

Workshop Panelist Bios

Rebecca Ackerman

Fellow, Code for America

Rebecca is a public policy researcher and developer. Most recently, she worked with the City and County of San Francisco Human Services Department as a Code for America fellow and was one of the creators of Promptly, a text messaging service for government. Prior to Code for America, Rebecca worked at Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, where she did web development and research about social services in the Chicagoland area. She organized with the Immigrant Youth Justice League, an undocumented-led youth organization in Chicago.

Jessica Bartholow

Legislative Advocate, Western Center on Law and Poverty

Jessica Bartholow is a legislative advocate at the Western Center on Law and Poverty with over a decade of experience in anti-poverty advocacy and program development. Before joining Western Center, Jessica worked for the California Association of Food Banks, where she built a statewide network of food stamp advocates and application assisters. She has served on the California Hunger Action Coalition steering committee and the board of the Oakland Workforce Collaborative. Jessica has led or participated in several statewide tasks forces pertaining to SNAP, Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT), CalWORKs and program modernization. Jessica holds a Master's Degree in Political Science and is the recipient of the 2012 Wheeler-Welstone National Anti-Hunger Advocate of the year.

Sarah Bohn

Research Fellow, Public Policy Institute of California

Sarah Bohn is a research fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California. PPIC aims to inform and improve public policy in California through independent, objective, nonpartisan research. Sarah has been a research fellow at PPIC since 2007.

A labor economist, her work focuses on how policy impacts individual and family economic well-being, with particular attention to low-income and vulnerable populations. She has published research on poverty, underground labor markets, the future of California's economy, California's community colleges, and the labor market impact of immigration policy. She has also conducted research on income inequality during the Great Recession, with a focus on the role of unemployment and educational attainment on family economic outcomes.

Her research has been supported in part by grants from the Ford Foundation, Russell Sage Foundation, Walter S. Johnson Foundation and James Irvine Foundation. Sarah's work has been cited in the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, The Economist, as well as media outlets across California. She is regularly called upon to speak to stakeholders in the California policy community as well as to provide expert testimony to various committees of the California legislature. Sarah holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Maryland, College Park.

Ronald Coleman

Government Affairs Manager, California Immigrant Policy Center

Ronald is CIPC's Government Affairs Manager, based in Sacramento. Formerly, Ronald was the Legislative and Policy Director for the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), and most recently with the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE). He has over 8 years experience advocating on a wide-range of issues to protect the interests of low income communities and working families. Ronald has received his Juris Doctorate from Southern University Law Center, and his BA in Political Science from Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans. Ronald is also a member of the State Bar of New Jersey.

Michael Dimmock

President, Roots of Change

Michael R. Dimock, president of Roots of Change (ROC), is a national food movement organizer and thought leader on sustainable food and farming systems. ROC is a “think tank, do tank” delivering road maps to victory for the food movement. Michael has focused on agriculture and food since 1989. He was a marketing executive in Europe for agribusiness, farmed organically for three years in Sonoma County, and in 1992 founded Ag Innovations Network, where he began his work on consensus building and strategic planning to create healthier food and agriculture. From 2002 to 2007, he was Chairman of Slow Food USA. Author, Katrina Fried, and Photographer, Paul Mobley, feature Michael in their latest book, [Everyday Heroes: 50 Americans Changing The World](#), published in October 2012. Michael received a BA in History with Honors at UCLA in 1983 and a Masters in International Affairs at Columbia University in 1988.

Charlotte Dickson

National HEAL Cities Campaign Director, CA Center for Public Health Advocacy

Ms. Dickson has directed our Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Cities Campaign since its inception in 2008. She has extensive experience working with elected officials and advocates to establish local health policies. Previously, while working for Contra Costa Health Services from 1998 to 2008, she directed a campaign to pass a comprehensive youth tobacco ordinance in 18 cities and the unincorporated areas of the county. Ms. Dickson received her MSW from Boston University, where she concentrated in Community Organizing.

Alexis Fernández

Director of Legislation, California Food Policy Advocates

Alexis' work focuses on developing and implementing policies aimed at improving CalFresh access and participation through state and county-level initiatives. In addition, Alexis leads CFPA's legislative and communication efforts. She received her Master of Social Work with an emphasis on management and planning from UC Berkeley and a BA in Ethnic Studies from UC San Diego. She began with CFPA as a graduate student intern in 2009 and joined the staff in 2010.

Christine Fry

Senior Policy Analyst, ChangeLab Solutions

Christine Fry is a senior policy analyst and program director at ChangeLab Solutions. She has written extensively on public health policy with an emphasis on food and agriculture issues, including the federal Farm Bill and the impact of restaurant and retail policy on public health. She is a cofounder of the Healthy Farms, Healthy People coalition, a national network of public health and agriculture leaders working to create a healthier food system for farmers, workers, and consumers. A skilled trainer and facilitator, Christine has given dozens of trainings and presentations on policy development to audiences across the nation. She also has consulted with local, state, and federal agencies on child welfare, mental health, and housing, and she is a board member at America Walks, the national advocacy organization for walkable communities. Christine graduated from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and UC Berkeley.

