

# Tri-county planning body

## Supportive housing services



Metro



### Eboni R Brown

Pronouns: she/her/hers

County where you reside and/or work: Tri-County

#### Why does racial equity matter to you?

Being a black woman myself, I want to see myself and other people of color, represented, empowered, protected, and advocated for. Racial equity is key in this work and every aspect of our community and if we are truly here to advance communities of color, to that of our white counterparts, we need to radically push into more spaces.

#### What excited you about serving on the TCPB?

Being a part of this board gives me hope that I will be able to honestly and frequently share the expectations of my unhoused neighbors around service delivery and policies long held that should be rewritten. In the next two years, I want to strengthen and empower our houseless community and unite our service providers to increase efficiency. Most importantly, I'm excited to learn and broaden my view on what is possible.



### Nicole Larson

Pronouns: she/her/hers

County where you reside and/or work: Clackamas/Multnomah

#### Why does racial equity matter to you?

Racial equity matters to me because I believe in the inherent equal value of every human being. We've seen and continue to see the unspeakable impacts of racism in our country and I believe that a proactive anti-racist approach is necessary. We can all learn so much from one another in humility and in our lived experiences, walking through life in different shoes. Diversity, equity, and inclusion is critical work that is essential and beneficial to all involved. When making complex

decisions regarding supportive housing services and planning, we must take into account how systemic racism has led to disproportionate rates of houselessness amongst the BIPOC community. Therefore, we must have equity and inclusion of the BIPOC community to inform best practices and lead in equitable decision-making.

#### What excited you about serving on the TCPB?

I am so honored and excited to serve on the Metro Supportive Housing Services Tri-County Planning Body. I am a licensed clinical social worker and have previously worked as a counselor and case manager for youth and young adults experiencing houselessness in Portland. I also directed advocacy efforts for a large coalition of nonprofits serving houseless communities in Los Angeles, working to elevate the voices of those with lived experience to policy-makers and contributing to the city's plan to end homelessness there.

I believe we are currently facing a humanitarian crisis in the tri-county region with the number of individuals and families experiencing houselessness and housing insecurity. There are so many factors involved and I believe that it will take intentionally collaborative efforts to address the complex systems and the multi-faceted needs of a diverse population of those experiencing houselessness and those struggling to maintain or find affordable housing. In one of my current roles, I regularly meet with nonprofit service providers, those with lived experience of houselessness, faith communities in the tri-county area hoping to serve vulnerable people in the community, and with elected officials to discuss these issues. As I meet with them I am trying to identify what is working well and what barriers exist, and what's not working, with the hope of identifying actionable steps forward. I hope to humbly bring these voices to the table as we meet and I hope to serve our community well.



## Mindy Stadlander, MPH

Pronouns: she/her/hers

County where you reside and/or work: Tri-County

### Why does racial equity matter to you?

Racial equity matters to me because it is imperative that we focus on where our systems aren't serving our community and start there to make change. I started working in safety net healthcare 20 years ago in a Federally Qualified Health Center in Montana during the first health disparities collaboratives which let me see for the first time how big of an impact income and race plays in health outcomes. As I've continued to learn about the drivers of those

outcomes, it is clear that many of our systems were not designed to serve communities of color. Through that early work of bringing providers, clinic staff, and our majority patient Board together to develop improvements, I learned quickly that bringing multiple perspectives to a problem is essential to making meaningful change. If we fail to examine our systems closely and listen to our communities and what they say they need, then we risk creating solutions that ultimately do not meet their needs and further exacerbate disparities in health. If we approach developing solutions through a racial equity lens, our entire community benefits from systems that are more responsive to each person's individual needs.

