

THE
CARTER CENTER



27th Rosalynn Carter Georgia Mental Health Forum Speakers



Paige Alexander

Chief Executive Officer, The Carter Center

Paige Alexander joined The Carter Center as chief executive officer in June 2020. Alexander has had a distinguished global development career, with over two decades of experience spanning the government and nonprofit sectors. She has held senior leadership positions at two regional bureaus of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), covering missions and development programs in 25 countries.

Between 1993 and 2001, Alexander held several roles in USAID's Bureau for Europe and the Newly Independent States Task Force, including deputy assistant administrator, chief of staff, director for the Democracy and Governance Office, deputy director of the Bosnia Task Force, and country desk officer. After leaving for 10 years to work in a leadership role in the nonprofit sector, Alexander returned to USAID in 2011 in the Senate-confirmed position of assistant administrator for Europe and Eurasia; in 2015, she was again confirmed to lead the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Bureau, overseeing 1,000 employees, programs in 12 countries, and more than \$1.4 billion in annual funding.

Between her assignments with USAID, Alexander was senior vice president and European founder/president of IREX (2001-2010), an international civil society, democracy, and education nonprofit organization. From 2017 until her appointment to The Carter Center, she served as

executive director of the European Cooperative for Rural Development (EUCORD) in Brussels and Amsterdam, working to bring market-led solutions to marginalized farmers in Africa to sustainably improve the livelihoods of families and communities.

Earlier, Alexander was associate director of Project Liberty at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government (1992-1993) and a consultant to institutions including the C.S. Mott Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and the Open Society Institute in Prague. She has served on many global boards and committees, including the advisory boards for World Learning and IREX. Alexander currently serves on the boards of the Romanian-American Foundation, the World Affairs Council of Atlanta, the ADL Southeast Region, and as a member of several human rights organizations.



Jeff Breedlove

Chief of Communications and Policy, Georgia Council for Recovery

Jeff Breedlove serves as Chief of Communications and Policy for the Georgia Council on Substance Abuse. Jeff is an Assistant Scout Master for the Boy Scouts of America and serves on the Board of Directors of MARR Addiction Treatment Center and the Georgia School of Addiction Studies. In 2018, Jeff was awarded the "God Send Award" from the Boy Scouts of America for dedication and service to the Boy Scouts. In the recent past, Jeff Breedlove served as Chief of Staff for DeKalb County Commissioner Nancy Jester. Jeff served as a senior staff member to Congressman Bob Barr in the historic 104th Congress and again in the 105th Congress.

Jeff Breedlove served as the Deputy Director for the Governor's Office of Workforce Development for Governor Nathan Deal and as a policy analyst for the Georgia State Senate.

In 2004, Jeff was selected to serve as a volunteer for the G-8 Summit on Sea Island, Georgia. He has served as a staff vice-chair for The National Conference of State Legislatures on the Transportation

Committee and as a member of The Council of State Governments Southern Legislative Conference Committee on Economic Development, Transportation and Cultural Affairs.

Jeff also served as the Georgia state director for The American Council of Young Political Leaders and was the former Georgia state director Sister Cities International and a member of the City of Atlanta Sister City Commission.



Pam Brooks-Crump, MBA, CPS-MH, WHWC, CPS-AD

Trauma-Informed Care Project Coordinator and Facilitator, Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network

Georgia Peer Policy Collective Representative Region 3

GaRecovers Billboard Ambassador

Pam Brooks-Crump, MBA, CPS-MH, CPS- AD, is a Certified Peer Specialist for Mental Health as well as for Addictive Diseases. She has worked for the last six years for Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network, the last **five** years as the project coordinator and facilitator for the Trauma Informed Care Project. Pam’s focus in her current work is on developing trauma-informed organizations not only for short-term rehabilitation but also for sustained recovery and resiliency in all of our communities. She wrote and illustrated an age-less picture book on resiliency tools as seen through the eyes of a caterpillar, called “Mia Inspired! A Caterpillar at a Crossroad.” Over the past 26 years, Pam has been in long-term recovery from mental health challenges, substance misuse and traumas. She is a wife, mom, and her newest role is her favorite yet, that of being a grandmother to her new granddaughter, Scarlett Jean!



