



OFA State and Tribal Technical Assistance and Resources

The Whole Family Approach: How TANF Programs Can Engage Customers in Mental Health Services

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Maria Aguirre-Mendoza, Executive Director, Soboba Tribal TANF Program

Dr. Maria Aguirre-Mendoza, member of the Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe of Los Angeles, California, currently serves as the Executive Director for the Soboba Tribal TANF Program (STTP). While in this position, she has helped serve numerous American Indian families in both rural and urban settings in achieving self-sufficiency goals. Part of these goals includes the importance of mental health. While serving as the STTP Executive Director, Dr. Aguirre-Mendoza has continued to maintain holistic mental health counseling services for program participants through a case management approach. STTP has found that career/educational assessments, drug testing, and at least one mandatory mental health counseling session is highly beneficial in helping program participants identify and remove barriers to their self-sufficiency path.

In her early years, Dr. Aguirre-Mendoza obtained her Bachelor's degree from the University of California, Berkeley and went on to earn her Master and Doctoral degrees from California Baptist University in Riverside, California. Her work with tribal communities led to her completing a dissertation titled, Cultural Infusion In Tribal TANF Programs of California. Dr. Aguirre-Mendoza also serves as an adjunct Professor for California Baptist University, where she sits on student dissertation boards for topics related to and affecting the tribal community.

Lisa Guetzkow, Integrated Programs Manager, Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, Ramsey County, Minnesota

Lisa Guetzkow is an experienced leader, having worked in human services and workforce development for over 30 years. She is driven by her passion and commitment to ensure individuals and families are supported by programs that are rooted in collaboration, best practices, community voice, and a comprehensive continuum of care. Her impact in leading integrated service delivery initiatives includes experience in workforce development, chemical and mental health, children and family services, housing, reentry, education and training, and community resources. She has worked in both non-profit and government organizations throughout her career and holds a Bachelor of Science in Social Work from Metropolitan State University.

Melisha Montañó, OPRE Program Manager, New Mexico Human Services Department

Melisha Montañó is a Northern New Mexican Hispanic woman in long-term recovery from substance use and mental health challenges for 12 years. She currently serves as the State of New Mexico program manager for the Office of Peer Recovery and Engagement (OPRE) Behavioral Health Services Division, and the Human Services Department. Her work focuses on leveraging the lived experience of those with mental health vulnerabilities and/or substance misuse as a way to improve the continuum of care. She built her career on lifting people up as they make their way into the behavioral health field with integrity and a strong emphasis on ethics. Her efforts focus on cross-agency collaboration promoting a unified



peer support model. Ms. Montaño considers herself a walking miracle, and because of her lived experience, she gets to lead the OPRE program with grace and dignity. Her passion is encouraging peers to step outside their comfort zone, to know that they are never alone in the hard work they do, and that sharing their lived experience is LIFE to someone that feels like they have run out of options. She is a Certified Peer Support Worker Trainer, Certified Older Adult Peer Specialist Trainer, and Certified Support Housing Peer Specialist Trainer.

Arnold Ontiveros, Staff Manager, New Mexico Human Services Department

Arnold Ontiveros is a staff manager with the Work and Family Support Bureau within the New Mexico Human Services Department. He obtained his Bachelors in Community Health from New Mexico State University. He is originally from Lovington, New Mexico and has spent his whole life living within the state lines of the Land of Enchantment. New Mexico is home, and he strives to develop programs to improve the lives of others. His passion and background consist of 15 years of case management, program implementation, and innovative strategies to better serve the citizens of New Mexico.

Mary Roberto, Project Director, ICF

Mary Roberto has over 25 years of state and local level leadership experience in human services and workforce development policy development, program implementation, evidence-informed technical assistance, training, and coaching. She has led state and local cross-system initiatives and interoperability efforts for a wide range of human services and workforce development programs. She was instrumental in shaping systems interoperability among state and local level human services and workforce development programs, including the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/SNAP E&T. She has conducted federal and state policy analysis and implemented various cross-program initiatives, including client assessment, effective case management, work requirements and training engagement initiatives, career pathways, violence prevention, and safety net programs, as well as related statewide training and technical assistance projects. Ms. Roberto also specializes in poverty reduction initiatives and interagency/multi-program interoperability.

Dr. Mary Beth Vogel-Ferguson, Research Associate Professor, Social Research Institute, University of Utah

For the past 24 years, Dr. Mary Beth Vogel-Ferguson has directed research studies and program evaluations with state and regional level government agencies. She is currently the Principal Investigator of several studies sponsored by Utah's Department of Workforce Services. These studies include evaluations of the work-focused cash assistance program, refugee programs, employment for formerly chronically homeless individuals, and implementation of trauma-informed approaches across the state. She has assisted all levels of agency management, from senior leadership to front-line workers, in using data for program and policy development. She also provides workshops for local and national agency administrators, research bodies, and social work groups addressing issues related to welfare policy, trauma-informed approaches, employment issues, poverty, and serving diverse low-income populations.