

The State of Latinx Children in America

September 22, 2021 | 10:00am to 2:00pm CT

Speaker bio's



Bob Sanborn EdD, President & CEO, CHILDREN AT RISK

Dr. Sanborn is a noted leader, advocate, and activist for education and children and the President and CEO of CHILDREN AT RISK. He earned his undergraduate degree at Florida State University and his doctorate at Columbia University in New York City. Before entering the non-profit sector, he had a distinguished career in higher education at institutions such as Rice University and Hampshire College.

Under his leadership, CHILDREN AT RISK has expanded its influence considerably. Notable achievements include opening up centers in Dallas and Fort Worth; launching the Public Policy & Law Center, the CHILDREN AT RISK Institute, the Center for Parenting and Family Well-Being and the Center to End Trafficking and Exploitation of Children. Sanborn is the Executive Editor of two peer reviewed, open-access academic journals, the Journal of Applied Research on Children and the Journal of Family Strengths. He is also the host of the popular radio program and podcast Growing Up in America on the Pacifica Radio Network.



Gabriella Barbosa JD, Managing Director of Policy, The Children's Partnership

Gabriella Barbosa is the Managing Director of Policy at The Children's Partnership, where she leads the development and implementation of a multi-issue area advocacy agenda focused on improving the health and wellbeing of children through public policy, research, and community engagement.

During the past decade, Gabriella has used various advocacy strategies to achieve a more just and equitable society for children. She previously served as the Public Policy Director for a local elected official and a non-profit advocacy organization, where she developed and utilized a policy-making approach that shifts power to community members as the drivers of systemic change for themselves, their families, and their communities.

Gabriella began her legal career as an Equal Justice Works Fellow in the Children's Rights Project at Public Counsel, where she designed and implemented an advocacy project focused on improving the academic outcomes of immigrant students and students from immigrant families using direct legal representation, impact litigation, policy advocacy, and community education. Gabriella was also previously a public school teacher in South Los Angeles. She is a proud daughter of immigrants.

Gabriella received a B.A. in Political Science and Human Rights from Columbia University and a law degree from Columbia Law School.



Ramon and Christian Cardenas ,Lxs Dos

Lxs Dos is the husband and wife duo of frontera graphic artists Ramon and Christian Cardenas. Ramon is a Filipino-American visual artist and co-founder of Maintain, a multimedia artist network formed in part to curate cultural events in the El Paso/Juárez region. Christian is a mixed media artist from Cd. Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico. Her portfolio includes a series of lithographs, screenprints and illustrations addressing the ongoing femicides in her native city. The artists create public art installations as well as gallery work to form a dialogue between the cities and their people. They have exhibited their

work in El Paso, Austin, San Antonio, San Francisco, Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua City, Puebla City, Oaxaca City, and CDMX. Their work has been featured by Remexcla, PBS, Vice and The Washington Post. @losdos_maintainstudio



Karla Fredricks, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Baylor College of Medicine and Director of the Program for Immigrant and Refugee Child Health, Texas Children's Hospital

Karla Fredricks, MD, MPH is an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine and the Director of the Program for Immigrant and Refugee Child Health (PIRCH) at Texas Children's Hospital. Dr. Fredricks began her career at Federally Qualified Health Centers with large immigrant populations, working as a primary care physician and medical director. She has also volunteered with international organizations such as Doctors Without Borders to serve displaced populations affected by humanitarian crises across the globe. In addition to directing PIRCH, Dr. Fredricks sees patients on the Texas Children's Hospital Mobile Clinic for under-resourced children and is one of the faculty advisors for the student-run Baylor

College of Medicine Human Rights and Asylum Clinic. Nationally, she co-coordinates the Specialty Care Access Network (SCAN) to facilitate access to subspecialty care for newly arrived children with special health care needs.



