

Background on Policy Consultant – LeSar team members



Jennifer LeSar, CEO and Founder

Jennifer LeSar combines a background of more than three decades in community development, real estate development and investment banking with a deep working knowledge of eco-system change management and organizational strategy.

She is the CEO/Founder of several systems change and sustainable communities-focused firms.

LeSar Development Consultants, founded in 2005, works specifically on systems change interventions to end the housing affordability and homelessness crises. In 2017, Ms. LeSar launched the Housing Policy Leadership Academy (HPLA), an education and engagement program for leaders and influencers designed to forge comprehensive regional housing solutions and identify actions needed to effectuate structural change and solutions.

Ms. LeSar earned an MBA in real estate and finance and an MA in Urban Planning from UCLA, and a BA from Bryn Mawr College in political science and economics. In 2014, she completed the Executive Program in Social Entrepreneurship at Stanford Graduate School of Business.



Natalie Donlin-Zappella, Director, Partnerships & Climate Practice

Natalie Donlin-Zappella has worked at the intersections of community development, health, and housing in the nonprofit sector for nearly 20 years in roles as an organizer, planner, educator, and facilitator. She currently serves as the Director of Partnerships and Climate at the Global Policy Leadership Academy, leading initiatives to advance effective systems change to today's most pressing challenges—housing affordability, equity, and climate.

Bringing deep experience in working across sectors with nonprofits, public agencies, and community development sectors, Natalie currently directs and guides initiatives focused on collaborative governance and resilient housing to advance equitable outcomes in housing, infrastructure, and environmental justice. In prior work as a Principal at LeSar Development Consultants, Natalie led the Policy and Legislative Research and Applications Team and client projects related to housing policy, sustainability and equitable community development, and community-driven affordable housing preservation.

Before joining LeSar, Natalie worked for Enterprise Community Partners in Southern California for over 5 years, supporting anti-displacement, neighborhood and regional development, resilience, and sustainability initiatives. She received her dual master's degree from University of Michigan Ann Arbor in urban planning and social work. In Michigan, Natalie held positions with the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice, and the Program on Intergroup Relations at University of Michigan. Natalie has formal training in social justice education and intergroup dialogues, and has extensive experience in designing and facilitating coalitions, workgroups, stand-alone workshops, and participatory research practices to identify shared priorities and solutions.

In 2019, Natalie was recognized as an *Impact-Maker to Watch*, nominated by the Chief Resilience Officer of the Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti.



Jacqueline Woo, Manager, CA Legislative Analysis

Jacqueline is passionate about using storytelling, policy, and data analysis to develop and preserve affordable and sustainable communities. She has worked on housing and homelessness policy in Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti's office, with Citi Community Capital, and with the Colorado-based COVID-19 Eviction Defense Program. Prior to focusing on this issue, she worked in the private sector and has extensive project/product management, business strategy, and big data analytics experience. Jacqueline earned her MPA from Columbia University and bachelor's degree in Economics from Emory University.



Edwin Peart, Associate, Housing Team

Edwin Peart is passionate about housing affordability and homelessness prevention. Before joining LDC, Edwin worked as a Program Manager with Washtenaw County (Ann Arbor, MI) supporting and managing projects for its Board of Commissioners, including work on equity-related policies and affordable housing initiatives that aim to safeguard vulnerable populations. He also served as Chair of the United Way Committee in Ann Arbor, working on safety-net initiatives that support school-aged youth, older adults, and housing and homelessness prevention efforts. He holds a dual master's degree in Public Policy (MPP) and Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) from the University of Michigan.