

The Domestic Violence & Homeless Services Coalition
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS SUMMIT

From Surviving to Thriving:
Sustaining Our Autonomy &
Flourishing in Our Collective Wellness



JULY 10, 2025

The California Endowment
1000 Alameda St., Los
Angeles, CA 900212

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ABOUT

We envision a world where no individual or family has to choose between stable housing and a life free from violence.

DVHSC CORE TEAM LEADERSHIP

Community Legal Aid SoCal

Downtown Women's Center

Haven Hills

LA City Community Investment for Families Department

LA County Domestic Violence Council

LA County Sexual Assault Council

Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority

Rainbow Services

The National Network to End Domestic Violence

The Whole Child



The Domestic Violence Homeless Services Coalition

In 2016, the Downtown Women's Center and Rainbow Services founded the cross-sector Domestic Violence & Homeless Services Coalition (DVHSC) with the goal of creating a client-centered system that increased access to safe housing and supportive services for survivors of domestic violence and their families. Since then, the DVHSC has grown to become the largest coalition of its kind in the country, with more than 800+ individual members and 244 member organizations from across the state of California.

Our mission is to end homelessness in Los Angeles for survivors of domestic violence and their families. We leverage survivor-driven insights for greater cross-sector alignment, coordination, and knowledge sharing, and are committed to foregrounding the voices of individuals with lived experience in all aspects of our work. Together, we seek to create a client-centered system that increases access to safe housing and supportive services for survivors of domestic violence and their families, in order to drive down the number of survivors entering homelessness and increase pathways to permanent housing.

AGENDA

8:00 AM — Registration and Breakfast

Self-serve continental breakfast, coffee, and tea;
registration and information table.

9:00 AM — Welcome & Land Acknowledgement

Laura Lull, Co-Lead, DVHSC, and CEO, Rainbow Services
Amy Turk, Co-Lead, DVHSC and CEO, Downtown Women's Center

Elizabeth Eastlund – Land acknowledgement

9:15 AM — Grounding & Intention Setting

Tiffany Duvernay-Smith, DVHSC Advocate & Systems Reform Champion
A moment to arrive fully, center our purpose, and introduce
wellness and self-care offerings available throughout the day.

9:20 AM — Standing in Solidarity with Survivors

Tim McOsker, Councilmember Fifteenth Council District, City of Los Angeles

9:30 AM — Keynote Address

Adrienne Spires, National Leader in Survivor Advocacy & Systems Change

10:05 AM — DVHSC Lifetime Achievement Awards

Honoring DVHSC Advocates: Millie Brown, Sonya C., LaRae Cantley, Pamela
Crenshaw, Vicky Cruz, Teniecka Drake, Tiffany Duvernay-Smith, Mariama Jalloh,
Suzan Kolkowicz, Alicia Rhoden, and Suzette Shaw

In memory: Shenette Holman, Alma Vizcaino

Presented by Ann English, Senior Consultant, Change Well Project and
Carielle Escalante, Collaborative Approaches to Housing for Survivors Sr.
Specialist, National Network to End Domestic Violence



AGENDA

10:25 AM – Mindful Movement: Chair Yoga Session & Break

Gentle movement to support presence and self-care,
facilitated by Orchid Cameron, Yoga Teacher

10:45 AM – Local Response to Gender-Based Violence

PANELISTS

Diana Grant, Senior Program Manager of Survivor Services,
City of Los Angeles Community Investment for Families Department

Nicolle Perras, MPH, LMFT, Executive Director, Sexual Assault Council, Office of
Violence Prevention, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Chanel Smith, Senior Advisor, Women & Family Homelessness,
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

MODERATOR

Chris Negri, Associate Director of Public Policy Strategies,
California Partnership to End Domestic Violence

11:45 AM – Expansion of the Coalition Model Across California

Karen Ben-Moshe, Program Policy Officer, Blue Shield of California Foundation

12:00 PM – Lunch & Self Care Room – (Cabrillo Room 7)

Take a moment to recharge by visiting our Self-Care Room, a calming space designed just for you. Enjoy relaxing activities like coloring, playing with playdough, or making bracelets to unwind between sessions. The room will be open throughout the duration of the Summit, stop by whenever you need to.



