

Randall Lewis/ ULI Building Healthy Places Forum

PARTICIPANT BOOK



Photo: Earvin "Magic" Johnson Park Recreation Center | Image Source: KPFF

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In conjunction with the 2023 ULI Fall Meeting

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SPEAKERS

Forum Welcome

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Randall Lewis oversees the sales and marketing operations of the Company. Randall received his B.A. from Claremont McKenna College. He is regarded as an industry leader in promoting the arts, education, healthy living and sustainable development initiatives. He has been President of the Inland Empire Arts Foundation, Secretary of the Los Angeles County Citizens Planning Council, director of the HomeBuilder’s Council, and national director of the National Association of HomeBuilders. Randall was named in the Los Angeles Times 2006 “West 100” list as one of the top 100 influential people in southern California. He has also received the California Business Properties Association Champion of the Industry Award and has been inducted into the California Building Industry Association Hall of Fame. Randall is a long time ULI member as well as a Governor of the ULI Foundation. Randall serves on several executive boards, including the USC School of Policy, Planning and Development, the UCLA School of Public Policy, Loma Linda University Medical Center’s Orthopedic and Rehabilitation Institute Advisory Council, Cal Poly Pomona’s National Development Council, and co-chairs the San Bernardino County Alliance for Education. He is recognized as an expert in the real estate industry and is frequently quoted in various newspapers, magazines, and trade journals. Randall has over 30 years of experience in the real estate industry.



Rachel MacCleery

Co-Executive Director of the Randall Lewis Center

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Rachel MacCleery is Co-Executive Director of the Lewis Center for Sustainability in Real Estate at the Urban Land Institute, where she leads the real estate industry in creating places and buildings where people and the environment thrive. In this role, Rachel provides strategic direction for the Lewis Center’s programs on sustainability, resilience, health and the built environment. Between 2013 and 2022, she led ULI’s Building Healthy Places program, which leveraged the power of ULI’s global networks to shape projects and places in ways that improve the health of people and communities, and prior to that she led ULI’s Infrastructure Initiative. Rachel has extensive knowledge of land use, environment and sustainability, social equity, and infrastructure policy and practice issues. Rachel has worked at ULI since 2008 and previously worked for AECOM and the District of Columbia Department of Transportation. She has a Masters Degree in Public Administration and Urban and Regional Planning from Princeton University, and also speaks Mandarin Chinese. She currently lives in Washington, DC.



Beth Nilsson

Director, Healthy Places

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Beth Nilsson supports Building Healthy Places through content creation and program management centered on the impacts of the built environment on health, well-being, and social equity. She is a primary author of ULI’s “[Together: Strategies for Promoting Health and Community in Privately Owned Third Places](#)” and manages ULI’s [Health Leaders Network](#).

Prior to ULI, Beth worked at a national commercial general contractor as a senior sustainability specialist where she fostered an environment dedicated to advanced sustainable construction and creating healthy buildings and communities. Beth holds a MSc in City Design and Social Science from the London School of Economics, where her studies centered on health and sustainability in urban and regional planning. She also holds a B.A. in Interior Design from Marymount University.



Jordan Downs Redevelopment Presentation

John King

Director, Community Engagement
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Passionate about making positive change, John has spent his entire professional career serving the underserved communities and families in Los Angeles. He has been an employee of the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) for 24 years. In his current capacity as the Director of Community Engagement, John works to ensure that HACLA’s policies and major initiatives are effectively and compassionately introduced to our public housing communities, while cultivating meaningful relationships with residents and community stakeholders. During his tenure at HACLA, John has served in various capacities including; Director of Resident Relations, Director of Planning and Policy as well Intergovernmental Relations. John earned his Bachelor’s degree from Seattle University and received his Master’s Degree from California State University Dominguez Hills. John also completed the University of Southern California’s Ross Minority Real Estate Development Certificate Program. When he’s not working, John also serves as the Assistant Pastor of a small Church in South Los Angeles.



