



2023 IN-PERSON

# PACT CONVENING

*Redefine*

**APRIL 17-18TH, 2023**  
**SACRAMENTO, CA**



**2023 Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking Speaker Bios**  
**April 17th-18th, Grand Hyatt, Sacramento, CA**

***April 17th***

**Morning Plenary: Welcome and Opening Message “Redefine”, Regency F Ballroom**



**Melissa Gomez** *she/her*, PACT Project Director, Child and Family Policy Institute of California

Melissa Gomez has contributed 20 years of service to the anti-trafficking movement. Her international and local leadership has been instrumental in establishing multi-disciplinary coalitions and in coordinating comprehensive care to survivors of both labor and sex trafficking in Europe and the Central Valley, California. As the Chair of the Central Valley Freedom Coalition and Program Manager of Fresno’s Central Valley Against Human Trafficking, she contracted with

partnering agencies to provide services throughout six central valley counties. Additionally, she acted as regional liaison to facilitate 24-7 trauma response in partnership with Polaris’ National Human Trafficking Hotline. Melissa is dedicated to the advancement and integration of diverse voices to pioneer systemic change and co-create pathways of empowerment. In 2018 Melissa was selected to participate in the first cohort of the Human Trafficking Leadership Academy administered by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, where she contributed to national guidance on survivor informed practices within federal grant programs. In 2020, Melissa was recognized with an Outstanding Service Award by the CDSS for her efforts to increase awareness and improve services to survivors of child labor trafficking. Ms. Gomez is currently the acting Director of the Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking Project for the Child and Family Policy Institute of California. In partnership with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), she facilitates a statewide model of cross-coordination strengthening child welfare programs serving vulnerable children and youth within California. Melissa resides in Ripon, California and is the proud mother of two creative boys.



**Kathy Givens, *she/her*, Cultural Inclusion and Human Trafficking Consultant** is a wife, mother, author, playwright, advocate, consultant, non-profit founder/director, member of the United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking, and directs the [Safe and Sound prevention program](#) serving Monterey and Santa Cruz counties. Read Kathy's full Bio [Here](#) to learn more about our amazing keynote speaker.

### **Session I Building Resilience Through Harm Reduction: Working with Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth People, Regency F Ballroom**



**Dr. Brandi Liles *she/her*, Psychologist, CAARE Diagnostic and Treatment Center, UC Davis Children's Hospital**  
Dr. Brandi D. Liles is a licensed clinical psychologist at the CAARE Center in the Pediatric Department of the UC Davis Children's Hospital. Over the course of her career, Dr. Liles has developed an expertise in working with children, youth, young adults and their families who have experienced trauma and maltreatment including commercial child sexual exploitation. She has worked extensively with socially, culturally and economically diverse and disadvantaged children and families. In addition to providing evidence-based assessment and treatment to

clients, she provides training and consultation for students, interns, community providers, and child welfare and juvenile justice system partners in a variety of topics related to trauma-responsive care.



**Dr. Dawn Blacker *she/her*, Interim Co-Director, Training Director, Psychologist, CAARE Diagnostic and Treatment Center, UC Davis Children's Hospital**

Dr. Dawn Blacker is a clinical psychologist and Interim Co-Director of Mental Health Services at the UC Davis CAARE Center as well as the Training Director of the APA-Accredited Psychology Internship in the Department of Pediatrics, University of California Davis Children's Hospital. Over the past 23 years, Dr. Blacker's primary clinical and research interests have focused on issues of abuse and neglect within

the family context as well as issues related to training clinicians in evidenced based practices. As a senior psychologist, Dr. Blacker provided individual therapy services such as Parent-Child Interaction Therapy, Trauma Focused Therapy, and Dialectical Behavior Therapy as well as Evaluation services for clients with very diverse social, cultural and economic backgrounds. As the Training Director of the CAARE Center, Dr. Blacker spends much of her time providing training and consultation to early career staff through the APA accredited Psychology Internship. She is also a master trainer of Parent Child Interaction Therapy and has trained others in PCIT for numerous clinicians. Dr. Blacker is also involved in the training of professionals including clinicians on providing services for sexually exploited youth. She oversees 4 contracts with Sacramento County (Probation; Child Protective Services; Behavioral Health; Public Defenders' Office) that provide training and



services for sexually exploited youth and their caregivers. Dr. Blacker has also co-developed a web course on sexual exploitation as well as a Caregiver Skills Group curriculum for caregivers caring for youth with a history of sexual exploitation. She is currently working on two project for California Department of Social Services focused on content for resource families and professionals working with CSEC youth.