### What excited you about serving on the TCPB?

I am excited to serve on the Tri-County Planning body because the Metro Supportive Housing Services program offers us a chance to meaningfully address the housing crisis and better meet the needs of houseless community members. At Health Share of Oregon, a Coordinated Care Organization (CCO) that provides physical, behavioral, oral, and non-emergency medical transportation services to more than 400,000 Oregon Health Plan members in the Tri-County area, we recognize the importance of housing as an integral part of our members' overall health and wellbeing. To build a healthy community for all, it is critical that our systems work together. I'm encouraged by the level of cross-county and cross-sector collaboration that is happening because of this program. Since many of those experiencing houselessness are also eligible for the Oregon Health Plan, I am excited to support advancing those collaborative efforts and to continue to deepen my own learning about the delivery of supportive housing services.



## Cameran Murphy

Pronouns: they/them

County where you reside and/or work: Washington

### Why does racial equity matter to you?

In the decades I have worked in service of young people, and lately transition age youth specifically, it's been very clear that racial equity is for people of all ages. All too often I continue to see youth of color have more and higher barriers than their peers, to education, to higher education, to housing, to employment. As a Program Coordinator for a queer youth center in NY, queer and trans youth of color filled our drop in center searching for safety

and community. The brilliance of the peer support they gave each other motivated me to keep working upstream within systems to change the conditions these youth lived in. As a white person who earned their trust, they pushed me to use my privilege and access to create and hold spaces for them where they hadn't been able to. Fast forward, still working with youth of color, continuing to witness the discrimination and barriers they face, I am still considered their accomplice, standing along with them and getting loud with them when they need to be heard.

### What excited you about serving on the TCPB?

Since moving to Oregon, I became very interested in understanding the Metro service area, which is a unique governing body to experience, and the various youth serving agencies within all three counties. I was thrilled when the SHS Metro bond passed, watched as the implementation started, and then reached out to agencies growing their housing programs, especially for youth and young adults. I have now been working for an agency implementing Washington County's Supportive Housing Services specifically for transition age youth exiting houselessness since August 2022.

Through this access point, working with unhoused youth quickly showed me how cross county their experiences have been and continue to be, which lead to my interest in this committee. I am excited to be here because it's a great opportunity to uplift the voices of young people who struggle to be heard and represented across multiple levels of government, and most uniquely, at this Metro regional level.



## Monta Knudson

Pronouns: he/him/his

County where you reside and/or work: Multnomah/Tri-County

### **Why does racial equity matter to you?**

At age 16, I entered the criminal justice system through McLaren Youth Correctional Facility. From 1987 until 2005, I spent nine years incarcerated, each time released without any support services or assistance. Finally, in 2005, I was released to a reentry program in Washington County. I navigated my newfound recovery with the help of a peer recovery mentor, addictions treatment, and supportive housing. For the first time, I experienced wrap-around services and

their effectiveness. I have sustained his long-term recovery since March 3, 2003, celebrating 19 years of recovery this past March. Throughout my journey, I have seen the impact of the war on drugs, specifically on people of color, from an overfilled prison system to stretched resources for under-served communities and systemic racism within institutions. Where doors have opened for me, I have seen them close for other people based on their intersecting identities. As a result, I have dedicated my life to working in housing, addictions, and mental health, focusing on changing the structurally embedded systems with white supremacy.

### **What excited you about serving on the TCPB?**

I have worked in different capacities throughout my career, from a peer mentor in 2008 to my current role as the CEO of Bridges to Change today. I have worked alongside individuals to ensure they have the tools to succeed in recovery, including treatment, housing, mentorship, job development, and community support. I am enthusiastic and excited to serve as a part of TCPB because it is a group actively seeking change for the communities that need it the most. TCPB is working to create a community where resources are available to all communities, not just the most privileged. I believe contributing my voice of lived and professional experience can provide insight and perspective in many areas. I also believe in my commitment to social justice and working from an anti-racist framework; I will be a champion of supporting and contributing to solutions generated by our most impacted community members. I am inspired to help create lasting change.