Mar Velez, State Policy Senior Manager, Latino Coalition for a Healthy California

Mar Velez is State Policy Senior Manager at the Latino Coalition for a Healthy California. In her role, Mar leads LCHC's policy agenda to address the social determinants of health, ensure healthcare access for California's Latinx and vulnerable populations, and incorporate community voice in all policy initiatives.

Mar's expansive experience in advocacy, research, and local, state, and federal government provides her with unique insight to advance equity, justice, and accountability for public good. Previously Mar was a Congressional Aide to Congresswoman Barbara Lee where she oversaw the criminal justice, Latinx, and women's rights district issues portfolio. Additionally, she has worked with grassroots leaders and organizations, particularly in the criminal and youth justice field, to pass and promote public safety measures at the state and local levels for positive health and life outcomes for youth.

Mar holds a dual Master's degree in Public Health and City Planning from the University of California, Berkeley. She led a community-based participatory research project using the PhotoVoice method with Oakland youth used in advocacy and movement building strategies to center youth's voice in policy. As a daughter to immigrant parents from Mexico who has had to overcome systemic barriers, it is Mar's passion to undo cycles that lead to negative life and health outcomes.



Ciriac Alvarez Valle, Senior Policy Analyst, Voices for Utah Children (she/her/ella)

Ciriac Alvarez Valle is passionate about advocating for children & family issues. Her background in direct action, community organizing, digital organizing, and spoken word poetry has and continues to inform the work she does. She combines her personal and professional experience to build bridges in policy and organizing by centering the leadership of impacted communities & building coalitions to create change. Ciriac currently works as a Senior Policy Analyst at Voices for Utah Children. She graduated with a B.S. in Political Science and Sociology from the University of Utah. Her work

at Voices for Utah Children is focused primarily on children's health coverage and policies that impact immigrant families. She is a proud immigrant and DACA recipient herself born in Cuernavaca Morelos, Mexico and has called Salt Lake City home for the last twenty years.



Andy Canales, Executive Director, Texas, Latinos for Education

Andy Canales is the Executive Director, Texas at Latinos for Education. Previously, Andy worked as a director at various nonprofit organizations serving students and families. Prior to working in the education nonprofit sector, Andy began his career in education as a teacher in low-income communities in Miami and New York City.

He serves on the Board of Directors of the Buffalo Bayou Partnership, TEACH, University of Houston-Downtown Advisory Board of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the Latino Texas PAC, which he chairs. He's a Senior American Leadership Forum Fellow (Class XLVII), 2018 Harris County Leadership ISD Fellow, and a 2020 Houston Business Journal 40 under 40 honoree.

With over 50 appearances on local, statewide, and national media, including ABC13 Houston, the Houston Business Journal, Houston Chronicle, Fox26 Houston, NBC News, Univision, Telemundo, Texas Tribune, and USA Today, he is a sought-after commentator on education and civic issues important to Latino students and families.

Andy holds a dual B.A. in Political Science and Religion from Pepperdine University and a Master's of Science in Education from Hunter College. As the son of Salvadoran immigrants, the first one in his family to graduate from college, and former educator, Andy is passionate about expanding educational equity.



Ana Graciela Nájera Mendoza, Staff Attorney, Education Equity Project, ACLU Foundation of Southern California

Ana Graciela Nájera Mendoza is from Los Angeles, California and is the daughter of Guatemalan immigrants. As a former community organizer and a civil rights litigator, Ana is committed to working within her communities and with allies to promote racial and social justice.

She is currently a Staff Attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Foundation of Southern California's Education Equity Project, where she advocates to protect the educational rights of California's students. Prior to joining the ACLU in 2017, Ana was an associate at a plaintiff-side employment and civil rights firm, where she worked on cases involving wage theft, housing discrimination, and employment discrimination. Prior to law school, Ana was a community organizer and organized youth in Los Angeles and in rural communities in the Midwest and Pacific Northwest to build community power and create positive social change.

