

COMMISSIONERS & STAFF



LA'TOYA COOPER

Supervisory District: 2nd

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Policy Areas: Child Welfare

Bio: La'Toya Cooper is an outstanding and vibrant young leader. She shadowed Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell during a California Youth Connection event in 2018. She credits that experience and participation in The RightWay Foundation as the key reasons she desires to lend her voice on the Youth Commission. La'Toya hopes to inspire other youth who have been impacted by the foster care system and is excited to bring her ideas and insight. She has a genuine enthusiasm and will represent youth and the Second District well.

Super Power: Connection



JOSHUA ELIZONDO

Supervisory District: 3rd

Pronouns: he/him/his

Policy Areas: Entertainment, Education

Bio: Joshua Elizondo is a brilliant leader and creative and has advocated for systems-impacted youth for over ten years. He has completed 9 Associate Degrees from Santa Monica College and is currently completing double Bachelor of Arts degrees at Pepperdine University. He has collaborated with many organizations through his advocacy efforts, including Spirit Awakening, MYOI, PBS SoCal 's-To Foster Change, and California Youth Connection, where he currently sits on the Board of Directors. Joshua also founded The Foster Bunch, an organization aimed at changing the narrative of the child welfare system. He is eager to use his diverse background to give back to the community.

Super Power: Connecting with people

COMMISSIONERS & STAFF



AMANDA HERNANDEZ

Supervisorial District: 5th

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Policy Areas: Workforce Development, TAY

Bio: Amanda Hernandez is a brilliant and kind advocate for youth experiencing foster care. As a current employee with the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, Amanda will provide vital insights on navigating County departments and systems. Amanda was nominated by Supervisor Kathryn Barger and is excited to explore County policies and programs; and is ready to partner with various departments and organizations. She is interested in exploring workforce development opportunities for systems-involved youth and plans to use her time on the Youth Commission to make a difference within and beyond her community.

Super Power: Creativity



JACOB "BLACC" JACKSON

Supervisorial District: 2nd

Pronouns: he/him/his

Policy Areas: Youth Development

Bio: Jacob Jackson is a dynamic advocate and leader who has supported the Youth Commission since its development in 2018. He took part in selecting the name for the Youth Commission and even spoke alongside Supervisor Janice Hahn to make the Youth Commission official. He is exceptionally passionate about juvenile justice and is committed to becoming a more excellent advocate, organizer, and public servant long after serving as a Youth Commissioner.

Super Power: Speed

COMMISSIONERS & STAFF



RICARDO ORTEGA MARTINEZ JR.

Supervisory District: 5th

Pronouns: he/him/his

Policy Areas: Higher Ed, Financial Independence, Immigration

Bio: Ricardo is a savvy public servant and passionate advocate for foster youth. His diverse experiences in state and local policy will benefit the Youth Commission and the youth it serves. He has been active as a Legislative Committee member with California Youth Connection, was appointed to Assemblymember Mike A. Gipson's Commission on Immigration, and is currently completing his Bachelor of Science degree at CSU Dominguez Hills. Ricardo currently works with Children's Institute Inc. as a Peer/Parent Partner to support clients' mental health journey. Ricardo hopes to streamline processes for systems-involved youth to receive financial and healthcare services.

Super Power: Healing (physical & mental pain)



EZEKIEL NISHIYAMA

Supervisory District: 4th

Pronouns: he/him/his

Policy Areas: Juvenile Justice

Bio: Ezekiel Nishiyama is a brilliant advocate and organizer in the juvenile justice community across Los Angeles County. As a policy advocate with the Anti-Recidivism Coalition and LA Youth Uprising Coalition, he leads discussions on improving outcomes for justice-impacted youth across the County. Ezekiel is well respected and stands out among his peers as an activist and leader at a young age. He believes very strongly in the ability of youth to lead the reimagination of the County's child welfare and juvenile justice systems. He will be an effective leader for the Youth Commission and a bridge to various organizations.

Super Power: Resilience, Belief in Oneself

COMMISSIONERS & STAFF



BRITTIANNA ROBINSON

Supervisory District: 4th

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Policy Areas: Juvenile Justice

Bio: Brittianna is a resilient and outgoing advocate with a powerful story and can connect with diverse communities. Through her experience in programs like Saving Innocence Project and Survival Leadership Academy for Youth (SLAY), she has used her voice in improving systems for youth across the County. Brittianna has a clear vision for improving the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and is excited to share her ideas. She will be a strong advocate and powerful public speaker for the Youth Commission.

Super Power: Generosity



MYRIAH SMILEY

Supervisory District: 2nd

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Policy Areas: Child Welfare, Housing

Bio: Myriah Smiley is an “architect,” one of six youth leaders who helped conceptualize and create the Los Angeles County Youth Commission. Her advocacy, intelligence, and graciousness are widely regarded in the child welfare system and other community organizations. Myriah was voted Miss Compton in 2018 and hopes that her story and experiences will be an example of other youth interested in impacting their communities. Myriah is currently studying Culinary Arts at LA Harbor College.