Elizabeth Gomez

Outreach Programs Manager, Alameda County Community Food Bank

Elizabeth is the Outreach Programs Manager at the Alameda County Community Food Bank, Oakland, CA, where she works with a team of 12 bilingual outreach associates and supervises CalFresh outreach subcontracting agencies' activities throughout the county. She has over 16 years experience working directly with low-income communities to improve their health and well-being. She has designed and developed outreach programs to increase access to healthy food for Alameda County's low-income populations; including outreach for CalFresh, Summer Lunch, School Meals, Food Helpline and other food assistance programs.

Tamara Manik-Perlman

Fellow, Code for America

Tamara is a geographer doing user researcher and software development at PostCode. As a Code for America fellow she helped build CityVoice, a tool for integrating community feedback into city decision-making processes. Previously, she worked at Azavea where she lead the spatial analysis and UX design teams and managed the development of web and mobile applications for clients ranging from local non-profits to federal agencies. She studied Anthropology at Swarthmore College and did graduate work in Geography at Temple University.

Jennifer Niklas

Policy Analyst, California Department of Social Services

Jennifer has been with the California Department of Social Services for six years and as an analyst with the CalFresh Policy Bureau for over 2 years. She has been the lead analyst in implementing the Heat and Eat Program, Modified Categorical Eligibility, and updating CalFresh regulations. Prior to joining the CalFresh Bureau, Jennifer worked in the Estimates Bureau, primarily focused on building CalFresh estimates for the Governor's budget. Jennifer has a bachelor's degree from CSU, Sacramento in Food and Nutrition Services with a focus in Gerontology.

Teri Olle

Associate Director, Policy and Advocacy, San Francisco-Marin Food Bank

Teri is the Associate Director of Policy and Advocacy at the SF-Marin Food Bank. She is responsible for advocating at the local, state and federal levels for policies that reduce the risk of food insecurity for low-income Californians. She currently serves as the Chair of the San Francisco Food Security Task Force. Teri has a law degree from the University of Chicago Law School.

Caryn Rizell

Manger, Welfare to Work Division, CalFresh Outreach, CA Dept. of Social Services

Caryn Rizell is the CalFresh Outreach Manager for the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). The CalFresh Outreach program oversees 7 contractors and over 100 subcontractors performing outreach, pre-screening, and application submissions for CalFresh. Prior to joining CDSS, Caryn worked for the Women, Infants and Children program. In addition, she has extensive experience working with community based organizations throughout California. Caryn holds a Master of Arts degree from George Washington University, and a Bachelors of Arts degree from the University of Oregon.

Dottie Rosenbaum

Senior Fellow, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Dottie Rosenbaum is a Senior Fellow at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Her work focuses primarily on federal and state issues in SNAP as well as issues that involve the coordination of SNAP and other state-administered health and income security programs, such as Medicaid, TANF, and child care. Before joining the Center, Rosenbaum was a budget analyst at the Congressional Budget Office where she projected federal spending and provided Congress with cost estimates for a variety of programs including: SNAP, Medicaid, the State Children's Health Insurance Program, Child Nutrition, and Elementary and Secondary Education.

Arcelia Sencion

Director of Health Care and Social Services, People Helping People

Arcelia manages Family Strengthening Programs and Resource Centers, Health Care Programs, and ADCAP (domestic violence prevention). As PHP's case management supervisor, the Director who is bilingual (Eng/Sp) and a Latina brings to PHP in excess of 21 years of experience in social service case management in a non-profit environment. She has extensive experience in participating effectively in collaborative groups to enhance program development and delivery. She has been involved in various community grass-roots organizing efforts to address issues related to education, poverty and immigration. Prior to joining PHP, she worked in the field of violence against women at local rape crisis and domestic violence organizations. Currently First 5 Advisory Board member and served as Board member for Fund for SB.

Tia Shimada

Managing Nutrition Policy Advocate, California Food Policy Advocates

Tia's work focuses on issues of access, participation, and nutritional quality primarily in the school breakfast and summer nutrition programs. Tia co-coordinates the BreakfastFirst Campaign and contributes to CFPA's data analyses that examine impacts of the federal nutrition programs, particularly CalFresh. She received her Master of Public Health at UC Berkeley through the Public Health Nutrition Program. Tia began with CFPA as a graduate student intern in 2008 and joined the staff in 2009.

Jacob Solomon

Fellow, Code for America

Jake is a public policy researcher and generalist techy. Jake studied Economics at Occidental College, worked as a Forward Deployed Engineer at Palantir Technologies, and supported health care policy research at the RAND Corporation. Most recently, he worked as a Code for America fellow to conceptualize, develop, and implement a text message service for human service clients in San Francisco.

Danielle White

Alameda County Department of Social Services

Danielle is the CalFresh Program Specialist for Alameda County Social Services Agency, Workforce and Benefits Administration. She is responsible for CalFresh policy and procedures, outreach, and SNAP-Ed programs in Alameda County. She has been with Alameda's Social Services Agency since 2001, and has worked in the CalFresh, CalWORKs, and General Assistance programs. She also serves on the California Welfare Director's Association CalFresh Legislative Council.