Ana is a 2014 graduate of UCLA School of Law, where she was enrolled in the Critical Race Studies specialization. She is a 2006 graduate of Macalester College (St. Paul, MN) where she majored in Political Science and Latin American Studies and minored in Hispanic Studies.



Sabrina De Santiago, Policy and Research Director for Golden State Opportunity

Sabrina De Staniago, For more than 20 years, Sabrina has worked to build stronger and more prosperous communities through policy, advocacy, and government affairs. She serves as the Policy and Research Director for Golden State Opportunity, a nonprofit dedicated to ending poverty by providing all Californians with the tools to build financial well-being and thrive. As Policy and Research Director, Sabrina leads GSO's federal and state legislative program and ensures GSO's work is informed by trusted research and data. She works closely with elected officials and partners to promote anti-poverty policies that help low-income communities build and retain financial stability, such as EITC expansion, living wages, public benefits reform, access to credit and savings programs.

During her time in Washington, D.C. she was an advisor on economic policy, housing policy, and appropriations to several Members of Congress, including former U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton (NY), U.S. Senator Tom Udall (NM), and U.S. Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA). She was also a Director of Government Affairs for the Center for American Progress focusing on economic and security issues.

Upon her return to California, oversaw the Community Engagement unit at the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), the largest homeless Continuum of Care in the nation. A native Angeleno, Sabrina now lives in Pasadena with her husband and daughter. She is a fervent pizza and Dodgers fan.



Matthew Weinstein, State Priorities Partnership Director, Voices for Utah Children

Matthew joined the organization in 2014. As State Fiscal Policy Director, he conducts analysis and advocacy focused on the state budget from the perspective of what's best for Utah's children. He holds a Master of Public Policy degree from Georgetown University and a B.A. in Political Science from Amherst College.



Congresswoman Veronica Escobar, 16th Congressional District of Texas

Congresswoman Veronica Escobar, a third-generation El Pasoan, proudly represents Texas' 16th Congressional District.

She took office on January 3, 2019 as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives after making history as the first woman elected to this seat and the first of two Latinas from Texas to serve in Congress.

Congresswoman Escobar serves on the prestigious House Judiciary Committee, House Armed Services Committee, House Ethics Committee, and the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis. In addition, she serves as Vice Chair of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Personnel.

She holds leadership positions on both the Democratic Women's Caucus as Vice Chair, and the Women's Working Group on Immigration Reform as Co-Chair. She is a member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Congressional Progressive Caucus, the New Democrat Coalition, and a co-founder of the Congressional Moms Task Force on Family Separation.

In Congress, she has established herself as the voice of the border and as a national leader on gun safety, health care, and immigration, including fighting the Trump administration's inhumane and cruel policies that harm border communities. She has led legislation to address our nation's immigration challenges in a responsible and humane manner by ensuring accountability, transparency, and oversight.

On February 4, 2020, Congresswoman Escobar delivered the Spanish-language Democratic response to President Trump's State of the Union address. She gave the nationally televised speech from Centro de Salud Familiar La Fe, a community health clinic, in El Paso.

Before her election, she served on the governing body for El Paso County, first as a County Commissioner and then as County Judge. There, she fought back against those who used government for their own personal gain and worked with her colleagues to modernize and reform the organization. She also worked to make El Paso County a leader in expanding access to healthcare by working with the University Medical Center of El Paso to build primary care clinics and the El Paso Children's Hospital, the only children's hospital on the U.S.-Mexico Border.

Prior to her service with El Paso County, Congresswoman Escobar was an English teacher at the University of Texas at El Paso and El Paso Community College, Communications Director for former Mayor Raymond Caballero, and the Executive Director of Community Scholars, a non-profit that taught high school students how to produce public policy reports and recommendations.

Congresswoman Escobar is a graduate of the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) and New York University (NYU). She and her husband, Michael, live in Central El Paso with their beloved cats. They have two grown children: Cristian Diego and Eloisa Isabel.