



Ventura County Leadership Academy Thirty Years of Community Leadership

Pattie Braga
Executive Director, Ventura County Leadership Academy

Tuesday, September 10, 2024

VCLA's Founder

Dr. Priscilla Partridge de Garcia



United Way of
Ventura County

From its inception in 1994 until 2016, Ventura County Leadership Academy (VCLA) operated as a special program under the United Way of Ventura County. VCLA recognizes the valuable assistance United Way of Ventura County has provided in its growth.



Mission and Purpose:

“To connect people and issues to strengthen our county.”

Ventura County Leadership Academy connects and cultivates a diverse network of passionate, capable leaders through an immersion in both critical issues shaping Ventura County & opportunities for personal and professional growth. VCLA’s comprehensive program ignites awareness and inspiration, helping cohort members discover their individual pathway toward impacting our region.

VCLA Program



VCLA Program



VCLA Program



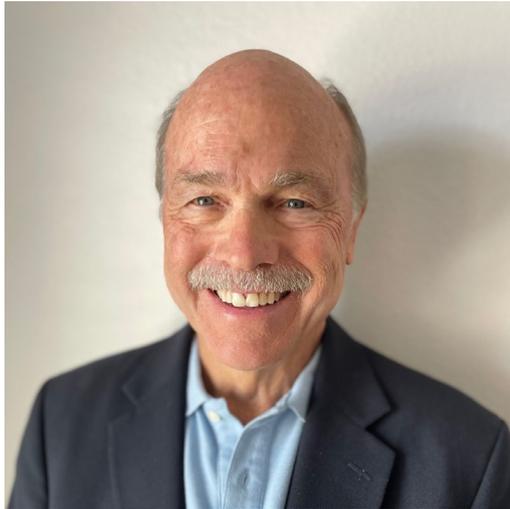
VCLA Relationship Building



VCLA Relationship Building



Our Alumni



Jim White

Class V

Current Engagement:

- Ventura County Transportation Commission - Commissioner
- California Van Pool - Board Member
- San Buenaventura Housing Authority - Commissioner & Vice-Chair
- Ventura Visitors and Convention Bureau - Board Member

Previous Engagement:

- Ventura Family YMCA - Board Member and Past Chair
- City of Ventura Parks & Rec. Commission - Commissioner & Past Chair
- Ventura County Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee - Past Chair

Our Alumni



**Susy Lopez
Garcia**
Cohort XXVII

Current Engagement:

- Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP), Board Member
- Oxnard Leadership Program, Steering Committee

Our Alumni



Linda Rossi

Cohort XX

Current Engagement:

- Women's Economic Ventures (WEV) – Secretary of the Board
- Interface Children & Family Services – Admin & Finance Committee
- Foundation of Ventura County Credit Union – Founding Officer & Current Advisory Board Member
- America's Credit Unions – CEO Council, Executive Committee
- CA & NV Credit Union Leagues – Social Impact Committee Chair

Previous Engagement:

- Habitat for Humanity Ventura County – Strategic Advisory Council
- CU-First – Board Member

Our Alumni



**Dr. Julius
Sokenu**
Cohort XXVI

Current Engagement:

- Ventura County Leadership Academy – Board Member
- The Colleges of Law - Board Member
- California Community College League – LGBTQ Caucus

Previous Engagement:

- Boys & Girls Club of Moorpark - Board Member
- City of Moorpark – General Plan 2050 Advisory Committee Member

Feedback for Our Future

January 2024 Community Focus Groups

Engaged with over 80 VCLA alumni, stakeholders, and local community leaders

2014-2019 Goals:

- More non-profit engagement and opportunities for connections
- Produce an annual or semi-annual impact report
- Host alumni projects/volunteer events throughout the county
- Offer alumni and community member opportunities to attend leadership and educational events





Jennifer Caldwell, President
Chief Development Officer,
Food Share of Ventura County



Steven E. Elson, Ph.D., Vice President
CEO Emeritus, Casa Pacifica Centers
for Children & Families



Dhruv Pandya, Treasurer
Director of Information Security,
Wistia



Crystal Stratton, Secretary
Community Engagement Program
Admin., V.C. Fire Department



Bob Harrell, Past President
Financial Planner,
Independent Capital Management



Brick Conners, Director
Assistant City Manager,
City of Ventura



Tim Gallagher, Director
Vistage Chair,
Vistage Worldwide, Inc.