Super Power: Empathy, Relationship Building

COMMISSIONERS & STAFF



LUISA FLORES URRUTIA

Supervisorial District: 5th

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Policy Areas: Public Health & Wellness

Bio: Luisa Flores Urrutia is a compassionate and innovative young leader who will bring a unique perspective to the Youth Commission. Her experiences navigating the child welfare and immigration systems will provide tremendous insights. Luisa is incredibly passionate about education and wellness for systems-involved young people and will bring an inspiring voice to the Youth Commission. She is a City of Pasadena Public Health Department Community Ambassador, young adults advocate, and case manager. Luisa helps young adults at risk or suffering from housing insecurity get connected with sustainable housing in this role. As a current student at CSU Los Angeles, she plans to graduate with her Bachelors of Science degree in Kinesiology in 2021 and apply to the Physical Therapy doctorate program at USC.

Super Power: Happiness, Gratitude, Discipline



FLORENCIA "FLO" VALENZUELA

Supervisorial District: 1st

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Policy Areas: Universal Basic Income, TAY

Bio: Flo Valenzuela is an enthusiastic and brilliant advocate for youth involved in the foster care system. Flo is currently studying sociology at UCLA and believes that it is fundamental for youth to co-envision and co-create the systems intended to support their lives. She was nominated by Supervisor Hilda L. Solis and is an extremely accomplished young woman who wants to use her voice to inspire youth currently involved in various systems. Flo hopes to remove transportation barriers for systems-involved youth and is excited to share solutions on the Youth Commission.

Super Power: Protecting Those I Love

COMMISSIONERS & STAFF



ANGELA YOUNG

Supervisorial District: 3rd

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Policy Areas: Kin-gap, Permanency

Bio: Angela Young is a confident, accomplished, and brilliant advocate. She has been very active in the Youth Commission's initial workgroups and has lent her voice on several important projects as the Youth Commission launches. Angela brings a wealth of professional and academic experiences. She hopes to lend her voice and experiences on various topics, including education and professional development opportunities for system-involved youth. A team player with a bright smile, Angela is excited to partner with her colleagues on the Youth Commission to reimagine the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Super Power: Relationship Management, Empathy



ASHLEY CARRILLO-LOPEZ

Executive Assistant

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Policy Areas: Youth Advocacy

Bio: Ashley Carrillo-Lopez, she/her, is a 21 year old student at Long Beach City College, transferring to California State University Long Beach as a Social Work Major where she will get her Masters. Ashley is extremely passionate about uplifting and providing assistance/resources to Systems Involved Transitional Age Youth. As a Former Foster Youth herself, Ashley believes sharing her experience with youth in similar paths can offer great outcomes. Ashley has a great amount of administrative and clerical experience in and out of the county – starting as a Youth Worker for the Department of Children and Family Services, where her interest in serving systems involved youth began, and now serving as a Career Development Intern for the Board of Supervisors, under the Youth Commission. Ashley is eager and hopes to be able to give back resources and assistance that she received once as a youth in care.

Super Power: Spreading Joy

COMMISSIONERS & STAFF



ERICA REYNOSO

Executive Director, Youth Commission

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Policy Areas: Juvenile Justice/TAY/Mental Health

Bio: Erica Reynoso has proudly served children, families and communities in Los Angeles for over 25 years. She earned an MSW degree from the School of Social Work at the University of Southern California (USC) and a Ph.D. in Forensic Psychology at the Center for Forensic Studies in Fresno, California. She is a dually licensed professional who holds licenses as a clinical social worker and a clinical psychologist.

Erica began her career as an in-home counselor, supporting families within Family Preservation, a program with the Department of Children and Families Services (DCFS). To follow, Erica served youth and families within the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH), Juvenile Justice setting. As a therapist, she provided direct mental health services throughout the juvenile halls and camps for more than 10 years. Later, Erica led efforts within the Department's Transition Age Youth (TAY) Bureau, focusing on program development and implementation; integrated treatment; substance abuse; evidence-based therapies; trauma-informed care and outcomes, related to Juvenile Justice service provision.

Beginning in 2008, Erica led anti-human trafficking efforts in LA County as the DMH rep. She led the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth (CSECY) Program which focused on implementation of mental health programs, protocols, and services for sexually exploited youth. Through partnerships with various County Departments, Board Offices, community agencies, faith-based partners and the survivor community, countywide services and programs were established.

Prior to joining the Probation Oversight Commission (POC) team in 2021, Erica served as a Supervising Psychologist at Campus Kilpatrick, a residential camp focused on using trauma-informed; skill-building and therapeutic approaches in working with Probation youth. Through her role at the POC, she served as liaison to the LAC Youth Commission, where she proudly and intently currently serves as the Acting Executive Director.

Super Power: People Connections

COMMISSIONERS & STAFF

CONTACT US

To get in touch with our staff or one of the
Commissioners directly please email
youthcommission@bos.lacounty.gov