AGENDA

1:20 PM – Training Sessions

Session 1 (Dr. Beatriz Solis Hall): Beyond a Service Delivery Model: Trauma Informed Supervision

Session 2 (Mojave - Room 5): Inclusion, Lived Experience, Workforce Development, Equity, Sustainability

Session 3 (Catalina - Room 6): A Trauma-Informed Approach to Housing Stability for Domestic Violence Survivors

Session 4 (Joshua Tree - Room 8): Adapting to the Evolving Needs of Domestic Violence Survivors while Navigating Homelessness to Stability

2:30 PM – Break

2:40 PM – Workshop Sessions

Session 1 (Dr. Beatriz Solis Hall): Advocacy 101: Introduction to State and Local Legislative and Budget Advocacy

Session 2 (Mojave - Room 5): Collaborating for Survivor Advocacy: The ABC's of Advocating for Safe Housing

Session 3 (Catalina - Room 6): Dealing with Vicarious Trauma

3:50 PM – Break

4:00 PM – Closing Remarks

Cristina Cortes, Sr. Manager, DVHSC

4:30 PM – Thrive & Vibe Networking Opportunity

Join us after the Summit for a vibrant happy hour featuring a refreshing agua fresca bar, a delicious charcuterie board spread, and an assortment of decadent desserts. Relax, mingle, and savor the flavors while connecting with fellow attendees in a casual, celebratory atmosphere!



MAP





TRAINING SESSIONS & WORKSHOPS

2025 DVHSC SUMMIT

Beyond a Service Delivery Model: Trauma Informed Supervision

Location: Dr. Beatriz Solis Hall

Working at the intersection of gender-based violence and homelessness poses unique challenges for direct-service staff, including repeated exposure to crisis, secondary trauma, and the potential for burnout. As such, it is important for staff in leadership roles to adopt a trauma-informed approach to supervision that acknowledges staff as unique individuals who bring their own life experiences into this work. Training participants will learn to foster an understanding of Trauma-Informed Supervision, review the six principles of Trauma-Informed Care, explore the different ways that trauma can manifest in the workplace, and learn how to implement Trauma-Informed Supervision with staff to support their resilience in this work.

Presented by Gina Murdock, Luna Covarrubias-Klein

Adapting to the Evolving Needs of Domestic Violence Survivors while Navigating Homelessness to Stability

Location: Joshua Tree (Room 8)

Leaving an abusive relationship is rarely a straightforward process. Research shows that, on average, a survivor attempts to leave seven times before permanently separating from their abuser. Survivors navigate a maze of complex systems, including immigration, the criminal justice system, social services, child welfare agencies, and homelessness services. For those facing housing instability, survival becomes even more challenging as they juggle safety concerns with bureaucratic obstacles and siloed services. To truly support survivors, we must recognize that their needs are constantly evolving; service providers, advocates, and programs must adopt a trauma-informed, flexible, and survivor-centered approach that addresses immediate safety concerns while also empowering long-term stability. This presentation will discuss the ongoing challenges survivors face even after leaving an abusive relationship, the impact of systemic barriers and how they intersect, the importance of adapting services to meet survivors' changing needs, and strategies to create a more responsive and effective support system.

Presented by Laura-Elena Garza, Jetzel Chavez, Anne Song, Takiya McCullar, Nancy Diaz, Marlen Tirado, Margot Schweichler



A Trauma-Informed Approach to Housing Stability for Domestic Violence Survivors

Location: Catalina (Room 6)

Homelessness among domestic violence survivors is a critical issue that requires a comprehensive, trauma-informed, and multidisciplinary approach. Survivors often face unique challenges, including safety concerns, economic abuse, legal barriers, and systemic gaps in housing and social services. This training will provide professionals with a trauma-informed framework to enhance service integration, foster collaboration among multidisciplinary teams, and create organizational shifts that improve housing stability for DV survivors. By the end of this training, participants will understand the intersection of domestic violence and homelessness, including systemic barriers survivors face; learn trauma-informed principles and how to apply them at an organizational level; identify strategies for integrating housing, legal, healthcare, and advocacy services into a seamless support network; explore best practices for multidisciplinary collaboration to improve outcomes; and Develop action plans for implementing trauma-informed organizational change.