Jenny Scanlin

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Jenny Scanlin was appointed Chief Strategic Development Officer of the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) in February 2018. In this capacity, she oversees the Strategic Initiatives Bureau of HACLA, including its Real Estate Development, Asset Management, Community Engagement, Partnership Development, Innovation and Fund Development, and Data/Metrics Departments. She leads HACLA’s efforts to diversify its portfolio, implement the Agency’s 20-year Vision Plan, stabilize its assets and develop projects, investments and programs that emphasize equity and outcome-driven impacts. Additionally, she leads a team of staff at the LA/Watts WorkSource Center and presides as President of the non-profit, Build Hope, Inc. Prior to her current position at HACLA, Jenny served as the Agency’s Director of Development from 2015 to 2018. Before that, she held various senior positions working for the City of Los Angeles’s Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD) and former Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA/LA), as well as the Alameda County Community Development Agency, Eden I&R, Inc., the Office of Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson, and the East Bay Conversion and Reinvestment Commission. She has a Dual BA Degree in Political Science and Social Work from the University of California, Berkeley.



MudTown Farms Presentation & Tour

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Watts Rising Panel Discussion

John Jones III

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John Jones III was born in Gardena and raised in the Florence-Firestone and Watts communities. As a youth, he believed he was destined for gang life due to both sides of his family being members of a local gang in Watts. At the age of 14, after being a part of a tagging crew, he met Deputy Ernie Ortega and Ramsey Nicholson who helped change his life for the better.

In the summer of 1994, Jones and his friends were offered jobs by the same people who once adversely affected his life. From this experience he learned the value of hard work, making a hard-earned dollar, and the truth about gang life. Jones began visiting Roosevelt Park where he participated in youth football and basketball. He would go on to play both sports at Fremont and Huntington Park High Schools. At the age of 19, John was blessed with a child, which led to life changes. Although he had to stop attending school and forgo enlisting in the military to work, he bounced back. He decided to enroll into LA Job Corps and Guajome Park Academy (SIATech) and earned his high school diploma, Business Management and Office Management certifications by the age of 21. In 2013, Jones became a member of the South LA CERT Team in Watts, now known as the Watts CERT Team and received the John D. Solomon Award from President Barack Obama along with the team from Los Angeles. The John D. Solomon Award is one of the highest awards in the nation. After completing these certifications, he became Field Deputy for Council District 15 under Councilmember Joe Buscaino for seven years. When Jones resigned from LA City, he was then appointed by Mayor Eric Garcetti to be a Commissioner for the LA City Transportation Committee.

At the age of 28, he took on an opportunity that would change his life forever. This opportunity led to the start of East Side Riders Bike Club (ESR), a community-based organization that has provided support to people in need in the Watts community since its beginning. In 2018, ESR became a nonprofit and has continued its mission of providing food, bikes and more to the Watts community.

Jones continues to serve as ESRBC President and CEO today, he sits on the board for Caltrans District 7 committee for Transportation, Serves as a member of the LA County Bicycle Master Plan 2023. For more information about the East Side Riders Bike Club please follow us on all social media platforms.



Ivory Rose Parnell-Chambeshi

Director of Neighborhood Initiatives, Watts Rising Collaborative

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Ivory Rose Parnell-Chambeshi is an equity- and sustainability-focused city planner and community economic development leader. She currently serves in Mayor Karen Bass’s Office as Director of Neighborhood Initiatives for the Watts Rising Collaborative, a multimillion dollar, resident-guided, place-based and cross-sectoral community development and climate resilience initiative, co-led by the Housing Authority of LA (HACLA). In this capacity, she guides implementation of Watts Rising’s CA SGC Transformative Climate Communities and HUD Choice Neighborhood Implementation grants, and serves as mayoral liaison for HACLA’s redevelopment of Jordan Downs, a billion-plus dollar, 70-acre housing, human capital development, commercial and open space initiative. Ivory also leads implementation of the multifaceted Displacement Avoidance Plan, designed to shift policy and provide resources to help Watts residents thrive in place. Prior to this role, she led high-impact economic empowerment and social services programs for CBOs in South LA and NGOs in Southern Africa. This experience motivated her to found Urban Rising Group, an organizational capacity-building and land use planning consultancy. Ivory earned a Bachelor’s degree in Ethnic Studies from UC Riverside, Master’s degrees in Urban Planning and Public Administration from the University of Southern California, and a Certificate in Sustainability from UCLA Extension Center. She leverages her vast training and expertise to serve in various advisory capacities including for the CivicWell/Resilient Cities Catalyst-led 2022 Statewide Climate Resilience Landscape Analysis. She is most proud to be a South Central L.A. native and ‘mommy’ to two phenomenal daughters that she and her husband steward to “run the world” as Beyoncé proclaimed. These core identities compel her to work purposefully to cultivate wellness-fostering, culturally-rooted, and justice-centered communities of choice and opportunity.