### Harm Reduction Q&A Panelists



**Angelica Zuniga** *she/her*, PACT Consultant, CSEC Action Team Survivor Advisory Board

Angelica Zuniga is a survivor and an advocate for human trafficking victims. Currently, Angelica volunteers in Twilight Treasures, a group that reaches out to women working in the commercial sex industry. She is a wife and a mother of 5. She works closely with several organizations including the Department of Human Services, Kern County Probation, and Common Spirit Health.



**Leeland Turner** *he/him*, Analyst, California Department of Social Services, Child Trafficking Research and Policy Unit

Lee is an analyst with the Child Trafficking Research and Policy Unit, CDSS. At his current position, and previously as a Policy Manager with Community Care Licensing (CCL), he has worked on improving the understanding and consistency of harm reduction implementation internally at CDSS and externally with CDSS partners. He sees harm reduction as an essential element to comprehensive and holistic risk assessment, as well as an integral part of trauma informed care.

### Session II Breakouts, Regency F Ballroom

#### Option 1: Transforming Child Welfare Through Youth Engagement



**Andrea Sobrado** *she/her*, Associate Director, Child and Family Policy Institute of California

As the Associate Director of the Child and Family Policy Institute of California, Andrea provides project and team-based coaching, facilitation, and consultation to counties and teams, leveraging the CPM and other innovations to improve practice and system effectiveness and to counteract racialized outcomes for families, children, and among those engaged in the work.

She has worked in the social services arena for 25 years, including experience as a social worker, program manager, and child welfare director, and as the director of a non-profit organization. She participated on the Center for Social Policy's Institutional Analysis team in Fresno, Santa Clara, and in the Pomona Region. She has also provided leadership and implementation coaching for CCTA, UCD, Casey Family Programs, and the Academy for Professional Excellence. Andrea earned a Bachelor's

Degree from the University of California at San Diego and a Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of Southern California.



**Leann Eddy** *she/her*, Program Review Specialist, Department of Social Services, San Luis Obispo County

Leann Eddy is a Program Review Specialist with San Luis Obispo County Department of Social Services and serves as the Human Trafficking Program Coordinator. She also sits on the Child and Youth Human Trafficking Subcommittee, the San Luis Obispo County Anti Human Trafficking Task Force and the Trauma Informed SLO Collaborative. Leann is committed to prevention and early intervention in serving vulnerable children and families in her community. Her passion and commitment to service has resulted in the development, expansion, and provision of critical programs in San Luis Obispo County. In particular, she has been pivotal in the collaboration to bring The Cool Aunt Series, a Human Trafficking prevention curriculum, to the county. Leann is the Youth Engagement Project (YEP) Program Coordinator and has successfully expanded the program into its second year. Her work with the YEP program supported the development of a Foster Youth Education Mentor Program, which provides early intervention to children in middle school by working with a youth with lived experience. Further, Leann has been instrumental in the county's efforts to address Labor Trafficking and develop a coordinated community response to Trauma Informed services and supports in San Luis Obispo County. Leann's creative and enduring commitment to service has supported and improved outcomes for children and families in her community.



**Pilar Ortega** *she/her*, Youth Ambassador, Department of Social Services, San Luis Obispo County

Pilar Ortega is a former foster Youth and youth advocate from San Luis Obispo County, CA. Pilar is a youth ambassador and chair president of the San Luis Obispo County Youth Empowerment Program (YEP) where she uses her lived experience of growing up and aging out of the foster care system to empower and inspire others. Through her work with YEP, Pilar engages with youth, school systems, and schools to facilitate the human trafficking curriculum, The Cool Aunt Series. In addition to this work through YEP, Pilar has also supported projects related to cultural inclusivity and community advancement to provide ongoing support to child welfare agencies. Pilar Ortega is also an Americorps partner where she serves as a youth mentor and partners with county agencies focused on family strengthening and linkages. As a youth mentor, she provides peer support to foster and at-risk youth. Pilar is passionate about making a difference in the foster care system and in the community. In her free time, Pilar is an artist and enjoys going to the beach with her family and friends where she can be outdoors and in nature.