Presented by Sylvia M. Gribbell, LCSW, Rachelle Neshkes

Advocacy 101: Introduction to State and Local Legislative and Budget Advocacy

Location: Dr. Beatriz Solis Hall

Survivors of gender-based violence deserve policies that reflect their needs and voices. This workshop will break down the who, what, when, where, and why of the legislative and budget processes at the city, county, and state levels. Participants will explore how decisions are made and how to effectively advocate for change. The session includes a hands-on activity to create a personalized advocacy plan, equipping attendees with tools to influence policy and support survivor-centered solutions.

Presented by Sarah Whitman, Teya Hisel



Collaborating for Survivor Advocacy: The ABC's of Advocating for Safe Housing

Location: Mojave (Room 5)

The workshop will provide participants with an opportunity to formulate an advocacy strategy with the support of seasoned advocates. While advocating for safe housing and trauma-informed services that center survivors' voices and experiences can be daunting, there are many ways advocates can participate in larger systems change. This engaging workshop will provide participants a safe space to discuss the various local, state, and national advocacy groups working to ensure safe housing for survivors and the multiple levels of involvement. Participants will understand the value of building relationships with their city and county offices, programs, and personnel. The presenters will share current strategies to bring together Los Angeles-based GBV shelter organizations to prepare for what the future holds in the current political climate. This interactive workshop includes collaboratively formulating an advocacy strategy. Working in groups or pairs, participants will have an opportunity to develop an advocacy pitch and strategy, with an emphasis on engaging survivors as advocacy partners. Engaging survivors to share their voices in advocacy strategies ensures our communities and elected officials understand the very real intersection between GBV and homelessness. To move beyond mere survival, there must be genuine recognition of the needs of survivors, enabling them to thrive in safe housing.

Presented by Elizabeth Eastlund, Millie Brown

Dealing with Vicarious Trauma DV

Location: Catalina (Room 6)

This workshop will teach participants about the interconnectedness of energy and how to have energetic hygiene practices for a healthy mind and healthy body. Stress and worry have a physiological effect, and the more participants practice good energy hygiene, the more attendees will be a sharper tool to help clients. Worry about clients, staff, and advocates "taking your work home with you" is a real struggle, and there are real solutions.

Presented by Orchid Cameron



Inclusion, Lived Experience, Workforce Development, Equity, Sustainability

Location: Mojave (Room 5)

Despite increased emphasis on trauma-informed care, many organizations continue to perpetuate norms rooted in white supremacy culture that keep staff with lived experience in a constant state of survival rather than supporting their ability to truly thrive. These norms, such as perfectionism, urgency, and rigid hierarchy, undermine efforts to support staff with lived experience and often create environments that might feel unsafe or disempowering. This training offers a systems-level perspective on how to shift from these inherited norms toward recovery-oriented values that prioritize dignity, flexibility, and sustainability. The presenters will explore how culture change begins with values alignment, not just procedural reforms. Participants will learn how to introduce anti-oppressive principles from the outset through onboarding, internal workshops, and ongoing team development. The presenters will share how redefining professionalism as the ability to act in alignment with one's values and ethical standards (rather than performing perfection) creates space for staff to learn, ask questions, and make wise, self-directed decisions in complex situations. The presenters will discuss practical strategies for building a workplace where lived experience is not treated as a liability, but as a foundation for authentic connection and leadership. This session does not offer a one-size-fits-all model. Instead, it provides a framework and lived example of how any organization can take steps to create an anti-oppressive culture where staff with lived experience feel seen, supported, and empowered to lead.