## Councilor Christine Lewis

Pronouns: she/her/hers

County where you reside and/or work: Metro

### **Why does racial equity matter to you?**

Communities of color in the Portland region face pervasive barriers in all areas of social well being. Many of these barriers are shared by other groups, like the LGBT community and people with disabilities. When we address the barriers most challenging to communities of color we create a more equitable community for all. Housing barriers have particular intergenerational impact- housing availability,

housing affordability, housing location, and housing discrimination- and as policymakers we have to create programs that recognize and solve the harms of the past as we plot a new more equitable path forward. Our community can't thrive until everyone has a safe and stable place to call home, and racial equity is integral to that future.

### **What excited you about serving on the TCPB?**

I am excited to serve on the TCPB because of the opportunity for transformational change in our systems. We must work not only across jurisdictions, but also across traditional systems. We know how to work on the individual level to surround someone with the supports they need to be successful in housing, our next challenge is to align systems so we can bring these individual solutions to the community scale. We have a lot of work to do, and I'm delighted by the diverse leadership at this table ready to do the work.



## Cristina Palacios

Pronouns: she/her

County where you reside and/or work: Multnomah/Clackamas, Washington and Jackson

### **Why does racial equity matter to you?**

Racial equity matters to me because as a housing advocate I see how BIPOC communities are disproportionately impacted when trying to secure a roof over their head. I started organizing at the age of 14, I love serving all people, especially people of color, immigrants, refugees, and the Latino Community. I am driven by a passion for housing and social justice and the belief that everyone - regardless, of

their income, disability, race, or immigration status - deserves a safe healthy place to call home. I have about 14 years of Senior Organizer experience, some of my strong skills are doing leadership development, community organizing, and multilingual-multicultural community engagement.

### **What excited you about serving on the TCPB?**

I am excited to be on the Tri County Planning Body because I believe I can represent the voices of a multi-ethnic, multicultural community that many times their voices are ignored, forgotten, or simply not on decision-making tables. Housing should not have borders and by working together we can make sure that programs, services, and well-established network support are equally lifted up in every region. All resources should be available to all communities regardless of where they live, work, worship, go to school, play, etc.



## Yoni Kahn

Pronouns: he/him/his

County where you reside and/or work: Multnomah

### **Why does racial equity matter to you?**

My family consists of immigrants and refugees who are from a very different part of the world. We communicated in a language that most others could not understand. As a first-generation American who spoke several languages, I often served as a cultural intermediary for members of my family by being the bridge between mainstream American life and the ancient traditions of our household.

Many of the immediate and extended family who helped raise me needed assistance with things like what to say in a medical appointment, how to use public transportation and assistance translating the choices on a voting ballot. I was honored to play that role for generations of family who had fled their homeland to find safety and freedom. It taught me to see things from many different perspectives and speak up for the people and values that I cared about.

I care about racial equity because I experienced how prior generations of my family sacrificed so much to pull together a stable life. Sometimes I think about many of the similarly situated children in America whose families rely on them to help navigate the unfamiliarity of everyday life in the "new world." When the dust settles, I want to look back and know that I played some role in making life better for the families holding themselves together in the shadows.

### **What excited you about serving on the TCPB?**

I am honored to have been selected as a member of the TCPB. I am looking forward to building relationships with other members and understanding their perspectives. I hope to contribute in a manner that helps build consensus and that emphasizes my knowledge of housing services, state and federal civil rights law and Medicaid.



## Steve Rudman

Pronouns: he/him/his

County where you reside and/or work: Multnomah

Steve Rudman's career spans over 35 years working locally in the affordable housing and community development field. He was Director of the City of Portland's Bureau of Housing and Community Development from 1993-2001 and Executive Director of Home Forward from 2001-14. Steve also served on the founding boards of numerous community-based organizations such as Portland Youthbuilders, Portland Housing Center, Proud Ground and REACH. Now retired, he currently co-chairs the Metro affordable housing bond oversight committee.