## **Option 2: Breaking the Silence: Understanding addressing Trafficking of Boys, Males, Trans Individuals and Gender Minorities**



**Russell Glenn Wilson** *he/him*, PACT Consultant

Russell recently graduated from the University of California, Berkeley with a degree in Anthropology and South & Southeast Asian Studies. As a Ronald E. McNair Scholar, Russell completed a research project in Cambodia looking at the factors of resiliency for male survivors of commercial sexual exploitation.

Russell recently worked with the National Human Trafficking Training and Assistance Center as a Human Trafficking Leadership Academy Fellow (HTLA).

Russell has also spent extensive time living and traveling throughout South and Southeast Asia, providing him with a deep understanding of the cultures as well as knowledge of the systemic mechanisms of human trafficking in those countries. As a CSEC survivor and former foster child, Russell has a unique and insightful perspective on the issues that male trafficking victims and survivors face in their daily lives. It is through these experiences that Russell brings authenticity and passion to his research and his life

## **Option 3: Flipping the Script: How Advanced Recovery Planning Can Increase Survivor Engagement**



**Courtney Desilet** *she/her*, Retired Law Enforcement Investigator, Resource Specialist II, Child Sex Trafficking Recovery Services Team, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

Courtney Desilet is a Resource Specialist II on the Child Sex Trafficking Recovery Services Team (RST) at the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). RST is a team of regionally assigned Resource Specialists who provide case-based assistance and support to child welfare professionals and other multidisciplinary team members in the development of trauma-informed and victim-centered recovery plans for survivors of child sex trafficking who are reported missing to

NCMEC. Prior to joining the team at NCMEC, Courtney was a sworn law enforcement investigator in Connecticut and served as the law enforcement liaison to Connecticut's Human Anti-Trafficking Response Team (HART). During this time, she facilitated countless investigation into child sex trafficking, CSAM, and other forms of child abuse. Courtney has provided training and technical assistance throughout Connecticut and nationally on child sex trafficking identification and response. She is pursuing her degree in Public Safety Administration and is passionate about bridging the gap between law enforcement and child welfare.

**April 18th**

**Morning Plenary: Where We're At Now - History and Evaluation of the CSEC Program, Regency F Ballroom**



**Cheryl Treadwell**, Branch Chief, Safety, Prevention, and Early Intervention, California Department of Social Services

Cheryl has over 23 years of career experience working at the Department of Social Services in the Children and Family Services Division, on several programs and initiatives that impact providers, resource families, foster youth and tribes. In April of 2021, she was appointed the Chief of the Safety, Prevention and Early Intervention Branch which is organized to focus the State efforts on the front end of the child welfare system's continuum built on prevention framework. Her education spans both the social work and legal field along with her extensive experience working in the community and in the human services for more than 30 years.

Cheryl has worked closely on several initiatives over the years such as wraparound, systems integration, advancing the developmental screening of all young children, working with tribes and implemented California's first federal child welfare waiver demonstration project. She is the proud mother of three wonderful adult children, fraternal twins Zeric and Genesis, age 39 and Elijah, age 28 who are the impetus behind her work in the human services field and her commitment to serve the underserved and less fortunate. She has experience as a foster and adoptive parent and continues to be a strong advocate for persons with intellectual disabilities, volunteers in her community and church, and loves to hike.



**Kelly Winston**, LCSW, Chief, Family Centered Safety and Support Bureau, California Department of Social Services.

Kelly Winston is Chief of the CDSS Family Centered Safety and Support Bureau. Kelly has worked in the Child and Family Services Division of CDSS since 2009, overseeing policy implementation to address the needs of trafficked youth and families at risk of entering the foster care system. Kelly has 20 years of experience as a child welfare worker and clinician, contributing to her passion for supporting programs that aim to preserve and support families.