Presented by Laura Hernandez, Fernando Aguirre





TRAINING & WORKSHOP PRESENTERS

2025 DVHSC SUMMIT

PRESENTERS



FERNANDO AGUIRRE, LCSW

Fernando Aguirre, LCSW, is a first generation, queer, child of immigrants and the Chief Innovation Officer at Nuna Behavioral Healthcare. They have lived through the experience of immigrating to the U.S. alongside their family and the cultural syncretism that results from relocation to a new country. Fernando centers a trauma-informed approach and emphasizes the importance of creating a space where clients' lived-experienced is embraced, integrated, and respected. Their work with clients seeks to uphold the mission of Nuna and empower clients along their healing journey.



MILDRED (MILLIE) BROWN

My name is Mildred (Millie) Brown and I am a Survivor of Domestic Violence. My trauma began as a child, as I come from generational dysfunction. It wasn't until decades later, after experiencing homelessness, deep depression, anxiety and a lot of other challenges that I was introduced to the Department of Mental Health where I began to address my trauma. Since becoming a member of the Domestic Violence Homeless Services Coalition (DVHSC) in 2017 it has been an AMAZING journey, not only have I had the opportunity to use my voice and share my story in positive and powerful ways, the journey continues. I am currently involved with RUN LA (residents united network), working on policy change and advocating for funding for Supportive/Affordable Housing.



ORCHID CAMERON

Orchid Cameron is a meditation teacher, a yogi for 29 years, a yoga teacher for 13 years, a Reiki practitioner, a mom, and a survivor of IPV. She has coached private clients and taught "The Happy Empath Workshop" around the United States. Her mission is to end pain and maximize fun for as many people as possible.

PRESENTERS



JETZEL CHAVEZ

Jetzel Chavez currently serves as the Domestic Violence Regional Coordinator for the Los Angeles Continuum of Care (CoC), at Rainbow Services. In this role, she works to strengthen collaboration between domestic violence and homeless service providers, fostering system alignment to better support survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual assault who are experiencing housing instability. Her background includes both direct service and program leadership. She previously served as the Lead Advocate for a domestic violence crisis response team. Her experience also includes work at a domestic violence emergency shelter, a 24-hour crisis hotline, and a Family Justice Center. With deep expertise in survivor advocacy and trauma-informed care, Jetzel is committed to advancing survivor-centered approaches across systems.



LUNA COVARRUBIAS-KLEIN

Luna Covarrubias-Klein, LCSW, is the Interim Sr. Director of Clinical Programs at the Downtown Women's Center (DWC) where she oversees mental health programming across the agency. Luna received her Master's in Criminal Justice (Forensic Mental Health) from California State University, Los Angeles and her Master of Social Work from Boston University. She has worked in the mental health field since 2008, but began her work supporting unhoused individuals in 2012. Luna is committed to addressing homelessness and advocating for the most vulnerable. She is also dedicated to ensuring frontline staff receive the support needed to thrive in their overall wellbeing as they also work to address homelessness.



NANCY DIAZ

Nancy holds a Bachelor's degree in Human Services with a focus on mental health recovery, complemented by a minor in Sociology. Since 2021, she has been deeply committed to supporting underserved communities through her work at St. Joseph Center. As SPA 5 Domestic Regional Coordinator and Program Manager for the Domestic Violence Time-Limited Subsidies (TLS) Program, Nancy combines her expertise in compliance, grants, and client care with a deep sense of purpose. She serves on the Education and Training Committee and the DVHSC Systems and Funding Committee. Driven by her passion to end gender-based violence, Nancy is dedicated to creating lasting change through survivor-centered programs and policy advocacy. Her work is more than a career—it's a calling. Outside the office, Nancy finds joy in traveling, hiking, and cherishing time with her family. Her journey is rooted in compassion, and she takes pride in making a meaningful difference every day.

PRESENTERS



ELIZABETH EASTLUND

Elizabeth Eastlund, MSW, has 24 years of organizational leadership experience and has been engaged in social justice activism for over three decades. Starting her social work career working on Skid Row in Los Angeles, housing is a big passion, as is ensuring justice and support for those who have experienced the trauma of homelessness, addictions, and/or gender-based violence. Harm reduction is the foundation of her practice and assisted Elizabeth in transforming service cultures to embrace trauma informed care. She believes deeply in the power of those with lived experience as partners in their own healing journeys, in our advocacy efforts, and in leading our movements for social change. Elizabeth has extensive experience coordinating community efforts to increase and support survivors' safe housing options, including being one of the founding members of the Los Angeles DV Homeless Services Coalition (DVHSC). Currently working as a Coach and Special Advisor, Elizabeth is committed to centering the voice of survivors of gender-based violence, and advocating for safe, affordable, supportive housing.



