



2022 CHEAC Annual Meeting Workshop Session Biographies

Developing a Health Equity Framework for Investment to Address COVID-19 in Long Beach, California

Kelly Colopy, MPP, Health & Human Services Director

Kelly Colopy is the Director of the Health and Human Services Department for the City of Long Beach, CA. The Department has over 350 employees, a \$150 million budget and 40 programs in the areas of public health, family preservation, violence prevention, homeless services, and the housing authority. These teams work with government, community and business partners to improve the health, wellness and resiliency of people in Long Beach.

Ms. Colopy has spent the past 30 years working at the Federal, State, County and local levels to design and implement systems and services that build wellness and resiliency for communities, families and individuals.

Ms. Colopy has a successful history of designing and implementing cross-agency and community initiatives, organizational and community facilitation, leadership development efforts, strategic planning and performance measures. During her tenure in Long Beach, the Department has expanded to include the City's Office of Equity and Language Access Program, My Brothers' Keeper, trauma and resiliency informed efforts, violence prevention and alternatives to incarceration planning and coordination, human trafficking prevention program, fatherhood program, early childhood education strategic plan, and healthy aging center.

Kelly holds a master's degree in Public Policy from Duke University, and a bachelor's degree in Political Science, with a minor in Mathematics, from Smith College.

Erica Valencia-Adachi, MPP, Collective Impact Bureau Manager

Erica is the Collective Impact Bureau Manager for the City of Long Beach in the Department of Health and Human Services. In this role, Erica leads the collective, coordinated design of policies, programming and data across the department and the community focused on the areas of racial and health equity, resource connections, youth development, and violence prevention. Erica has been serving the City of Long Beach in various roles in the department since 2015. She served as the Human Services Bureau Analyst, then as Interim Special Projects Officer, and next as Homeless Administrative Operations Officer before stepping into her current leadership role.

Prior to her service in the City of Long Beach, Erica worked at the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools, the Center on Educational Governance, and Education Pioneers, where she led multiple efforts to increase the capacity of school leaders, teachers, families, and other partners in historically under-resourced schools across Los Angeles County. Erica started her career as an immigrant rights advocate and researcher as the Immigrant & Workplace Rights Program Coordinator for OCCORD. Her work on immigrant rights has been published in various academic journals. Erica received her degree in International Studies from the University of California, San Diego, and her master's degree in Public Policy from the University of Southern California.

Jeremy Scruggs, MEd, Racial and Health Equity Manager

Jeremy Scruggs began his undergraduate career at the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss), where he received a Bachelor of Social Work and a Masters of Higher Education and Student Personnel. As a first-generation college student who did not relate to the conventional narratives of college life, Jeremy understood the importance of advocating for underserved groups and addressing systemic barriers that perpetuate the oppression of specific demographics. His passion for serving and supporting his community ultimately led to his career as a Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) professional.

In the course of his tenure as a Higher Education Practitioner, Jeremy served as a counsel for institutions including The University of Mississippi, Berklee College of Music, University of California, Santa Barbara, and California State University, Long Beach where he helped to enhance the campus climate in an effort to create a safe and inclusive learning environment for all intersecting identities. With years of experience in participating in thorough evaluation that encourages racial equity in practice and outcomes; recruiting diverse talent to key roles; connecting to and servicing diverse markets and communities; Jeremy continues to honor his commitment to championing the voice of underserved demographics while helping structural entities enhance their business practices and decision-making processes through a DEI lens.

Cynthia Howell, MPH, MCHES, Long Beach Recovery Officer

Cynthia Howell is the Long Beach Recovery Officer with the City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services. In this role she helps direct equitable program design and implementation, with recent success translating an Equity Investment Framework into the creation of multimillion dollar funding opportunities to support essential recovery efforts designed and implemented by community organizations.

Previously supporting the Department as the Healthy Aging Center Coordinator, she oversaw COVID-19 relief funding for meal delivery programs and other social services to advance equity and ensure the safety and health of older adults in the city.

Cynthia holds a master's in public health and the Master Certified Health Education Specialist credential with 15 years' combined experience in health care and public health. Also a proud Soccer Mom, she can be found on the sidelines most weekends.