**Ivy Hammond** *she/her*, MSW, PhD Candidate, Project Director, UC Berkeley Child Welfare Indicators Project

Ivy Hammond is Project Director of the SB 855 Commercially Sexually Exploited Child (CSEC) Program evaluation. Prior to joining Berkeley's California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP), she served as a child welfare social worker for Los Angeles County's CSEC Specialized Program. Her current research focuses on system-level responses to CSE and cross-system outcomes for transition-age youth and nonminor dependents.





**Kia Dupclay**, *she/her*, CSEC Action Team Survivor Advisory Board  
Kia Dupclay is a human rights advocate with the passion to end homelessness and human trafficking. As a survivor of both, she has dedicated herself to make changes within the community and legislation. As an electrical engineering major, Kia focuses on integrating technology and nonprofit to dismantle broken systems and assist in creating unconventional solutions to the way services are provided. Kia has won the Los Angeles County Building Bridges Award, S.C.R.I.P.T Award, Real Unsung Hero Award and has spoken across the country. Kia sits on for boards and as a part of the NYCL's CSEC Advisory Board, she was recognized by the California State Senate. As a part of LAHSA's youth advisory board and adult advisory board, she received awards from the Mayor of Los Angeles. She is the executive director of Free 2 Dream Big, an organization that provides outreach, training and support for survivors of human trafficking. With love, compassion and integrity, Kia fights against injustice and strives to provide trauma informed care to every person she meets. Her favorite saying is "Be like Nike and Just Do It!"



**Jaclyn Chambers** *she/her*, Research Associate, Urban Institute  
Jaclyn Chambers is a research associate at the Urban Institute. Her research focuses primarily on child welfare program evaluation. Before joining Urban, she was a graduate student researcher with the California Child Welfare Indicators Project. Her dissertation examining the impact of child welfare system experiences on juvenile justice involvement was funded by the National Institute of Justice. She holds an MSW from New York University and a PhD in social welfare from the University of California, Berkeley.

### Session III Collective Cafe - SB 855 Table Talks, Regency F Ballroom

**Andrea Sobrado** *she/her*, Associate Director, Child and Family Policy Institute of California  
*See Bio Above*



**Sarah Johnston** *she/her*, PACT Regional Coordinator, Child and Family Policy Institute of California  
Sarah Johnston is a community advocate and consultant working to address human trafficking within the nexus of program development, survivor engagement, and system change. Sarah has a passion for developing systems with a heart, to prevent and heal from trauma and to better serve those suffering from injustices and inequities. Sarah has served as the Central Valley Against Human Trafficking Program Manager at Fresno EOC and currently is the Preventing and Addressing Trafficking Regional Coordinator for the Child and Family Policy Institute of California where she provides training, technical assistance and capacity building for Child

Welfare agencies across the state of California. Sarah has a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, International Relations and Human Rights from the University of California, Davis, and a Masters of Social Work from the University of Southern California, Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work.

#### **Session IV Breakouts, Regency F Ballroom**

##### ***Option 1: A Discussion on Placement Barriers, Strategies, and Support with the Child Trafficking Response Team***

**California Department of Social Services, Child Trafficking Response Team**

##### ***Option 2: Comprehensive Approach to Child Trafficking - Addressing Labor Exploitation***

**Melissa Gomez** *she/her*, PACT Project Director, Child and Family Policy Institute of California  
*See Bio Above*

**Bilee Hernandez** *she/her*, *Human Services Program Planner, Child Protective Services, Department of Child, Family and Adult Services, Sacramento County*

Bilee Hernandez, is a Program Planner with Sacramento County Department of Child Family and Adult Services, (DCFAS) in the Child Protective Services (CPS) division. Bilee earned her Master Degree in Social Work from California State University, Sacramento in the Title IV-E Child Welfare program. Bilee is a strong advocate for systemic change in addressing and providing services for youth who have been exploited/at risk for exploitation in human trafficking and as a Program Planner, this is a practice area under her purview. Prior to moving into a management position, she was previously a Supervisor for a unit that specializes in serving victims and survivors of human trafficking. Bilee has been working in the field of Social Work for 29 years, 24 of which have been in CPS. Bilee Hernandez helped implement and administer a state pilot, Residentially Based Services (RBS), in preparation for Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) working with youth who have high mental health needs and who were most often survivors of commercial exploitation. Ms. Hernandez is committed to the safety of children with an emphasis on families and permanency.