Eve Byrd, DNP, MPH

Director, Mental Health Program, The Carter Center

Eve Byrd (she/her) became director of the Carter Center's Mental Health Program in February 2017. Prior to joining The Carter Center, she was a faculty member of the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing at Emory University and served as executive director of the Fuqua Center for Late-Life Depression, Department of Psychiatry at the Emory School of Medicine.

She has held leadership positions both nationally and locally in work aimed at eliminating stigma and improving access to care for people with behavioral health disorders. She supported the Special Advisor to the Governor on Mental Health, engaging stakeholders in the process that resulted in a settlement agreement between Georgia and the U.S. Department of Justice.

Byrd has expertise in building coalitions to improve behavioral health policy. She has been a consultant to the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the Georgia Division of Aging, the Atlanta Regional Commission, National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, and Georgia State Rep. Pat Gardner. Until she joined The Carter Center, Byrd practiced as a nurse practitioner in geriatric psychiatry, establishing onsite services in affordable housing for older adults and young disabled, as well as practicing in a patient-centered medical home for individuals with dementia. She began her career as a public health nurse in Georgia.

Byrd earned a Doctor of Nursing practice with a concentration in health systems leadership and implementation science from Emory's School of Nursing, where she also earned a Master of Science in nursing with a concentration in psychiatric/mental health nursing. She earned her Master of Public Health in health policy from Emory's School of Public Health. She earned bachelor's degrees in nursing from Emory and in psychology from Florida State University.



Laura Colbert, MPH, CHES

Executive Director, Georgians for a Healthy Future

Laura Colbert has served as the Executive Director at Georgians for a Healthy Future since 2017.

Laura came to GHF in June 2014 as the Community Outreach Manager. She previously worked at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta; HSTAT, a student-run health policy and advocacy organization; and the CDC's Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention.

Laura sits on the Georgia Department of Community Health's Medical Care Advisory Committee. She has served as a Consumer Liaison Representative to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (2018-2020), and as a board member to the Georgia Society for Public Health Education. Laura is also an alum of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Child Health Leadership Network (2019).

Laura earned her Master of Public Health degree from Emory University, where she focused on health literacy and the social determinants of health. Previously Laura attended the University of Georgia where she studied biomechanics and earned her B.S.Ed. She is also a Master Certified Health Education Specialist.

She lives in Atlanta with her husband, their two dogs, and many bicycles.



Dimple Desai, MSW

Senior Policy Analyst II, Voices for Georgia's Children

Early experiences as a first-generation immigrant have shaped Dimple's understanding and passion for informing programs and policies which are integrated, coordinated and delivered with cultural humility.

At Voices, Dimple is responsible for designing and leading policy research projects across various "whole child" policy areas (health / behavioral health, education and early childhood education, child welfare, and juvenile justice). She brings extensive knowledge of children's mental/behavioral health across the life span, and experience in project management, directing program evaluations, technical assistance delivery, and translation of data to inform practice, program, and policy. Before joining Voices in 2022, she was a senior researcher at the Center of Excellence for Children's Behavioral Health (COE) at the Georgia Health Policy Center at Georgia State University's Andrew Young School of Policy Studies. Dimple worked on federally and state-funded research and evaluation projects related to the system of care, school-based mental health, and workforce development.

Dimple received her undergraduate degree in Psychology with an emphasis on developmental psychology. Her master's degree in social work from Georgia State University focused on building and leveraging community partnerships and the development of social work leaders. Given Dimple's educational background combined with her professional experience, she serves on collaboratives such as the Interagency Directors Team for children's behavioral health and supports community-level initiatives such as the Walton Feeder School's Counseling Advisory Team in Cobb County.



Kashef Ijaz, MD, MPH

Vice President, Health Programs, The Carter Center

Dr. Kashef Ijaz became vice president for health programs at The Carter Center on Oct. 1, 2020. In this role, he provides leadership for programs and initiatives working to control, prevent, eliminate, or eradicate six tropical diseases in 18 nations, as well as efforts to improve mental health care in the United States and abroad.