Teresa Perez

Director of Grants Administration

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Teresa Perez is a Los Angeles native, grew up in East Los Angeles, and has always been driven to help create healthy and safe communities across Los Angeles. Teresa graduated from Cal State Long Beach with a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Science and Policy and from UCLA with a Masters in Public Health. Teresa has worked for GRID Alternatives and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health focusing on environmental justice work from climate change initiatives, lead abatement programs, and providing solar technology and training to underserved communities across Los Angeles.



Treasure Sheppard

Project Manager

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Treasure currently works as a Strategic Initiatives Project Manager in the Strategic Development Division of the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), where she is responsible for strengthening and growing a collective impact, collaborative model which requires establishing and maintaining cooperative working relationships with a variety of individuals, internal departments, outside organizations, consultants and related public agencies. Highly skilled in developing structures, policies, and practices for grant implementation and management, she shepherds a variety of infrastructure and capital projects through concept to completion within budget while meeting all schedule milestones. She oversees a spectrum of projects focused on sustainability, public and environmental health, mobility and transportation, small and large infrastructure, and affordable housing construction.

Previously, she worked as an Analyst for the Community Development Division of the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) where she managed reporting on Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), HOME Investment Partnerships, and Fair Housing programs acting as a liaison between the federal government (Housing & Urban Development – HUD) and local municipalities and community-based organizations. As a Program Specialist at the LACDA, she managed the project-based voucher program in over 30 privately-owned multifamily housing projects with over 900 units, oversaw initial lease-up of new supportive housing projects, determined applicant eligibility, performed contract maintenance, amongst other related duties. Before entering urban development, Treasure worked as an Operations Manager leading emergency preparedness, health equity, and community outreach initiatives at Lake Avenue Church (LAC).

In addition to her work at the HACLA, Treasure serves her community as a Commissioner to the City of Pasadena’s Recreation & Parks Commission, Board Member of the Pasadena Continuum of Care, and President & CEO of the Pasadena Recreation & Parks Foundation. Lastly, Treasure is completing her Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership at Northeastern University and her dissertation focuses on the role intersectoral collaboration plays upon health equity and community resilience.



Aaron Thomas

Director of Urban Forestry

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Aaron Thomas is a certified arborist and environmental activist. For the past 25 years he has worked with North East Trees where he has overseen the planting of thousands of trees throughout Los Angeles. He served as Mayor Eric Garcetti's commissioner for the Community Forest Advisory Committee.



Angelica Urquidez

Chief of Programming/Community Engagement

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Angelica, in her role as the Chief of Programming and Community Engagement at the Thinkwatts Foundation, is dedicated to advancing the foundation's mission of addressing the unique needs of the communities they support. She actively contributes to the coordination and execution of programs and projects that deliver both immediate and lasting positive effects for the individuals within those communities.

As a proud native of Watts, Angelica's commitment to her community is deeply rooted not only in her personal experiences but also in her active role as a Street Team Member at Wattsrising. With a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and a fervent passion for environmental justice, she is unwavering in her determination to cultivate partnerships and ensure the seamless implementation of programs and projects.



Watts Rising Evaluation Progress Presentation

Elena Hernandez

Project Manager

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Elena Hernandez (she/her) is a project manager at the UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation. Elena has worked at the Luskin Center since the fall of 2019, starting as a graduate student researcher. Her research includes the evaluation of the Strategic Growth Council's [Transformative Climate Communities](#) (TCC) program, the nation's most comprehensive investments in local climate action. As a staff researcher, Elena collects qualitative and quantitative data for outputs and outcomes of TCC projects.

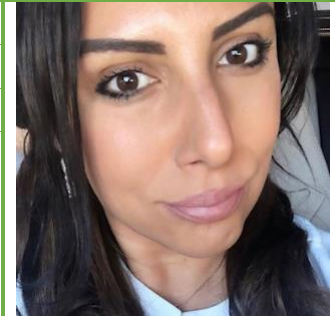
Elena graduated with master's degrees from UCLA in urban and regional planning and public health, with a concentration in environmental health sciences. She holds a bachelor's degree in geography and environmental studies from UCLA. Elena brings her lived experience growing up in the Inland Empire to lead environmental equity work for vulnerable communities.