LAURA-ELENA GARZA

Laura-Elena Garza is a committed advocate with over seven years of experience addressing domestic violence and homelessness. She began her career in a domestic violence shelter, providing crisis support and survivor-centered care. Currently serving as a Regional Domestic Violence Regional Coordinator for SPA 7, Laura-Elena plays a key role in building strong partnerships between domestic violence agencies and homeless service providers, ensuring a more coordinated and effective response for survivors across systems. At The Whole Child, she also leads the Domestic Violence Time-Limited Subsidy Program, helping families impacted by violence secure safe, stable, and permanent housing. In addition to her direct service and program leadership roles, Laura-Elena also serves on the Domestic Violence and Homeless Services Coalition (DVHSC) Education and Training Workgroup. This regional workgroup brings together experts and thought partners to advise and develop training content that aligns homeless and victim service providers.



SYLVIA M. GRIBBELL

Sylvia M. Gribbell, LCSW is a dedicated trauma specialist, social worker, and eco-therapist based in Los Angeles. With a background in political science and a master's degree in social work, they have spent their career advocating for individuals affected by domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and special needs. Their expertise includes creating programs that support clients navigating legal systems, ensuring they receive the care and resources needed to heal and thrive. A significant focus of their work is serving populations at an increased risk of homelessness due to systemic barriers, making stable housing difficult to attain. For the past decade, Sylvia has addressed these challenges at Survivor Justice Center by connecting clients to critical resources through a community advocacy program that fosters resilience and empowers survivors.

PRESENTERS



LAURA HERNANDEZ, LCSW

Laura Hernandez, LCSW, is a survivor of domestic violence and sexual assault and the founder of Nuna Behavioral Healthcare, a psychotherapy practice that prioritizes care from providers with shared lived experience and whose identities reflect the communities they serve. Drawing from her own healing, Laura co-created a survivor-honoring model where clients are seen not only through the lens of personal trauma, but within the broader context of systemic and socially engineered harm. Outside of her practice, Laura is active in abolitionist organizing in Los Angeles. She co-designed the Koreatown Community Action Team of Community Alternatives to 911, a crisis response line for people who may not have the privilege of calling the police. She also serves on the Board of Directors for A New Way of Life, supporting formerly incarcerated women in rebuilding their lives.



TEYA HISEL

Teya Hisel is the Policy Manager for Downtown Women's Center, the only organization in Los Angeles focused exclusively on serving and empowering women and gender diverse individuals experiencing homelessness. In her position, Teya works on a wide range of advocacy in federal, state, and local governments, focused on housing, homelessness, and supporting survivors of gender-based violence. Previously, they have worked on housing advocacy at United Way of Greater Los Angeles and within their student community at the University of Southern California, where she graduated with her Bachelor of Arts.



TAKIYA MCCULLAR

Takiya McCullar is a dedicated Manager and Domestic Violence Regional Coordinator at Union Station Homeless Services, bringing over 20 years of experience in the field of homeless services. Throughout her career, she has worked with diverse populations including veterans, single adults, and families, providing compassionate, client-centered support and advocacy. For the past four years, Takiya has specialized in domestic violence services, where she continues to be a steadfast advocate for survivors, helping them navigate complex systems and access safe, stable housing. Her leadership and deep understanding of the intersections between homelessness and domestic violence drive her commitment to creating lasting change in the community. Takiya brings deep expertise in trauma-informed care and systems navigation, and is a passionate advocate for housing stability, safety, and equity for all.

PRESENTERS



GINA MURDOCK

Gina Murdock, LCSW, is the Deputy Program Officer at the Downtown Women's Center (DWC) in Los Angeles. She earned her Master of Social Work degree from the University of Southern California in 2008 and has since dedicated her career to community mental health and homelessness intervention. Gina is committed to developing and supporting direct service teams and leadership staff, ensuring their efforts are both impactful and sustainable.