Previously, Dr. Ijaz was the principal deputy director in the Division of Global Health Protection, Center for Global Health, at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. His division worked on building disease detection and response capacity for health security, including humanitarian assistance for refugees and internally displaced population in areas such as nutrition, WASH and mental health issues. He joined the CDC in 2002, and during his tenure served as deputy director for science and programs in the Center for Global Health and chief of the Tuberculosis Field Services and Evaluation Branch in the National Center for HIV, STD and TB Prevention. He helped lead the CDC's responses to the West Africa Ebola epidemic of 2014-16, the MERS-CoV outbreak of 2013-14, and the H1N1 pandemic of 2009.

He began his career as a medical epidemiologist at the Arkansas Department of Health, where he worked with marginalized rural populations at the state, local, and community levels. He was Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and also did molecular epidemiology research on *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. He has worked extensively in Asia, Africa, and across the developing world on malaria, tuberculosis, and other diseases.

Dr. Ijaz is a physician trained in public health from the University of Oklahoma and holds certificates in public health leadership from the University of Alabama and in national preparedness and response

leadership from the Kennedy School of Government and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health at Harvard University.

He is a member of the American College of Epidemiology and is recipient of Phil Brachman's award for the Epidemic Intelligence Service alumni association at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He speaks five languages and has had more than 100 articles, chapters, and presentations published in peer-reviewed journals and at conferences.



Kim H. Jones

Executive Director, NAMI Georgia

Kim H. Jones is the Executive Director of NAMI Georgia. NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization, dedicated to building better lives for those affected by mental illness. As executive director, Kim H. Jones is responsible for the strategic management and financial operations of NAMI Georgia, a statewide nonprofit dedicated to raising awareness of mental health. NAMI Georgia is responsible for supporting 20 local NAMI Affiliate's across the state of Georgia. Under her leadership, the organization has grown its annual budget from \$180,000 to \$2.6 million and has served up to 30,000 people annually. Before joining NAMI Georgia, Jones was the director of skills development at Goodwill of North Georgia. She has 20 years of experience in nonprofit management, education, training, marketing, and business development.

Under her leadership, NAMI Georgia's advocacy was key to the passage of the Mental Health Parity Act, Georgia General Assembly - HB 1013 which ensured that behavioral health and physical health are covered equitably by public and private insurance. This new law will also address shortages in the mental health workforce so that all Georgians will have access to medically necessary behavioral health. Under Jones' leadership, NAMI Georgia has experienced exponential growth in funding sources,

volunteers, and participation that has extended the availability of peer support, resources, awareness, and education for people affected by mental health concerns.



Terah Kalk, MPH

Senior Program Associate, Public Policy, Mental Health Program, The Carter Center

Terah Kalk (she/they) is a school-based mental health systems specialist who joined the Mental Health Program in October 2022. Previously, she was with the Southeast Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC), where she led the School Mental Health Initiative to advance comprehensive school-based mental health systems in the Southeastern United States. Kalk provided technical assistance to leaders in the Southeast and developed programming around LGBTQ+ youth mental health, collective trauma, and other school-based mental health topics. She also worked in a national collaboration to create learning collaboratives that support healing racial violence in our communities and to create a mental health literacy training for educators and school staff. She holds a Master of Public Health in global health from Emory University and a bachelor's in anthropology from the University of Florida.



Melissa Kazakides, CPS-MH, WHWC

Advocacy Engagement Coordinator, Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network

Melissa grew up in Salem, New Hampshire where she attended Salem High School. She graduated with honors from two private academic institutions in Massachusetts gaining Certification as a Medical Assistant in 2004, and as a Licensed Practical Nurse in 2006. Her hopes were to continue school for Registered Nursing the following year. Unfortunately, after years of living with chronic autoimmune disease, opiate dependence had become uncontrollable. Eleven years later, after countless failed drug treatment centers, overdoses, suicide attempts, and arrests, Melissa found long-term recovery from complex post-traumatic stress disorder and opiate addiction in Moultrie, Georgia. She completed an 18-month, intensive long-term treatment program which allowed her to slowly integrate back into the community and live a productive, meaningful life.