Jordan Downs Redevelopment Tour

Sheena Baca

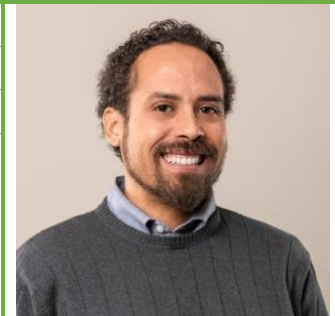
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John Mimms

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As Vice President of Development, John Mimms is involved in all aspects of the development cycle including site acquisition, community outreach, underwriting, negotiations, as well as design and construction management. He communicates and works with financial institutions, investors, community partners, and government entities to ensure success and implementation of complex affordable housing developments.



Earvin “Magic” Johnson Park Panel Discussion

Rachel Bennett

Director of Health Equity

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Rachel Bennett, MPH, MURP, is a national expert in public health, community planning, and park equity. Rachel has created and implemented projects impacting communities across the nation to address a range of issues, including health, environmental resources, transportation, and climate change. She began her career with an international nonprofit organization that provided medical care and health education in countries around the world. Since then, Rachel has worked closer to home, focusing on how policies and systems within the field of urban planning impact people’s health. While earning dual master’s degrees in public health and urban planning at UCLA, Rachel worked closely with Dr. Dick Jackson, a distinguished leader in the built environment and health field. For the last 15 years, Rachel has been dedicated to advancing health equity and environmental justice as crucial elements in urban planning. Prior to joining MIG in 2023, Rachel spent a decade working with Prevention Institute, advocating for policies and investments that support healthy communities. There, she led the People, Parks, and Power (P3) national initiative, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which supports community power building to advance park equity in Black, Latino, and Indigenous communities across the U.S. As MIG’s new Director of Health Equity, Rachel works with clients, communities, and MIG’s own team to co-create policies, places, and programs that advance health and justice for all. When she’s not thinking about building healthy places, Rachel enjoys spending time with her two young daughters and exploring new parks.

Marianne Eppig

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Marianne Eppig is a Director of Resilience within the ULI Randall Lewis Center for Sustainability in Real Estate, which is dedicated to creating healthy, resilient, and high-performance communities around the world. Marianne leads research and publications, training, technical assistance, and educational activities on resilience topics to support and enhance environmental performance, economic opportunity, and social equity in real estate and land use.

Prior to joining the Urban Resilience team, Marianne was a Director with ULI Colorado, where she led advisory services, diversity, equity, and inclusion programming, building healthy places programming, and member committees across the state of Colorado. Before joining the ULI Colorado team, Marianne coordinated the year-long “City in 2050” initiative for ULI Columbus.

Marianne has worked with organizations dedicated to sustainable development and resilient land use for over a decade. These include the Alliance for Sustainable Colorado (now the Alliance Center), Greater Ohio Policy Center (Ohio’s smart growth think and do tank), GreenCityBlueLake Institute (a nonprofit dedicated to sustainable land use), and BrownFlynn (a corporate sustainability consulting firm now called ERM). Marianne has a bachelor’s degree in Environmental Studies, Comparative Literature, and Spanish from Dartmouth College and master’s degrees in City and Regional Planning and in Public Policy and Administration from The Ohio State University.



Chester Kano

Chief of Development

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Chester leads a team of busy project managers, designers, architects, and landscape architects managing a portfolio of over 300 projects valued at over \$400 million for one of the nation's largest public parks agencies. Chester has more than 25 years of private and public sector building experience in the U.S. and Japan; he leans heavily into projects that support LA County Parks' mission to serve as faithful stewards of parklands while building healthy, resilient communities through an equity-centered allocation of public resources. The Earvin "Magic" Johnson Park redevelopment is an exemplary project, one that primes the park for more investment for generations to come.