### **Why does racial equity matter to you?**

Steve is passionate about creating a strong nexus between new affordable housing opportunities and a reduction in homelessness. He also believes it's critical to address the racial disproportionality in our homeless population. With regard to regional policy and strategy development, he hopes we'll be intentional, support culturally specific services, and be willing to redesign systems to eliminate racial disparities.

### **What excited you about serving on the TCPB?**

He believes our challenge is to "think outside of the jurisdictional silo box" and strengthen our regional supportive housing capacity with this funding. The aim should be to foster a culture of shared best practice, innovation, mutual accountability, and trust. He also hopes to seek creative partnerships and alignment with other systems of support, in particular behavioral health. Steve truly thinks the SHS initiative has the potential to be a game changer as it offers an extraordinary opportunity to combat chronic homelessness in our region with dedicated, flexible resources.



## Zoi Coppiano

Pronouns: she/her/ella

County where you reside and/or work: Washington

### **Why does racial equity matter to you?**

I am from Ecuador. I moved to Oregon 19 years ago, but I didn't speak the language or understand the culture. I know firsthand how hard it is to get to know the different systems and the many barriers you can encounter while doing it.

My passion for being of service to the community allowed me to volunteer and work in different social services settings and for the last 8 years, I work in the Homeless and Housing Stability department at Community Action in Washington

County. I have served my community and participants of programs by finding and supporting them with the best resources to accommodate their needs and/or housing stability needs. I identify and can name many of the issues people living in Oregon must navigate to find stability or thrive, including in the Immigrant, Refugee, BIPOC, LGBTQ+ communities. I am familiar with the issues in the many Systems of Care, in access, linguistics, bias, racism, Systemic racism, discrimination for many reasons, classism, regionalism, and housing discrimination with restrictive rules, regulations, policies, and eligibility criteria to name a few.

I recognized that structural race, gender, and inequities remain today, and they need to be named and addressed. Equity in service delivery is important! I want to be able to inform with that lens and focus on our integration with equity, as well as be able to provide good quality housing services to all.

### **What excited you about serving on the TCPB?**

I worked in the Coordinated Entry for Homeless Individuals at Community Action. I have done entry access, navigation, and supported the success of my community when they found a place, they can call home. I was also a Rent Well student and a Rent Well Teacher. That knowledge has given me insights into the specific needs people living in Oregon have and how important it is to listen to those needs.

With the Supporting Housing services guided by regional goals, I see a great opportunity that will benefit our community.

Metro, Clackamas, Washington, and Multnomah counties are in my point of view, one big, beautiful city as we are all close by and share many commonalities. One person can live in one area, work in another, and have their social net or social support throughout all areas. For someone experiencing housing instability or homelessness, it is the same. I have met people who camp in one city one day and move to another city the next or spend the night on public transportation which allows them to have free breakfast in one city and lunch in another. We need collaboration, integration, sharing best practices, to know our participants and analyze our data among all of us to make sure we are advancing equity and providing opportunities and justice.



## Yvette Marie Hernandez

Pronouns: she/her/hers

County where you reside and/or work: Clark/Multnomah

### **What excited you about serving on the TCPB?**

I'm honored and excited to serve on the Tri-County Planning Body Committee. I believe we have an incredible opportunity to make an impactful change to the homeless crisis with the measure funds and advance racial equity as a united region. I'm passionate about ending homelessness and addressing racial equity because of my own lived experiences with discrimination, poverty, homelessness, and housing instability. I want to be a part of making a difference for our

homeless neighbors – as they are counting on all of us to end the vicious cycle. Homelessness and housing instability is traumatizing – no one should have to experience this in their lives.

