

## **Transforming Systems Together**

Community Members and Alternates Bios

### **Tierre Caldwell**

Tierre Caldwell works as a Reentry Employment Specialist for The Power of People Leadership Institute where he provides mentorship, equity-based community engagement and career counseling for returning citizens reintegrating back into society.

A member of the advisory board for the American Civil Liberties Union's Smart Justice Campaign, Caldwell is a steadfast proponent of criminal justice and prison reform and fighting the war on mass incarceration. He is adamant in the battle to end technical violations and restore the right of felons to vote once released back into society. He is also involved with Restore the Vote – Minnesota, a program aimed at dismantling felony voter disenfranchisement to allow more than 50,000 unheard voices to be heard.

Caldwell's other community involvement includes: mentoring middle and high school students about drug prevention through the FBI's Community Outreach Program; facilitation with the Father Project – a program that assists low-income fathers to establish parental rights, contact with their children and to be more productive parents; community outreach for the Minnesota African American Heritage Museum; lead mentor for the Boys of Hope program which teaches personal power, cultural awareness, manhood, leadership and service-learning to young boys; and a trainer with the North 4 Program with Emerge, an initiative geared toward self-development, personal power, and disrupting the school-to-prison pipeline for at-risk youth.

### **Isabel Chanslor**

Isabel Chanslor is the Interim Director of the CO-MOTION Center for Movement, a 40,000 square-foot collective of arts and athletic organizations open to all. Chanslor previously worked as Vice President of National Programs and Chief Program Officer at the Neighborhood Development Center (NDC). While at the NDC, she designed and led the U7 (University Avenue Business Preparation Collaborative) whose goal was to help businesses prepare to survive and thrive before, during and after light rail construction. The U7 project had a 99 percent success rate with only 4 out of more than 450 businesses closed due to construction hardships.

Before working at the NDC, Chanslor served as a program officer of the Northwest Area Foundation and worked primarily with rural Latinos and Native Sovereign Nations, covering an eight-state region. A trained community organizer, small business consultant, fundraiser, and strategic planner, Chanslor has worked nationally, statewide, and locally with primarily low-resource communities of color utilizing asset-based community development philosophies and principles. She is a U.S. Army veteran.

### **John Day**

John Day is an enrolled member of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe within the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. He has more than 30 years of experience working in the areas of Indian education, health, and human services. Day participates in and practices traditional Ojibwe ceremonies.

Day is retired from the academic staff of the University of Minnesota-Duluth's Department of Social Work. He served on numerous boards and committees to assist in shaping University policies, practices, and curriculum and testified before the Minnesota Legislature and the University of Minnesota Board of Regents in support of American Indian initiatives, programs and students. He served on the state's Library and Guardian ad Litem boards and currently serves on the state's Urban Indian Advisory Board and Indian Child Welfare Advisory Council, in addition to consulting with the Minnesota Humanities Commission. He is a board member of the American Indian Community Housing Organization (Duluth) and a member of the Saint Paul Indians in Action committee.

### **Lisa Deputie**

Lisa Deputie has been working for more than 10 years with diverse communities to raise her voice to let systems, organizations, parents and family members know that there is room at the table, and that we must be included in a meaningful way to create the change we want to see.

She has grown from a parent sitting in a focus group with other parents similarly seeking better outcomes for the over-represented African American, and Black and Brown children within the child protection system, to sitting on workgroups, committees and boards that collaborate and partner with agencies and organizations. Using a shared leadership and strength-based model that builds on capabilities, she has been involved in asking the community what are their biggest challenges to community development and self-healing.

Deputie works as Director of Prevention Initiatives for the Metro Area at the Minnesota Communities Caring for Children (MCCC) where she builds relationships to stop child abuse and neglect before it starts. Before she joined MCCC's staff, Deputie was a participant in their Parent Leadership for Child Safety and Permanency Team and a contracted consultant.

Deputie has also mentored parents with open child protection cases, supporting and advocating on behalf of parents. She cares about parents' rights and building communities and raises her voice to help underserved and unprivileged communities thrive by holding systems accountable for creating safe environments for all.

### **Faith Dietz**

Faith Dietz is a human resources professional and resident of the Hamline-Midway area. Originally from the East Coast, she has called the Twin Cities area home for 22 years. Dietz is an advocate for youth voice and development, education funding and reform and community empowerment.

Dietz believes that with every connection comes an opportunity to learn, grow, and be a better person and advocate. She looks forward to working with the team and communities to create collective action toward better services.

### **Damon Drake**

Damon Drake has worked in the community as a restorative justice and policy advocate, community engagement liaison, and a martial arts instructor. Drake is a community-oriented professional who has worked tirelessly to confront systems that produce inequity, poverty, disparities in employment and mass incarceration.

His professional experience includes work as: a union organizer with AFSCME; Civic Engagement Coordinator at Community Action; Program Coordinator with the Community Ambassadors Program; Community Connections Manager at Saint Paul Youth Services; Youth Liaison at the Mall of America; Youth Counselor at Boys Totem Town; Building Lives Counselor at Hired, Inc.; and Outreach Director with the Council on American Islamic Relations. He is a U.S. Army veteran.