Jennifer Zell

Director, Los Angeles Operations; Director, Regenerative Design Studio

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Jennifer Zell is an award-winning landscape architect who leverages over two decades of experience to produce innovative design solutions in public, commercial and private landscapes. Jennifer discovered an aptitude for her profession in high school—drawn by the prospect of combining her creativity with her love of the outdoors. Her work encompasses a full range of landscapes throughout Southern California from mountain to desert to sea. Jennifer is constantly engaged by the variety of challenges she encounters and the new solutions she helps to devise. She is committed to finding ways to increase biodiversity in urban areas and utilizes her team building skills to lead efforts that can enhance and sustain the natural world. Through her designs, Jennifer strives to reveal the hidden qualities that make each place a unique experience—framing the space, features, plants, light or geology and allowing it to be seen anew. She frequently presents at conferences on topics related to regenerative design and climate adaptation including Greenbuild, California Society of Ecological Restoration and the ASCE International Conference on Sustainable Infrastructure. She also teaches and writes for industry publications.



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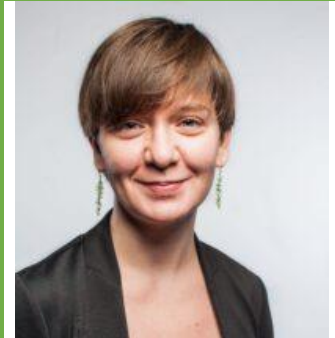
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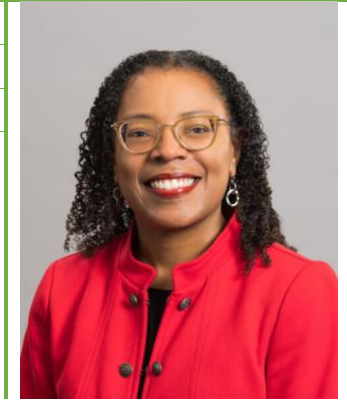
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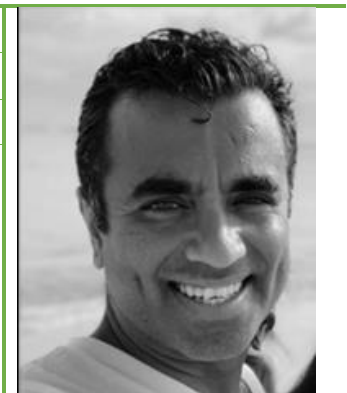
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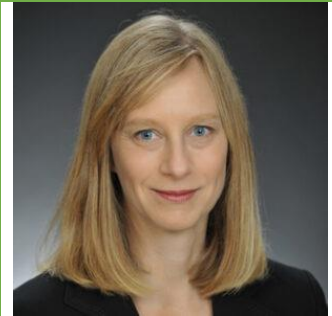
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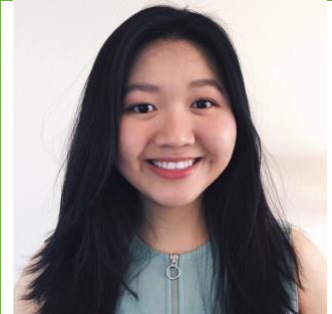
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Emily Zhang

Senior Associate, Healthy Places

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SUGGESTED PRE-READING & RESOURCES

Watts Rising, Jordan Downs Redevelopment, & Watts Neighborhood

- [Watts Rising website](#)
- [Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles \(HACLA\) website](#)
- [Jordan Downs Redevelopment](#)
- [Watts Labor Community Action Committee \(WLCAC\)](#) & [MudTown Farms](#)
- [Watts Rising striving to improve the lives of residents](#)
- [About the Transformative Climate Communities \(TCC\) program](#)
- [Transformative Climate Communities Supports a Vision for a Healthier Watts](#)
- [Watts Rising Data Collection & Indicators – Progress Reports \(UCLA Luskin\)](#)
- [History of Watts](#)

Earvin “Magic” Johnson Park & Willowbrook Neighborhood

- [What’s hiding in plain sight at Magic Johnson Park? Maybe a solution to our water problem](#)
- [L.A. loses 100 billion gallons of water a year. This park is helping recapture it](#)
- [“The Comeback Kid”: Willowbrook’s History and Transformation](#)
- [Sanctum- a short video of interviews with community leaders about EMJ Park](#)
- [ARLA \(Accelerate Resilience Los Angeles\) Living Infrastructure Field Kit with Magic Johnson Park](#)