**Leann Eddy** *she/her*, Program Review Specialist, Department of Social Services, San Luis Obispo County  
*See Bio Above*



**Nikki N Cardoza** *She/her*, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Tulare County Child Welfare Services

Nikki Cardoza is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with Tulare County Child Welfare Services (CWS) and serves as the CSEC Clinician. Having worked for CWS in various roles for almost ten years, Nikki has experience working with families in each step of the court process. In her role as the CSEC Clinician, Nikki provides clinical support to youth identified as victims or at high risk of human trafficking (HT) and works closely with social workers throughout the agency to ensure that youth are being screened

for HT risk and receiving appropriate services to ensure ongoing safety and support. Nikki facilitates monthly stakeholder meetings to provide opportunity for collaboration between CWS staff, law enforcement, and other service providers. Nikki has a passion for educating others about HT and is the Outreach Subcommittee Lead on the Tulare County Human Trafficking Task Force (TCHTTF), where she has helped develop and present training about human trafficking throughout Tulare County. Along with partners of the TCHTTF, Nikki helped to develop a screening tool for labor trafficking of minors, as well as a supporting user guide and video, which are available for public use on the Task Force's website. Outside of her work with CWS, Nikki is an Adjunct Professor in the Social Work Department at Liberty University. Nikki is an advocate for work-life balance and enjoys serving at her church, spending time with her husband and two young daughters, and baking.



**Kelly E. Amend** She/her, PACT Central Valley Regional Coordinator, Child and Family Policy Institute of California

Kelly Amend has been an advocate, trainer, and cheerleader for education on human trafficking since 2012. Previously, Kelly served as Tulare County's Human Trafficking Task Force Coordinator under the Office for Victims of Crime Enhanced Collaborative Model

Anti-Trafficking award where she led a task force of three local direct service providers, six local law enforcement agencies, and four federal agencies along with a community coalition of individuals and organizations working together to prevent and stop human trafficking.

She has conducted numerous workshops, strategic partner training, and awareness events to engage in effective responses to labor and sex trafficking in the Central Valley of California. Her previous experiences include developing the prevention education program at the Central Valley Justice Coalition, working with foster and incarcerated youth as a trained facilitator in Fresno County Juvenile Justice Campus, and as Administrative and Marketing Director at Lanna Coffee Company- a wholesale coffee company focused on seeking transformation of lives through a social enterprise model within specialty coffee. As a graduate of Fresno Pacific University, she had a career as a children's Librarian before transitioning into human trafficking prevention work in 2014. Kelly continues to serve on the Board of the Lanna Foundation helping improve the lives of coffee farmers and hill tribe peoples in Northern Thailand. She can also be found supporting her husband's coffee shop, by drinking lots of fairly sourced cups of coffee and thinking about ways to improve our global supply chains. Kelly resides in Visalia, CA with her husband and two dogs.

### ***Option 3: Trauma Stewardship and Self-Care***



**Beatriz Lodia** she/her, Program Manager, Stanford Sierra Youth & Families

Beatriz Lodia completed her bachelor's degree in Psychology at CSU Sacramento and has pursued careers in both academic and nonprofit settings. She has worked in the mental health field professionally for over 6 years. Her former experience as a Youth Advocate serving the CSEC population as well as youth impacted by child welfare provided her the opportunity to utilize her personal lived experience and platform to empower and elevate others. She is currently a Program Manager for the Wonder Mentoring Program at Stanford Sierra Youth & Families. Her drive is to amplify the voices that are often overlooked or underserved, and as an instructor for UC Davis uses her skills to advocate for children, families, and underserved communities on a greater scale.