Melissa worked as a Certified Peer Specialist for 4 years and in August of 2019, relocated to Decatur, Georgia after becoming the Director of The Peer Support & Wellness Center of Decatur. She provided a supportive, and recovery-focused environment and modeled self-direction and recovery principles for peers and staff. Melissa currently serves in a leadership role as Chief of Advocacy for The Georgia Peer Policy Collective. She supported organizing and standing up the first peer-focused policy group which brings the peer perspective from members across the state while raising the peer voice in policy discussions. Melissa is also the Administrative Coordinator for The Georgia Behavioral Health Planning and Advisory Council. She supports Council members and the Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities Leadership while they review and comment and make recommendations to the state's plan for the allocation of federal block grant dollars for children & adult behavioral health services across Georgia.

Melissa has a passion for advocacy and immense gratitude for small acts of kindness. It is a priority in her life that she does what she can to leave the world better than it was yesterday. Melissa currently & happily resides in Decatur, Georgia, with her cat Willow.



Moki Macías

Executive Director, Policing Alternatives & Diversion Initiative

Moki has served as the Executive Director of the Atlanta-based Policing Alternatives & Diversion Initiative (PAD) since its launch in 2017. PAD reduces arrest and incarceration for activities related to mental health, substance use and extreme poverty through two strategies: immediate alternative to arrest for individuals detained by police, and community first response to referrals through the City of Atlanta 311 line. Moki received her Master's Degree in City and Regional Planning from the Georgia Institute of Technology, and has spent the last 20 years engaged in community organizing, program design and advocacy related to criminal justice reform and community development. More about PAD can be found at www.atlantapad.org.



Garry McGiboney, Ph.D.

Executive Director of Government and Education Programs, Sharecare

Garry McGiboney, Ph.D., is the Executive Director of Government and Education Programs at Sharecare and is the former Deputy State Superintendent at the Georgia Department of Education. He has served on several committees as an appointee of the Governor's Office on topics including children's mental health, literacy, dyslexia, foster children, school safety, substance abuse, and trauma. He also served by appointment on the Georgia Supreme Court's Justice for Children Committee. Additionally, Dr. McGiboney serves on The Carter Center School-Based Behavioral Health Advisory Committee; Chair-Elect of the Board of Directors of the Council on Alcohol and Drugs; Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission's Child and Adolescent Committee and is Chair of the Annie Casey Foundation Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative. Also, Dr. McGiboney is co-founder of the Georgia Education Climate Coalition. He is a Subject Matter Expert for the United States Department of Education Technical Assistant Center where he provides training on behavioral threat assessments for districts, states, and territories. Dr. McGiboney has over 40 professional publications and is the author of several books, including books on school climate, school safety, mental health, leadership, crisis management, pandemic planning, and emergency planning. His textbook *An Epidemiological Study of Leadership* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing CSP) is being used by non-profits and for graduate studies at several universities, as is his often-referenced book, *The Psychology of School Climate 2nd Edition* (CSP). Dr. McGiboney authored an inspirational book, *Leading Us Out of Darkness*, and a book of poetry, *Timberline of the Mind*. He is the recipient of several awards, including NAACP Educator of the Year; the National Association of School Psychologists National Friend of Children Award; Georgia School Counselors Advocate of the Year Award; Georgia Association of School Nurses Hero Award (twice); National Alliance on Mental Illness Community Service Award; United States EPA's Health Awareness Award; Georgia Appleseed Law and Justice Center Good Apple Award, and others. He was inducted into the Georgia Board of Regents Alumni Hall of Fame for his career-long efforts on behalf of children. Recently, he received the Outstanding Leadership Award from the Georgia Association of Positive

Behavior Supports and the award will henceforth be named in his honor as the annual *Dr. Garry McGiboney Outstanding Leadership Award*. Dr. McGiboney has been interviewed by *CNN, NBC, CBS, ABC*, and many regional and local media outlets. Also, he has been quoted in *Time* magazine, *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today* and the international press, including *Le Devoir, Listin Diario, El Diaro, Japan Press*, and *Mato Grosso*.



Polly L. McKinney, B.A.