RACHELLE NESHKES

Rachelle Neshkes is a Senior Attorney at Survivor Justice Center. She is in her 17th year of rendering legal aid to underserved and vulnerable populations at legal services programs in California. Her experience is in the areas of housing, family law, domestic violence, public benefits and consumer debt. At LACLJ she co-created their new consumer debt project, aimed at stabilizing survivors by mitigating the effects of financial abuse and improving their credit. She currently serves the City of Los Angeles as Vice Chair of the Domestic Violence Alliance. She has served Los Angeles County as Co-Chair of the Committee on Systems Improvement of the Domestic Violence Council for over a decade.



MARGOT SCHWEICHLER

Margot Schweichler is a dedicated domestic violence advocate and counselor with a multidisciplinary background in legal advocacy, mental health, and community engagement. She currently serves as the Domestic Violence Regional Coordinator for SPA 6 at HOPICS, leading efforts to improve services for survivors experiencing homelessness. Her previous roles include Family Preservation Counselor at Children's Institute, Inc., Lead Senior Legal Advocate at the Domestic Violence Clinic at the Inglewood Courthouse, and Health Services Paralegal at Neighborhood Legal Services, where she supported underserved clients navigating complex legal and healthcare systems. Margot also served as the "Say No – Unite" Street Actions Coordinator for UN Women LA, mobilizing public campaigns to combat gender-based violence. She brings a trauma-informed, intersectional approach to all her work, grounded in a strong commitment to social justice, systemic change, and survivor-centered care.

PRESENTERS



ANNE SONG, MA.

Anne Song, MA. (She/Her), is the DV Regional Coordinator in SPA 4 stationed at Center for the Pacific Family (CPAF) where she joined in 2021. She coordinates and oversees CPAF's Training and Technical Assistance team providing Transitional Housing TA for culturally specific organizations serving survivors of color. Prior to the DVRC role, Anne worked as Housing Liaison at CPAF for the Survivor's First Program, an emergency financial assistance program supported through the Community Investment for Families Department (CIFD). Anne worked at UN Women in Turkey supporting the program, "Implementing Norms, Changing Minds" to end gender-based violence and discrimination in Central Asia and the Western Balkans. Anne is passionate about ending gender-based violence. She is also a tennis player and yoga instructor. Anne holds a BA in Cultural Anthropology and an MA in International Studies with a concentration on gender. She is fluent in Korean.



MARLEN TIRADO

Marlen Tirado is the Domestic Violence Regional Coordinator for Valley Oasis, the lead agency in SPA 1, where she has been for six months. She is passionate about supporting individuals and families affected by domestic violence and empowering survivors. Having grown up with a mother who is a survivor of domestic violence, Marlen brings a unique, lived perspective to her work. Her personal experience fuels her commitment to advocating for those experiencing domestic violence and providing vital resources and support. Marlen holds a Bachelor's degree in Social Work with a minor in Ethics, Justice, and Policy from Chico State University. With over three years of experience in domestic and sexual violence advocacy, she has worked in various roles, including legal advocacy, helping survivors obtain Temporary Restraining Orders (TROs). She has also served as a shelter advocate, providing support in emergency shelters and responding to hotline calls. Marlen worked at a drop-in center, offering counseling services and connecting clients to essential resources. Additionally, she has served as a Sexual Assault Crisis Counselor as part of the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), providing immediate assistance to survivors of sexual violence. Marlen is committed to raising awareness and advocating for change.



SARAH WHITMAN-STEWART

Sarah Whitman-Stewart (she/her) is the Sr. Coordinator, Domestic Violence Systems Alignment at LAHSA. In her role, Sarah creates system change to support domestic violence survivors in Los Angeles, oversees eight Domestic Violence Regional Coordinators, and launched the Centralized Access Project. Sarah has a Master of Public Administration from the University of Southern California and graduated Summa Cum Laude from UC Santa Barbara.



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The California Endowment

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for more information visit us at
dvhsc.org