### **Why does racial equity matter to you?**

As a brown woman, I'm working on unlearning and unpacking the whiteness I consumed through most of my life. In doing so, I've had to revisit my painful experiences of racism while simultaneously acknowledging that I must enter the conversation about race and racism from a place of racial privilege and understand that it's okay to feel discomfort. My anti-racism journey has been complex, insightful, and painful. Although revisiting my personal experiences can be emotionally exhausting – telling my story little-by-little brings forth awareness of the complexity of racism and healing to my heart. Though my lived experiences left scares, it made me a strong and resilient woman. Therefore, my goal is to build relationships, trust and center homeless communities of color, particularly, Black and Native Americans because of the historic and ongoing racism from slavery and violent land theft to continued housing discrimination. Housing is a human right!



## Mercedes Elizalde

Pronouns: she/her/hers

County where you reside and/or work: Clark/Multnomah

### **Why does racial equity matter to you?**

Advancing racial equity means we are closing the disparities in access to services and outcomes for people engaged in those services. The disparities are caused by community wide, long-trenched policies and practices; therefore, correcting these disparities is an act of justice, it's how we can actively live anti-racist principles and heal our communities from the long-term effects of racism. Knowing that many best practices were built with white providers for white clients, we need to take a data-driven and community centered approach to understanding what

interventions work best for BIPOC clients specifically, and integrate that learning into the design of services, including funding and reporting structures. It's not just about getting input from communities most impacted; it's about designing systems to align with and invest in community's strengths. To truly improve the health and wellbeing of our communities we need to look for and evaluate these trends at a system level.

### **What excited you about serving on the TCPB?**

While individual factors can impact a person's risk of experiencing homelessness, the primary drivers are systematic. The availability and accessibility of affordable housing, health care and living wage jobs ultimately determine if

someone's risk factors will lead to homelessness, or if a community is resilient enough to maintain housing stability in the face of risk. It will take system integration, alignment and reform to make our communities more resilient and able to respond to homelessness, poverty and complex health needs. Given the Tri-County Planning Body's goals, this feels like the right place to center system level work that can improve the quality and quantity of community-based services. I have a passion for problem solving, and look forward to pairing a system level approach with a direct service lens. The impacts of poverty and housing instability are not contained by county boundaries. People work and live across the region and seek social support, health care and other resources that meet their needs. Continuity of care and consistency in quality of services is something the region should strive for, to ensure we are investing in healthy communities. While people may still travel for connections they want, it shouldn't be because their community lacks options. I think the challenges and the opportunities are one in the same. To make our community more resilient, we need to have common goals, strategies and investments that create a minimum standard of care.



## Clackamas County Chair Tootie Smith

Pronouns: she/her/hers

County where you reside and/or work : Clackamas

### **Why does racial equity matter to you?**

Racial equity is an important part of achieving a robust, community-driven process. My ideal is that voices from historically disadvantaged or marginalized groups are able to fully participate and share key information. Each perspective has value and brings new strategies, areas of concern and opportunities to light.

### **What excited you about serving on the TCPB?**

The three counties are taking an important step to address housing and homelessness as a region. This is a robust group of stakeholders, business leaders, nonprofits and government leaders committed to the success of the Supportive Housing Services work. I am eager to see the innovative planning, cooperation and investment that will go into creating the TCPB Regional Plan. I would like to see efficiencies and strategies that create added capacity for shelter, housing and case management that translates directly into less people living on the street.



## Sahaan McKelvey

Pronouns: he/him/his

County where you reside or live: Multnomah

### **Why does racial equity matter to you?**

Racial equity matters deeply to me because I have seen the negative impacts of racial inequity both individually and collectively over the course of my life as an African American male. Growing up in Portland, Oregon has given me a very direct and close-up view of the oppressive impacts of societal racism and the many ways that this manifests itself in inequitable opportunities for my people. I see the disproportionate representation of African Americans who; live in poverty, who are incarcerated, who are involved with child welfare, who are unemployed,

who are living without high school or college education, and who suffer from houselessness. None of these oppressive metrics are a secret, and none of these oppressive realities are unknown. And the fact that this reality for my people has not changed in centuries only highlights the equally disturbing reality that these conditions for African American people, across the U.S. but specifically in Portland, Oregon, have been purposefully and intentionally designed.

