities; something that Living Streets Alliance advocates for on a regular basis. Emily is passionate about making Tucson a great place to live by providing quality public space and transportation options for everyone. She's a big supporter of grassroots organizing and believes that people can come together to make positive change in their community. [Contact Emily Yetman.](#)

Linda Oddonetto – Economic Development Director, City of Globe

Linda is one of the co-conveners of the Cobre Valley Collaborative, which includes residents and leaders from the communities of Globe, Miami, and San Carlos. The Cobre Valley Collaborative has ambitious goals ranging from improving educational opportunities, to increased inventory of quality affordable housing and development of accessible recreation opportunities. From the beginning, the collaborative team has embraced leadership from multiple sectors such as government, small business, education, the arts, youth and heavy industry. [Contact Linda Oddonetto.](#)

Sheila Sjolander – Assistant Director, Division of Public Health Prevention Services, Arizona Department of Health Services

Sheila Sjolander is the Assistant Director of the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), leading Public Health Prevention Services for the past eight years. She oversees a budget of more



than \$200 million and over 60 public health programs, including maternal and child health, nutrition and physical activity, injury prevention, chronic disease, primary care, and tobacco prevention and cessation. In her 17 years at ADHS, Sheila has been a leader in integration of prevention programs, strategic planning, and the state's work to reduce prescription drug and opioid overdose. She received her Master of Social Work degree from Temple University.

[Contact Sheila Sjolander.](#)

Judith Gilligan – Prevention Services Director, Cochise Health & Social Services

Judith Gilligan is the Director of Prevention Services at Cochise Health & Social Services, a role that she has served in since 2011. The Prevention Services Division includes WIC, Health Start Community Health Worker Home Visiting and a variety of health promotion programs including tobacco & chronic disease prevention, teen pregnancy prevention, worksite and school wellness and policy, systems & environmental change. As a part of her position, she was instrumental in implementing Healthy Cochise, the Cochise Healthy Communities Initiative, in 2016, involving a community health improvement coalition of partners including over 45 agencies and organizations in Cochise County. This initiative conducted a Community Health Assessment, drafted a Community Health Improvement Plan and implemented Healthy Community Committees in nine local communities in Cochise County. Judith earned a Master's Degree in Social Work from Syracuse University in 1983. She was employed by The Salvation Army Syracuse Area Services (TSA SAS) for over 25 years. TSA SAS is the second largest not-for-profit human services agency in central New York, serving approximately 35,000 people annually with a variety of human services. [Contact Judith Gilligan.](#)

Jami Snyder – Director, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS)

Jami Snyder serves as the director of AHCCCS, overseeing Arizona's Medicaid and CHIP program, including the provision of acute, behavioral health and long term care services and supports to more than 1.8 million Arizona residents at an annual cost of \$14 billion. She was appointed by Governor Doug Ducey on January 5, 2019 after having served as the agency's deputy director since December 2017.

With more than 20 years of public and private sector experience in the health and human services industries. Ms. Snyder's areas of expertise include regulatory oversight, policymaking and leadership development. Prior to joining AHCCCS, Ms. Snyder served as Medicaid Director for the state of Texas, managing a program covering 4.7 million enrollees at a cost of \$29 billion. She held posts as Chief Operating Officer of the University of Arizona Health Plans, an Operations Administrator at AHCCCS, and a Bureau Chief at the Arizona Department of Health Services.

Ms. Snyder is a 2013 Flinn-Brown Civic Leadership Academy Fellow and holds master's degree in political science from Arizona State University as well as a bachelor's degree in political science from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota.



Manik Bhat – CEO, Healthify

Manik Bhat is the CEO of Healthify, a New York based company on a mission to build a world where no one's health is hindered by their need. Manik co-founded Healthify while working as a community health worker in Baltimore where he witnessed, first hand, how closely poor health outcomes and the increasing cost of care were tied to unmet social needs such as food insecurity and affordable housing. Today, Healthify helps large healthcare organizations identify and manage the unaddressed social needs of their most vulnerable populations. Healthify delivers a leading solution to enable healthcare organizations to find community services for their patients, track social needs across their population, and coordinate care with community-based services. As a partner to health plans, social service agencies, and provider networks working with Medicaid and Medicare members, Healthify enables integrated care to fulfill the promise of a value-based healthcare system. Healthify's platform and services are used across the country by thousands of staff and have been featured by TEDMED, the Center for Healthcare Strategies, KPMG, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and Forbes.

John C. Jones – Community Liaison – Social Determinants of Health, Promedica

John C. Jones is a proven leader with expertise in diversity, inclusion, board governance, strategic community building and leadership development. He has served in various roles for ProMedica across 14 years, his most recent assignment being with the social determinants of health team.

John previously served the community as the President and CEO of the Greater Toledo Urban League from 2008 – 2012. He is a certified diversity practitioner, which he received from American Hospital Association's Institute for Diversity. He has an Executive Master's from the University of Toledo (2013) and a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and Finance from Central State University (1996).

John is an ordained minister and serves as an Associate Minister at the Christian Temple Baptist Church under the leadership and pastorate of his father, Rev. Charles E. Jones. Preaching and ministering since he accepted his call in 1999, John clearly defines who he is through his ministry service and this is the guiding principle for what he does in his professional life. John resides in Toledo and is blessed to have three beautiful children, Naomi Elise, Cathryn Elisabeth and John Michael. [Contact John Jones.](#)

Nicolas de la Fuente – Desert Botanical Gardens

For the past 11 years, Nicolas has worked in three different countries as a convener and educator. This time abroad gave him a deep understanding of the global cycles of poverty. Nicolas is excited to be developing a 19-acre community food hub in south Phoenix called Spaces of Opportunity. [Contact Nicolas de la Fuente.](#)