Advocacy Director, Voices for Georgia's Children

Polly has been advocacy director at Voices for Georgia's Children since 2010. Additionally, she owns a strategic communications company, Long Game Strategies, LLC, allowing her to enhance and continue her work at Voices, while creating content for clients and causes akin to child policy. She serves on the Georgia School Based Health Alliance Board, is a member of the National Juvenile Justice Network and is past Chair of the ChildKind Board of Directors. Polly also serves on the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Board, an appointment made by Governor Nathan Deal. She is a member of the Annie E. Casey Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative state steering committee. Prior to her work in child policy, Polly was responsible for developing communications for Southern States Energy Board, served as Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of Georgia and spent more than two decades in various production capacities in the Georgia film industry, which included two regional Emmy nominations and the writing and production of the introductory film at the National Prisoner of War Museum at Andersonville National Historic Site. She was a member of the first class of the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics and earned a Bachelor of Arts from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She has two astounding kids, Skye and Zane.



Kaitlin Merchen, MSW

Executive Director, Georgia Prevention Project

Kaitlin Merchen is the Executive Director for the Georgia Prevention Project. She has developed and managed prevention programming and grants for GPP since 2016. Kaitlin received her accreditation as a Certified Preventionist by the Prevention Credentialing Consortium of Georgia (PCCG) in 2017. She provides oversight of the Georgia Meth Project, the statewide College Prevention Partnership, Expansion Project, Teen Advisory Council, Substance Education Training (SET), Partners in Prevention Project in Taliaferro County, Drug Free Communities project in Polk County, and all community outreach programs. Kaitlin is also a national speaker on topics around prevention in schools and peer to peer education.

A native of Kennesaw, Georgia Kaitlin earned her Bachelor of English degree from the University of Georgia. She earned her Master of Social Work (MSW) degree from The Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University with a concentration in Community Partnerships.

Before her role as Executive Director, Kaitlin gained valuable experience at GPP working as Community Outreach Specialist and Director of Programming, joining the team in 2015. Kaitlin has over eleven years of experience in the youth development field - in educational settings and working with youth in foster care. She is also a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer (RPCV), having served in Mozambique, Africa working on education and community development projects that emphasized sustainability and community empowerment.

Kaitlin is passionate about working with youth and using advocacy efforts and education to strengthen communities. She believes that prevention efforts and changing attitudes about substance misuse will make for a healthier Georgia, where young people can thrive.



Roberta "Toni" Meyers Douglas

Vice President of State Strategy & Reentry, Legal Action Center

As the Vice President of State Strategy and Reentry, Roberta "Toni," executes strategic state-based criminal justice and health advocacy goals and priorities for LAC. She also directs the [National Helping Individuals with criminal records Reenter through Employment \(H.I.R.E.\) Network](#), LAC's national project to improve employment and other opportunities for people with arrest and conviction records. She has decades of experience training workforce development, corrections, and behavioral health practitioners on employment strategies that best serve job-seekers with arrest and conviction histories; authored dozens of guidebooks and policy briefs on criminal record policies that impact employment, housing, education, and other opportunities; testified before and served as a technical assistance provider to members of Congress, government agencies, and state legislators about effective reentry policies and practices that reduce recidivism; and more importantly works closely with community and directly impacted leaders within communities to strengthen and support their ability to organize and mobilize around critical issues that impact Black, Brown, Indigenous and other people of color. She co-leads LAC's [No Health=No Justice](#) campaign to achieve racial equity in health care and criminal legal reform. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Business, Management, and Economics from the State University of New York/Empire State College and a Master of Science degree in Public Safety with specialization in Criminal Justice and Public Administration from Capella University.

Toni serves on the Board of Directors of Youth Represent, Alabama Justice Initiative, the Collateral Consequences Resource Center, and LIFEline to Success and is a member of the Council on Criminal Justice.



Sarah Phillips, MPA

Public Policy Program Associate, Mental Health Program, The Carter Center

Sarah Phillips joined The Carter Center Mental Health Program in April 2023. Previously, she served as the Senior Manager of Policy & Advocacy at Georgia Watch, and has a background in legislative relations, policy research and analysis, and advocacy training.

Much of her career has focused on consumer advocacy, identifying the needs and disparate impacts affecting historically marginalized populations, and guiding the development and implementation of equitable policies to combat these disparities. In addition, she worked at the Georgia State Capitol, conducting policy research for new legislation and analyzing each bill's impact, tracking legislative priorities, and working with members of the media.