We live in a society that has been built on inequity for people of color, and specifically African American people. And in order to effectively address the inequities for our people that have resulted from centuries of oppressive institutional practice; then we must be equally as purposeful in dismantling these oppressive institutional practices as our society has been for centuries in building them. Racial equity matters to me because I have to do my part to contribute to dismantling this oppression on purpose.

### **What excited you about serving on the TCPB?**

I am excited about serving on the TCPB because this is an opportunity to contribute to seeing real and meaningful change in our region. We see the oppressive impacts of structural inequity if every sector of our society. But housing is a big deal, and the oppressive impact of a historical lack of access to housing for people of color is a tremendous wrong

that we have a unique opportunity to make a little bit less wrong with the effective implementation of the SHS funds that were recently approved by our region voters.

Being able to help shape, measure, and actualize the long and short term impacts of these funds for community members who have been historically marginalized is not only exciting, it is meaningful and purposeful for me. This is an opportunity to contribute to taking steps as a region towards being a community that creates a level of access to housing that has never been a reality before for the communities of color that reside here.



## Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington

Pronouns: she/her/hers

County where you reside or live: Washington

### **Why does racial equity matter to you?**

Racial equity matters to me because I grew up seeing the impacts on communities who have not had the same access to government services based solely on their skin color. It is vitally important that there be equitable access to services, and we make efforts to mitigate the generational impact of inequitable policies by pursuing programs that allow marginalized community members to flourish in Washington County. We must act to see that racial and ethnic identifiers are no

longer a predictor of long-term health and economic opportunity.

### **What excited you about serving on the TCPB?**

I have been a true believer in conquering regional issues since the late 1980's culminating in my 2007 – 2018 tenure as a Metro Councilor. Serving on this Tri-County Planning Body is the natural continuation of my efforts to see data driven positive outcomes to our region homelessness issue. As the Chair of the Washington County Board of Commissioners I am excited to participate in this body as it takes the next steps toward comprehensive regional efforts to address homelessness.



## Chair Jessica Vega Pederson

Pronouns: she/hers

County where you reside and/or work: Multnomah

### **Why does racial equity matter to you?**

As a Latina elected official, I know the work of dismantling structural racism requires deep engagement with the systems that drive housing, education, employment, transportation, climate and community safety. I'm committed to center the voices of BIPOC communities in our policy-making process and advocate for the needs of our diverse region. Multnomah County's diverse and dynamic workforce is made up of more than 5,500 people who successfully

provide a vast array of services that benefit everyone who lives, works or does business in Multnomah County.

We create and manage programs and resources to maintain a safe, healthy and vibrant community. Inclusively leading with racial equity gives us the framework, tools, and resources to make sure our programs make the most impact for the most people, especially those who are most vulnerable. As our local and regional governments deepen our work to eliminate racial inequity, I continue to prioritize the transformation of systems that have historically marginalized residents. Each day offers a new opportunity to support Latine/x, BIPOC and immigrant communities across the County and within the County's workforce and I look forward to this daily engagement with the people whose lives are most impacted by the work we do.

### **What excited you about serving on the TCPB?**

Our homelessness response system is only as strong as our partnerships. As a tri-county region, we share a commitment to working together and building strategic, attainable goals that will help hold us accountable in this critical moment when we all must work collaboratively and proactively to address the crisis on our streets. I believe in the region you believe in – one filled with opportunity, safety, health and belonging. One where homelessness is rare, and brief. Where people, no matter their race, age or income level, have homes they can afford. And where each of our residents have the opportunity and support to take the next step in what their lives can become. And we must have the community and partners we serve at the table to help us make the decisions that will take us from where we are to where we need to be. I value this planning body for its diversity of thought and experience as we consider



the tough challenges before us to capitalize on the work of the Metro Supportive Housing Services program and the transformations it offers to us as a region.