Drake has served on numerous boards and committees including; the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative; the Saint Paul Human Rights and Economic Development Commission; Ramsey County Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee; and as a board member with Oyate Hotanin (Voice of the People)/IN Equality. For the past 15 years, he has served as a volunteer Islamic advisor for Minnesota State Correctional Facilities at Red Wing, Rush City, Stillwater and Oak Park Heights.

### **Martín Hernández**

Martín Hernández was born and raised in East Los Angeles, a working class, Mexican American neighborhood in Los Angeles. He worked for fourteen years at Los Angeles County's Department of Public Social Services, the last seven as a social worker assisting the needs of people with disabilities. Prior to that, he worked as an organizer for eight years with the Labor/Community Strategy Center (L/CSC), a civil rights/environmental justice organization in Los Angeles. The L/CSC, through its Bus Riders Union campaign, succeeded in improving public transportation for millions of mostly low-income, transit-dependent people of color with new cleaner fuel busses, new bus lines and reduced overcrowding.

Since his 2017 retirement, Hernández has served as the chairperson of the board of directors of Saint Paul's West Side Community Organization and Clouds in Water Zen Center. He is also a member of the board of directors of the Twin Cities Media Alliance and the City of Saint Paul Transportation Committee. He has kept his ties to L.A. and sits on the board of trustees of the Labor/Community Strategy Center.

### **Mohamed Liban**

Mohamed Liban is co-founder and Executive Director of the Somali American Partnership social service organization. A former Registered Respiratory Therapist, he is also the founder of the Midnimo Historical Medical Library Collection. The library has a rare specialty medical reference resource for the community. Liban is a grassroots activist in the Frogtown community, having served the community in different capacities over the years with the District Seven Planning Council Board, and the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission.

### **KaYing Yang**

KaYing Yang is a social justice advocate who has built and led community development efforts in the United States and Asia. Twenty years ago, Yang began her career as a community organizer and nonprofit leader providing social services and advocacy to refugees and immigrants. She worked in coalition with civil rights groups in Washington, D.C., and international development agencies such as the International Organization for Migration and International Finance Corporation to address refugee migration, educational, economic and gender inequities.

In 2013, she became the co-founder and President of RedGreen Rivers, a social enterprise working with women and girls in the Mekong Region to build sustainable communities. Today she is the Director of Programs for the Coalition of Asian American Leaders. Yang is a 2019 recipient of a Bush Foundation Fellowship, she was also recognized by AARP and Pollen as one of 50 Over 50 most inspiring and accomplished leaders from across Minnesota.

### **Alternates**

#### **Aleatha Austin-Thompson**

Aleatha Austin-Thompson is a parent and community volunteer. She is active in the school system as a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) member, and as a volunteer with the Eastside Heat Athletics, a youth basketball team. Her other community involvement includes volunteer work on political campaigns, facilitating community conversations, and listening to community concerns. She is honored to be a part of the Transforming Systems Together and will use her position on the team to be part of the solution.

#### **Matthew Emerson**

Matthew Emerson is a Workflow Manager at Augustine Surgical Instruments and a full-time student at Metro State University studying technical communication and professional writing. Emerson volunteers for Project for Pride in Living and participates there in conversations around humanizing systems to meet the need of our communities.

He believes in simple, common-sense changes that make large impacts. He is always willing to challenge systems and institutions when the peoples' money is not being directed towards meeting community needs. He wants to work towards the wellness of our entire community as opposed to penalizing and stigmatizing our community. He is honored by this opportunity and will work to make sure his participation is always aimed at making our community better and healthier.

#### **Thai Lor**

Thai Lor is a father and Eastside resident of Saint Paul. Lor is a construction laborer, currently with Laborer Union, Local 563. He is a community organizer and immigration advocate. Lor is a part of a community group called "Families Together," which advocates for stopping deportation to Laos. He believes in keeping families together and one big community working together.

#### **Jennie Shining Star Marlowe**

Jennie Shining Star Marlowe is an enrolled member of Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate (Dakota) and a full-time student at Metropolitan State University majoring in criminal justice. Active in the Native American community, she sits on the

Johnson O'Malley, Title Six Parent Committee, and the Native Circle at Metropolitan State. She is also a member of FEDS – Family Education Diabetes Program Committee.

Marlow previously worked for 16 years as a Certified Nursing Assistant. She is ready to help with her ideas to help reform and bring change to the Ramsey County community.

**Bre Porter**

Bre Porter is a community organizer. She recently moved to the East Side of Saint Paul and is part of a concerned parents group.

Porter is also chair of a literacy committee and enjoys doing community organizing. She finds it awesome to empower and to educate the people around her on resources available. She looks forward to getting their input on things that need to be changed and to help implement new ideas in the community to build a better and stronger living environment.

**Clara Ware**

Clara Ware is a graduate student at Hamline University. Her education includes degrees or course work in education, political science, community organizing and community development. Ware chairs the Concerned Parents Group where she has worked to address homelessness in the Saint Paul Public Schools. She works with other historical, underserved and unrepresented communities of color. She would like one day to run for local elected office.