Sarah graduated with honors from Georgia State University with degrees in Political Science and Public Policy, and a Master of Public Administration with a concentration in Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation.



Jennifer Reed, MS, LPC

Senior Director of School and District Programs, JED Foundation

Jennifer Reed is a professional educator and Licensed Professional Counselor with more than 15 years of experience and expertise in supporting the social, emotional, and mental health of students through strategic systems and program development. Prior to joining JED, Jennifer was the Director of Strategic Education Initiatives at the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, where she supported the growth, development, and implementation of innovative new school mental health programming across K-12, higher education, and other partners across Texas. She previously served in Dallas ISD as Director of Clinical Services in the Mental Health Services department where she led the nation's largest comprehensive school mental health program. Jennifer's multifaceted career has advanced collaboration between schools and strategic partners in identifying solutions to improve service delivery and ensure equity in access to high-quality school-linked mental health care to students and families.

Jennifer is a first-generation college graduate and reflects her family's South Texas Latina roots in her hard work, dedication, and passion. She has bachelor's degrees in Human Development and Family Sciences, and Philosophy from The University of Texas at Austin, and a master's degree in Counseling from The University of North Texas. She is also a Licensed Professional Counselor working with families and adolescents experiencing a variety of concerns.



Alyssa Reynolds, CPS-MH, WHWC (they/them/theirs)

Empowerment and Resource Coordinator, Chris 180

Alyssa Reynolds is a passionate nonbinary artistic mental health advocate. They are a graduate of Utah State University, obtaining their Bachelor of Science in Psychology in 2020. During that time in school and led by their own mental health journey, Alyssa found a passion in peer support work. They are a Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPS-MH) both in Utah and Georgia and has worked as a CPS over 5 yrs. Alyssa currently works with Chris180 at their Westside Empowerment Center doing resource coordination and community outreach. They are building their own nonprofit, trying to find ways to bring resources, hope, and healing to the LGBTQ+ young adult community. They are a Respect institute graduate, who has found healing in writing their story. Alyssa lives in Decatur with their wife Micaela and the cutest Australian Shepherd named Wonder.



Rose Scott

Host and Reporter, WABE

Rose Scott is an award-winning journalist and host of the midday news program “Closer Look” heard on Atlanta’s NPR, station 90.1 FM – WABE.

In her role as a co-host and now host, Rose has interviewed foreign heads of states, cabinet members, U.S. ambassadors, numerous consul generals, state and local elected officials as well as civic and social leaders. Closer Look has become a signature broadcast for the community and brings together viewpoints from all sectors of society.

She leads the “Closer Look” team in presenting discussions centered on affordable housing, domestic violence, HIV/AIDS, immigration and criminal justice reform.

With more than two decades of reporting in Atlanta, Rose has covered education, minority health issues, Atlanta historically Black colleges and universities, gender issues and sports.



Lindsey Sizemore, CPS, APS-AD, FPM

Forensic Peer Mentor Training Project Director, Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network

Lindsey is a Georgia Certified Peer Specialist of Addictive Disease (CPS-AD). She is employed with the Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network as the Forensic Peer Mentoring Training Project Director. She supports the training of Forensic Peer Mentors in the criminal justice system in effort to support returning citizens successfully return to our communities and live a life of meaning and purpose. Over the years, she has successfully supported others in telling their recovery stories all over the state. She worked closely with the RESPECT Institute of Georgia's Outreach Team to expand the voice of recovery in order to fight stigma and promote healing within communities. Lindsey is a woman in long term recovery and with her community on her side she has survived 13 years of addiction, 1 year of homelessness, and 3 years of being incarcerated. She has been in recovery for over 10 years and feels it is her responsibility to network and connect with diverse communities to help spread hope by advocating for peer support and being the evidence that recovery is real! Her lived experience has poured into the development of the training curriculum for the Forensic Peer Mentor program, and she now leads conversations surrounding expansion of this training across the United States. With great passion, Lindsey continues to seek out opportunities where she can make a difference and inspire hope.



Commissioner Kevin Tanner

Commissioner, Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Kevin Tanner serves as the Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.

