

CHALLENGE GRANT FELLOWS



Lauren Bigelow (Palo Alto)

Lauren (she/her) joins the Fellowship from Palo Alto Housing, where she helped create policy and administered Below Market Rate programs for the cities of Palo Alto, Mountain View, Redwood City, and Los Altos. While at Palo Alto Housing, Lauren focused on educating tenants on local housing policy and connecting them to local housing and advocacy resources. Lauren serves as a Commissioner on Menlo Park's Housing Commission and San Mateo County's Commission on Disabilities, where she works to review development proposals and update affordable housing guidelines to ensure equity and inclusion of historically excluded communities. Prior to Palo Alto Housing, Lauren worked at College Track in East Palo Alto to bridge opportunity gaps faced by low income communities disproportionately comprised of people of color. She has a BS in Psychology and Social Action from Palo Alto University and a BA in Theatre and Communications from Goucher College in Baltimore, MD. Lauren is devoted to preserving the diversity of communities by protecting current residents and increasing the supply of affordable housing.



Karen Camacho (East Palo Alto)

Karen (she/her) is an experienced organizer, coming most recently from the Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo County (HLCSMC). At HLCSMC, Karen advocated for the protection, preservation, and production of affordable housing; collaborated with different government and community stakeholders; and empowered residents to speak up about affordable housing opportunities in their communities. She also worked to implement the Surplus Land Act and to ensure affordable housing opportunities on public land. Prior to joining HLCSMC, Karen worked at the ACLU of Northern California as an organizer and policy advocate on criminal justice and reproductive rights issues. She gained much of her early advocacy experience organizing around Latinx rights in college and advocating – alongside Buena Vista Mobile Home Park residents – for individuals facing eviction. Karen has interned at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law in Washington, D.C., and worked as a mentor and educator for youth in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. She is passionate about empowering marginalized communities and ensuring that low-income people of color have the tools they need to authentically create the changes they want to see in their communities. Karen completed her bachelor's degree in Political Science and a master's degree in Latin American Studies at Stanford University. She currently serves on the Rent Stabilization Board of East Palo Alto.

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Anna Cash, MCP (Berkeley)

Anna's (she/her) interests and experience center around social, racial, and economic justice, and planning for more equitable cities. Prior to the fellowship, Anna held the role of Program Director of the Urban Displacement Project (UDP) at UC Berkeley, where she was responsible for research management, with an emphasis on community engagement and policy applications of research on displacement. During graduate school, Anna's research explored the diversity of housing tenure types in Oakland, shedding light on who is left out of resident protections. Prior to graduate school, she lived in Brazil, conducting research on worker cooperatives, and reporting on displacement and the inspiring community organizing happening in favelas. Anna holds a bachelor's degree in Sociology and Latin American Studies from Wesleyan University, and a Master's in City Planning from UC Berkeley. She is very excited to work collaboratively with community partners and the City of Berkeley towards implementing creative housing justice strategies.



Brandon Running Bear Harrell (Redwood City)

Brandon (he/they) works at the intersection of sociology and ecology, where economic development and permaculture design meet to provide for all human needs. His 10 years of demonstrated background in urban innovation and community building continue to help scale radical inclusion and systems change. Brandon is a partner at the Urban Permaculture Institute where he co-developed locally responsive, urban and environmental planning strategies and recommendations to regional governance and "grasstops" organizations. Previously, Brandon was a full time GIS software geek and diversity, equity, and inclusion advocate – holding director-level positions at organizations such as GIS Planning Inc., Change Catalyst, and Impact Hub. As director he led efforts to develop partnerships and programs as well as support engagement with local communities – contributing to the economic opportunities and stabilization of their residents and culture. Though born and raised in the Bay Area, his expertise in urban innovation and community planning enabled him to work on community development and environmental justice projects as far as Taiwan, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Germany, Turkey, Nicaragua, Cuba, and Kenya. Brandon has lectured about planning and development in the United States and the Caribbean and has taught at UC Berkeley. Brandon holds a master's degree in City Planning from UC Berkeley, an MBA from LIFT Economy, and a bachelor's degree in Communication from the University of New Mexico. When he's not working, he can be found practicing archery or cooking with his partner.

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Charles Harris (Alameda County)

Charles (he/him) is joining the Fellowship from Hello Housing, where he was the Program Manager for Cupertino and the Town of Los Gatos Below Market Rate programs. Prior to Hello Housing, Charles was at Hamilton Families working to help families experiencing homelessness find stability by leveraging policy tools to connect them to affordable housing. He comes with experience managing large municipality-based affordable housing programs that include down-payment assistance, homeownership, and rental opportunities with the goal of augmenting those programs to work better for the people. Charles has extensive research experience and a strong understanding of affordable housing policies, production, and market trends, which has given him a concrete understanding of how organizations can move towards making housing more accessible for all communities and families. Charles is most interested in both creating pathways to homeownership for low-income and working-class families, as well as exploring new and innovative ways to create and preserve affordable housing.



Aboubacar "Asn" Ndiaye (San Jose)

Aboubacar "Asn" (he/him) has been generating and advocating for policy to achieve economic and racial justice in Silicon Valley through innovative policy, research and organizing campaigns that focus on affordable housing and anti-displacement, transportation justice, and quality jobs. Prior to joining the fellowship, he was Policy Manager for Working Partnerships USA, a community organization bringing together the power of grassroots organizing and public policy innovation to drive the movement for a just economy. Before Working Partnerships, he worked as Strategic Researcher for SEIU Local 1, responsible for planning and developing organizing campaigns for building services workers in the Midwest, and as an Employment Specialist for Goodwill Industries of Houston, where he assisted individuals with barriers to employment find gainful and sustainable work. Asn has also worked or volunteered in a variety of roles on electoral campaigns in Texas, Michigan, and Illinois. He is a proud immigrant and a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, where he earned a bachelor's degree in Government. His interests include making cities more equitable, labor history, and traveling. Justice using race and place as a lens is inspired by his upbringing in Baltimore, MD.