## **Closing Plenary: Informing Policy and Practice through the Lens of Lived Experience - Panel, Regency F Ballroom**

### **Facilitators**



**Maria Contreras** *she/her*, Community Policy Associate, Collaborative Responses to Commercial Sexual Exploitation Initiative, National Center for Youth Law  
Maria Contreras is the Community Policy Associate for the Collaborative Responses to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Initiative at the National Center for Youth Law (NCYL). In this role, Maria aims to ensure that state and local policy and practice to identify and serve youth impacted by CSE are driven by community and lived experience expertise. Prior to joining NCYL, she worked as a Youth Advocate at WestCoast Children's Clinic serving youth involved in Alameda County foster care and Juvenile Justice systems and used her lived experience to advocate with and on those youth. She obtained her B.A. in Political, Legal and Economic Analysis and Ethnic studies and Master's in Public Policy from Mills College.

**Sarah Johnston** *she/her*  
*See Bio Above*

### **Panelists**



**Ummra Hang** *she/her*, PACT Consultant  
Ummra Hang is a second generation Cambodian American, consultant, advocate, trainer, and speaker born and raised in Oakland, CA. She is dedicated to working with those who have been impacted by child sexual exploitation as well as formerly incarcerated people. Ms. Hang has an M.S.W. from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a B.A. in Psychology from San José State University. She focuses on research and education in anti-trafficking, particularly around the importance of trauma, the impact of narratives that are placed on people, and language/label usage. She uses her academic and lived experiences to promote the power of healing from trauma through agency, self-empowerment, and pursuing authentic selves to



realize one's passions and goals for self-sufficiency. Ms. Hang shares her story to uplift the many others who are still silent and continue breaking barriers to help others reach a place of healing and not only survive but thrive.



**Jess Torres** *they/them*, PACT Consultant

Jess Torres (they/them) is a Trans Indigenous writer, educator and organizer dedicated to community building, direct action and policy work for the marginalized and criminalized. They are of Lenca lineage born on the stretch of earth now called El Salvador; displaced on unceded Matinecock land in so-called NYC as an “undocumented” immigrant for twenty five years. Jess is a systems-impacted youth with lived experience of child trafficking.

Today, Jess resides on Tongva territory or colonially known as Long Beach, CA. They are a birth and abortion doula, prison abolitionist and harm reductionist whose activism centralizes community health based economic justice, healing justice, disability justice, Indigenous sovereignty, Trans liberation, and the dignity, and self-determination of people impacted by drug use.

Jess has fifteen years of advocacy in the anti-trafficking and sex worker rights movement, serving in the following leadership roles: Training/Technical Assistance, Communications, Capacity Building and Policy and Program Development consultant and later, as the Artisan Relations and In-House Production team manager, lead product developer and social justice communications specialist with The Little Market, the Survivor Leadership Program Coordinator at the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) co-coordinating a self-determination group for LA- based labor trafficking survivors and coordinating a national human trafficking survivor network organizing for social chafe rooted in labor rights, peer developed programming and outreach, displacement/im/migration protections, harm reduction, de/anti criminalization, racial, gender and sexuality equity. They are a Trainer and Communications Specialist with Rising Worldwide, a standing Consultant with Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking (PACT), the former Community Liaison for the NYC Mayor’s Office to End Gender-Based Violence, a Qns/BK Farmers Market Manager with GrowNYC and Facilitator with Grow to Learn; creating dozens of sustainable gardens in NYC public schools and participating in various water rights actions and food sovereignty efforts. See Jess’ full Bio [Here](#).

**Russell Wilson** *he/him*  
See Bio Above

**Angelica Zuniga** *she/her*  
See Bio Above

**Kia Dupclay** *she/her*  
See Bio Above

## Closing Remarks

**Melissa Gomez** *she/her*, PACT Project Director, Child and Family Policy Institute of California  
*See Bio Above*



**Stuart Oppenheim** *he/him*, Executive Director, Child and Family Policy Institute of California

Stuart Oppenheim is the Executive Director of the Child and Family Policy Institute of California (CFPIC). After 32 years in public human services, including 15 years as the Child Welfare Director in San Mateo County, California, Stuart retired in 2004 to found CFPIC, where he is proud to currently work with highly skilled and motivated colleagues who are passionately committed to improving the delivery of human services programs for the benefit of children, youth, families, and older and disabled adults throughout California. Stuart is a committed feminist and the father of three strong women who give him reason to hope that support in his later years will be provided.