Prior to his appointment by Governor Brian Kemp, Kevin Tanner served as the County Manager of Forsyth. Governor Kemp also appointed him as chair of the Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission in 2019, helping to secure meaningful improvements in this field. Previously, he served four terms as a State Representative for District 9 and has a total of thirty-two years in public service.

Before his time in the General Assembly, Tanner served as the Dawson County Manager where he oversaw day-to-day operations as the county's chief operating officer. He was recognized in 2011 as the Appointed Official of the Year by the Georgia Association of County Commissioners and in 2007 as one of *Georgia Trend Magazine's* 40 under 40.

Tanner received his undergraduate degree from North Georgia College and State University and earned a Master of Public Administration from Columbus State University. He and his wife, Stacie, are the proud parents of three daughters, and he serves as a Deacon and adult Sunday school teacher at Bethel Baptist Church.



Wendy White Tiegreen, MSW

Director of Medicaid and Health System Innovation, Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities

Wendy White Tiegreen, M.S.W. is the Director of Medicaid and Health System Innovation for the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities. She has 30 years of experience working in services delivery and administration in the public behavioral health sector. The majority of her career has been spent as liaison to the state Medicaid authority. In that role, she was the primary negotiator with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services in the establishment of peer supports as a Medicaid-financed service, and is a presenter at several national Medicaid, health, and behavioral health management conferences. In her various Departmental roles, she has led in the development of the first 24/7 statewide call center, the 9-8-8 implementation, Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs), Parent Peer Support, Youth Peer Support, High-Fidelity Wraparound, Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health, and System of Care frameworks for the State of Georgia. She has also been a contractor for CMS, SAMHSA, NASMHPD, and more than half of all states related to behavioral health, Medicaid, and peer support. Ms. Tiegreen is a selected academy member of the National Association of State Health Policy (NASHP) and is the vice-chair of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors' (NASMHPD) Division of Finance & Policy. She holds a Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Georgia and her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Wofford College. She has been honored by the Georgia Certified Peer Specialist Project as a **Partner in Recovery** and by the Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network as **Consumer Supporter of the Year** and with the **Randall Baxter Humanitarian Award**.



Drew Umberger

Care Navigator, Policing Alternatives & Diversion Initiative

After serving a five-year sentence, Drew Umberger became a Certified Peer Recovery Empowerment Specialist who has dedicated her life to helping others, particularly incarcerated women and underserved communities in Atlanta. Originally hailing from Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Drew is currently working towards her B.A. from Atlanta Tech.

Drew joined the Policing Alternatives & Diversion Initiative in August of 2022 as a Peer Advocate on the Street Wellness Enhancement & Engagement Team, providing intensive-street level peer support to unhoused individuals experiencing serious mental health concerns. Now as a Care Navigator, Drew provides case management to people impacted by the criminal legal system through a harm-reduction, person-centered approach. Drew is actively involved in several organizations based in Atlanta, including Motherhood Beyond Bars, Living on Purpose ATL, Women in Transition, Support + Feed, and ATL Free Fridge.

When not working or studying she enjoys spending time with her children and doing home improvement jobs to her home she just purchased in December.



Michael Waller, JD, MTS, MS

Executive Director, Georgia Appleseed Center for Law & Justice

Michael Waller leads the Georgia Appleseed team in the development of innovative policy solutions and tools to keep Georgia's children safe at home and in school, and out of the criminal justice system.

Michael is a frequent speaker on the devastating consequences of exclusionary school discipline, poor school climate, and unhealthy housing on marginalized children, particularly children in poverty, children of color, and children and youth in foster care.

Prior to starting with Appleseed as Director of Projects in 2018, Michael was a prosecuting attorney at the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) for eight years, leading investigations and lawsuits across the country to stop companies and individuals from defrauding economically vulnerable consumers. Before the FTC, Michael was a staff attorney at the Atlanta Legal Aid Society, representing indigent clients in housing, domestic violence, and consumer rights cases. He came to Legal Aid from WilmerHale, an international law firm based in Washington, DC.

Michael graduated with a B.A. from University of the South (Sewanee), an M.A. in international affairs from Syracuse University (Maxwell School), an M.T.S. in theological studies from Vanderbilt University Divinity School, and a J.D. from American University's Washington College of Law.