

# EVENT SPEAKERS



## **Dr. Lucy Jones, Seismologists, Founder and Chief Scientist of the nonprofit Dr. Lucy Jones Center for Science and Society**

Dr. Lucy Jones is founder and chief scientist of the nonprofit Dr. Lucy Jones Center for Science and Society, which supports the application of science in the creation of more resilient communities. With a Bachelor of Arts in Chinese Language and Literature from Brown University and a Ph.D. in Geophysics from MIT, she worked as a seismologist at the US Geological Survey for 33 years where she developed the methodology used for earthquake advisories in the State of California, created the Great ShakeOut drill, encompassing over 60 million participants globally in 2019, served as Science Advisor for Seismic Safety for the Mayor of Los Angeles and wrote over 100 published papers on statistical seismology and integrated disaster scenarios. She has held visiting professorships at University of California (Hitchcock Chair), and University of Oregon (Morse chair).



## **Kellie Kao Miles, Executive Director of Urban Land Institute Los Angeles**

Kellie Kao Miles is the Executive Director of Urban Land Institute Los Angeles ("ULI Los Angeles"), a district council of the Urban Land Institute, a global nonprofit education and research institute with approximately 50,000 members. ULI Los Angeles is dedicated to advancing best practices in land use and real estate through the collective expertise and thought leadership of its members. In her role, Kellie leads a staff team that guides, supports, and collaborates with over 2,000 active and engaged members in Los Angeles to help shape the future of our region for positive, transformative impact in our communities.



## **Michael Anderson, AIA, NOMA**

Michael, a distinguished architect, author, and visionary, leads the Accelerated Housing and Transit Development (AHTD) Project, an extensive initiative aimed at revitalizing underserved communities across Los Angeles County. This transformative project involves pursuing Climate Funding to convert BIPOC single-family homes into fourplexes, providing a home for families and creating three income-generating units for additional family members. Spanning 24 Metro transit stations, the project includes infrastructure enhancements and has received positive feedback from the Secretary's Office at the U.S. Department of Transportation.



## **Jonathan Larsen, Principal, Managing Director and U.S. Executive Committee**

Jonathan is a member of Avison Young's global leadership team and U.S. Executive Committee. He is the leader of Avison Young's Downtown Los Angeles office, where he oversees delivery of all services to clients, develops new business and recruits additional talent to enhance local service offerings on a global basis. A real estate executive with over 35 years of experience, he has been recognized on numerous occasions as a top commercial real estate broker by CoStar, Connect Media, Bisnow and the Los Angeles Business Journal, and has completed many of the largest leases and sales throughout the US. Jonathan specializes in representing tenants for all their office and industrial real estate needs, and he is an expert in various types of transactions such as leasing, sale/leasebacks and over \$2 billion U.S. Dollars in investment sales throughout the United States.



# EVENT SPEAKERS



## **Erica Alexis, Ladybuilder/ Bridgeline Construction**

Erica Alexis, also known as “The Lady Builder” is the founder and owner of Bridgeline Development and Construction, a rapidly growing company specializing in commercial and residential new construction. The company was founded in 2015 and rebranded as Bridgeline in 2021 as a vehicle to spur impactful construction development experiences in the industry. Bridgeline partners with local property owners, developers, contractors, and investors to advance self-sustainable environments in underdeveloped urban communities to increase diverse business growth through building legacy projects.



## **Fernando J. Guerra, Ph.D., Professor, Departments of Political Science and Chicana/o Latina/o Studies, Founding Director, Center for the Study of Los Angeles, Loyola Marymount University**

Dr. Fernando J. Guerra is a professor in the departments of political science and Chicana/o Latina/o Studies and the founding director of the Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Center for the Study of Los Angeles (StudyLA) at Loyola Marymount University. His scholarly work focuses on state and local politics, racial and ethnic politics, and local governance reform. Dr. Guerra has been a principal investigator in over 30 major studies on Los Angeles, including the largest general social survey of residents in the Los Angeles region and the largest per-capita exit poll in the nation. He has been on the faculty at LMU since 1984. He has served on standing commissions, blue ribbon committees, and ad hoc task forces for the City of Los Angeles, the State of California, and regional bodies throughout Southern California. He is a source for the media at the local, national, and international level and has been highlighted by the Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, Newsweek, Business Week, The Economist, and media outlets in Latin America, Europe, and Asia.



## **Christopher Earl, Assistant Deputy Director, Innovation & Entrepreneurship for the California Office of the Small Business Advocate**

Christopher Earl, appointed in December 2022 as the Assistant Deputy Director, Innovation & Entrepreneurship for the California Office of the Small Business Advocate within the California Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development. Previously, Earl was appointed as the Southern California Regional Advisor at the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development in September 2020. Prior to his role within state government, Christopher served at Riverside Community College District where he held several positions from 2012 to 2020, most recently as Executive Director of Economic Development and Entrepreneurship, District Director of the Office of Grants and Contracts, Statewide Director of the Federal and State Technology (FAST) Partnership Program, and Assistant Director of the TriTech Small Business Development Center serving the Southern California small business Innovation ecosystem. Mr. Earl has spent the last 15 years supporting small businesses and developing new aspiring entrepreneurs.



