

**2018 Project Leadership Alumni Meeting – Northern California  
April 21, 2018**

**SPEAKER BIOS**

**LILIAN ANSARI**

**Family Engagement Manager, Family Voices of California**

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After earning her Masters in psychology and counseling, Lilian Ansari spent 17 years working with various non-profits and public schools. For the past 10 years, Lilian has advocated for the needs of her own children as well as others with special health care needs. She was also the Project Leadership trainer at Family Resource Navigators in Alameda County, where she trained 60 parents. Lilian serves on the board of directors for the Regional Center of the East Bay as well as the Developmental Disabilities Council, and she is the Northern California Community Alliance chair for The Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance, as well as a special education parent mentor. Lilian serves as Family Voices of California's (FVCA) family engagement manager, where she supports Project Leadership graduates and identifies opportunities for them to participate in advocacy activities at all levels of government and community. Originally from Iran, Lilian now lives with her family in the East Bay.

**KELLY HARDY**

**Senior Managing Director, Health Policy, Children Now**

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Kelly Hardy serves as senior managing director of health for Children Now, where she directs and supervises the organization's health policy areas, including health coverage, health homes, and oral health, among others. Kelly has worked in health policy at the federal, state, and county levels, focusing on Medi-Cal and the uninsured. In Washington, D.C., she advocated for reproductive rights and on behalf of breast cancer organizations as a member of the government relations firm Bass and Howes, Inc. In Sacramento, Kelly worked directly with the California Health and Human Services Agency's Assistant Secretary on Medi-Cal. She also analyzed state health policies and budgets for the government relations firm Hyde, Miller, Owen & Trost. Afterwards, she oversaw the Medi-Cal, CalWORKS, and food stamp budgets for the Alameda County Social Services Agency. Kelly currently serves on the Family Voices of California Advisory Committee. She earned her Masters of Public Policy and Masters of Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley, and a Bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in women's studies at Johns Hopkins University.

**ALLISON GRAY**

**Program Officer, Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health**

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Allison Gray joined the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health to spearhead its efforts to empower families to be advocates and to oversee investments that support family engagement. She has been a leader in the field for many years, serving as project manager for FVCA's Project Leadership program, a parent advocacy training program funded by the foundation. She serves as family leader of California for the Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP) and is a member of the AMCHP Family Youth Leadership Committee. She has served as the family advocate for California on the Western States Regional Genetics Network. Allison holds a B.A. in English Literature and an M.A. in Applied Linguistics. As a mother of a child with special health care needs she understands first-hand the challenges of dealing with a health care system that doesn't always address family concerns efficiently or effectively.

**ELAINE LINN****Training Manager, Family Voices of California**[elinn@familyvoicesofca.org](mailto:elinn@familyvoicesofca.org)

Elaine Linn serves as FVCA's training manager, where she coordinates and supports Project Leadership facilitators and oversees program curriculum. She also works with the California Children's Hospital Association to raise awareness about issues faced by CYSHCN, supporting families to share their stories with decision makers and the media. Previously Elaine served as vice president of Perry Communications Group, where she supervised and conducted public affairs activities to improve local, statewide and federal health policies and promote access health care treatment and services. Before that, she worked for The Dolphin Group, where she managed government affairs activities for a variety of clients. Elaine co-founded the Down Syndrome Information Alliance in Sacramento, and is active in local, statewide, and national Down syndrome organizations. She serves on the State Council of Developmental Disabilities Sacramento Regional Advisory Committee, and she is a FVCA Project Leadership facilitator. Elaine has two sons, both of whom are medically involved. She has a Bachelor's degree from California State University Sacramento.

**PIP MARKS****Project Director, Family Voices of California**[pipmarks@familyvoicesofca.org](mailto:pipmarks@familyvoicesofca.org)

Pip Marks attended her first parent support group meeting at Support for Families 29 years ago when her oldest son was born with spina bifida and hydrocephalus. Prior to joining FVCA in 2013, she was the director of education and support for the Hydrocephalus Association for 18 years where she worked extensively with families and professionals affected by hydrocephalus. Pip's son remains her guiding light in her work as she focuses on improving the lives of children and youth with special health care needs. A native New Zealander, she has lived in the Bay Area for more than 30 years.

**KAITLIN PERRY****Senior Account Executive, Perry Communications Group**[kaitlin@perrycom.com](mailto:kaitlin@perrycom.com)

Kaitlin Perry's focus on the intersection of politics and public affairs, along with a wealth of experience and passion for political data, policy research, and digital advocacy led her to Perry Communications Group in 2016. Prior to joining PCG, she coordinated media relations efforts for a statewide ballot initiative during the 2016 election. She also played an integral role in the management and success of many high-profile public and legislative affairs campaigns. At PCG, Kaitlin assists senior staff in project development and implementation, specializing in digital advocacy and social media campaigns. Kaitlin graduated from Texas Christian University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science, and a minor in Business.

**MAYOR LIBBY SCHAAF****City of Oakland**[officeofthemayor@oaklandnet.com](mailto:officeofthemayor@oaklandnet.com)

Born and raised in Oakland, Libby Schaaf has led initiatives to offset the cost of living crisis, reduce crime, improve transit and infrastructure, and expand educational and career opportunities for the city's most vulnerable residents. She developed Oakland's "17K/17K Plan" to protect 17,000 low-income households from displacement while producing 17,000 new housing units by 2024. Mayor Schaaf also created the city's first Department of Transportation, a new urban design unit focused on transit-orientated development that intersects safe streets with housing and transportation. Mayor Schaaf received national attention for launching the Oakland Promise, an education initiative that aims to triple the number of college graduates from Oakland by 2025.