Melissa Miller, Director
Community Partnerships Manager,
Ventura County Credit Union



Dr. Julius O. Sokenu, Director
President,
Moorpark College

Our Strength is Our Alumni Network



VCLA's Cohort XXX (2024-2025)

Alex Gallardo, *VP, Community Impact* - Premier America Credit Union
Alicia Morales-McKinney, *Interim Continuum of Care Dir.* - County of Ventura
Alondra Gaytan, *Director of Strategic Relations-Economic Development Collaborative*
Brett McMurdo, *Assistant County Counsel* - County of Ventura
Candice Tang Nyholt, *Director of Marketing* - VC Community Foundation
Christin Shatzer Román, EdD, *Director of Engagement* - Pepperdine University
Cynthia Torres, *Chief Executive Officer* - New Dawn Counseling
Cynthia Salas Salgado, *Community Schools Coor.* - VC Office of Education
Dani Anderson, *Disability Access Manager* - County of Ventura
Danica Selvaggio, *Chief Executive Officer* - Big Brothers Big Sisters of VC
Daniel Bednar, *Chief Strategy Officer*, OceanAir
Diana Lopez, *Branch Manager II* - Ventura County Credit Union
Dianne McKay, *President/Owner* - Mustang Marketing
Ethan Walker, *Programs and Partnerships Manager* - Cortico
Francisco Camarena, *IT Director* - Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura
Gabrielle Vignone, *Executive Director* - House Farm Workers!
Graciela Garcia, *Resource Management Agency Manager II* - County of Ventura
Heather Williams, *Development & Outreach Director* - Museum of Ventura County
Ingrid Hardy, M.P.A., C.L.C., *Assistant City Manager* - City of Thousand Oaks
James Schuelke, *Director of Outreach & Marketing; PIO* - Oxnard College

Jessica Hug, *Sr. Director of Community Engagement* - Food Share of Ventura County
John Bandek, *Economic Development Manager* - City of Moorpark
Justin Karbowski, M.B.A., *Founder* - The Fran Coach
Kathleen Mallory, *Planning & Sustainability Manager* - City of Oxnard
Katie Norris, *Chief Development Officer* - Habitat for Humanity of Ventura County
Kayla Ancheta Chey, *Development Director* - United Parents
Kelly Brown, *Community Information Officer* - Interface Children & Family Services
Kendra King, *Humane Investigations Director* - Humane Society of Ventura County
Laura Ortega, *Manager of Education* - CommonSpirit
Laura Hanson, *Lead Sexual Assault Response Coor.* - DOD, Naval Base VC
Lynnette Coverly, *President & CEO* - Coverly Professional Services, Inc.
Martha Johnson, *Program Administrator* - Ventura County Health Care Agency
Mike Saum, *Founder and Head Coach* - M2P Leadership
Dr. Nicolas Palacios, *Global Marketing Manager* - Amgen
Ozzie Rios, *Business Banking Relationship Manager* - Montecito Bank & Trust
Rhett Mauck, *Chief Executive Officer* - Search Dog Foundation
Sonia Escobar, *Territory Account Manager* - Thermo Fisher Scientific
Teo Lopez, *Web & Multimedia Coordinator* - Oxnard Union High School District
Traci Holt, *Program Administrator* - VCPH Emergency Medical Services Agency
Veronica Nava, *Executive Director* - SPIRIT of Santa Paula



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