## **Jeffrey Buller, Vice President, Charter Communications Inc.**

Jeffrey Buller joined Charter Communications in 2017 as a Vice President, working with corporate business units on financial operations, budgeting, as well as on special projects. Mr. Buller is responsible for the oversight and management of the Spectrum Community Investment Loan Fund, an impact fund of Charter Communications focused on investing in Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and small businesses in underserved markets across Charter’s 41-state service footprint. Prior to joining Charter, Mr. Buller spent 14 years with Spectrum Group Management, a NY-based hedge fund, investing in the distressed debt of communications, transportation and energy companies. He served as Managing Director and a Senior Analyst responsible for identifying investments, as well as all aspects of due diligence and portfolio management.



# EVENT SPEAKERS



## **Nicole Williams, Executive Director, LISC Los Angeles**

Nicole Williams spearheads the LISC LA office, which has invested nearly \$1.6 billion in affordable housing, small businesses, economic development, health, education, community safety and jobs throughout Los Angeles over the last 36 years—all designed to close race, class and opportunity gaps that keep people from reaching their full potential. Williams' background spans finance, government and community-focused nonprofits, all of which she will draw on to lead LISC LA. Most recently, she was senior vice president and head of nonprofit banking for Banc of California, where she built a line of business focused on nonprofits and community development financial institutions (CDFIs) in California.



## **Monte E. Perez, Ph.D., Interim President**

Dr. Monte E. Perez has 20 years of senior higher education leadership with 14 years as a college President. Dr. Perez has over 40 years of K-12 and higher education experience including serving as a Board of Trustee of the Los Angeles County Board of Education. Prior experience includes the Assistant Director of Admissions, Stanford University, Director of Educational Opportunity Programs/TRIO at California State University, Los Angeles, Regional Director of the Educational Testing Service and Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs at the National Hispanic University. He also worked for the Department of Education as a Senior Policy Analyst for five years.



## **Fran Inman, Senior Vice President, Majestic Realty**

Fran Inman, Senior Vice President, has worked as part of the Majestic Realty team for more than two decades. In addition to overseeing the government relations work for the company, Fran also serves as the founding President of the Majestic Realty Foundation. Recognized as a national leader in the transportation sector for her work on the global supply chain, she serves as a member of the California Transportation Commission. Inman also serves on the highly acclaimed National Freight Advisory Committee that reports directly to the US Secretary of Transportation and on the California Freight Efficiency Task Force. In addition to her numerous awards and honors for her work in these areas, Fran was recently awarded Visionary Business Leader of the Year at the region's Mobility 21 summit. A civic and philanthropic leader, she serves and has served on a diverse range of business, economic development and transportation boards and organizations throughout the region. Fran holds a bachelor's degree in Finance and an MBA in Finance from Cal State Fullerton.



## **Paul Audley, President of FilmLA**

President of FilmL.A. since 2008, Paul Audley, helps streamline and enhance on-location filmmaking process for communities and content creators, to ensure the Greater Los Angeles economy continues to thrive. Paul has negotiated new long-term contracts from client municipalities and school districts, initiated a public education campaign; and has overseen improvements in the organization's online permit system. A native of Connecticut and member of the Connecticut Bar, Paul served in elected and appointed positions in local, state and federal government offices.



# EVENT SPEAKERS



## **Stephen Cheung, President & CEO, LAEDC, President, WTCLA**

Stephen Cheung is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) and its subsidiary, the World Trade Center Los Angeles (WTCLA). As CEO of the LAEDC, Mr. Cheung brings together the capabilities of LAEDC's mission-delivery department areas, including the Institute for Applied Economics (Research), Business Assistance, Industry Cluster Development, Workforce Development, World Trade Center Los Angeles (International), Strategic Relations, Communications & Marketing, and Public Policy, into a single team that delivers the LAEDC's critically important, public-benefit mission – Reinventing our economy to collaboratively advance growth and prosperity for all.



## **Ron Frierson, Director of Economic Development for the Western Region at Amazon, Chairman at LAEDC**

Ron currently serves as Director of Economic Development for the Western U.S. region at Amazon. He served in various roles throughout his career, including NAI Capital, CBRE, Kansas Department of Commerce, and most recently as Director of Economic Policy for the Los Angeles Mayor's Office under former Mayor Eric Garcetti. Ron's temperament, strategic insights, and hands-on experience have consistently resulted in successful outcomes. As Chairman, Frierson plans to focus on key areas such as industry cluster development, workforce development, small business support, and sustainable innovation. He aims to build on LAEDC's existing programs and introduce new strategies to address the evolving economic challenges faced by the county.



## **Shannon Sedgwick, Senior Director, Institute for Applied Economics**

Ms. Sedgwick oversees and executes the planning and design of economic research projects and develops subject-specific information and data interpretation for economic impact, demographic, workforce development, transportation, and industry and issue studies. She performs research, data collection and organization, analysis and report preparation in addition to managing a team of economists. Her work focuses on demographics, industry clusters and contribution analysis, and occupational analysis. She is also proficient at conducting geospatial analysis and working with IMPLAN. Ms. Sedgwick is a principal contributor to the Center for a Competitive Workforce reports prepared for the California Community Colleges and local Workforce Development Boards (WDB).



## **Matt Horton, Vice President, Research and Policy**

Over the past fifteen years, he has worked to direct research-driven programs and initiatives to develop public policy that impacts housing production and infrastructure finance, enhances access to capital, creates jobs, and other economic development strategies. Previously, he was director of the California Center at the Milken Institute, where he produced research, programs, and events designed to inform and activate innovative economic policy solutions to support job creation and infrastructure development to support resilient growth. Earlier in his career, he worked for the Southern California Association of Governments, the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization. There, he served as the primary point of contact for external and government affairs, coordinating regional policy development with local elected officials and state and federal stakeholders.