

MARY NICELY

Chief Deputy Superintendent, California Department of Education



Mary Nicely was appointed as the Chief Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction at the California Department of Education (CDE) on September 9, 2021. She is responsible for the overall operations and administration of eight branches and implementation of key initiatives identified by State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI), Tony Thurmond: recruitment and retention of teachers of color, community schools, educator housing, and public/private partnerships with philanthropy and industry.

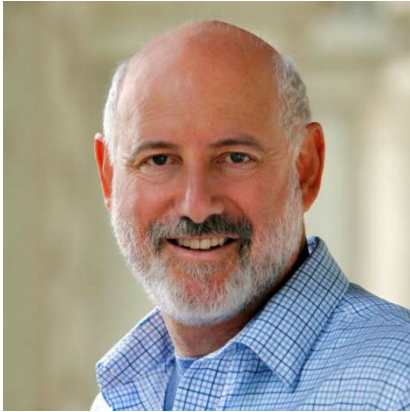
Ms. Nicely also oversees the Information & Technology Branch, leading efforts to modernize the department's technology systems. She supports the SSPI's Digital Divide Taskforce, working with internal and external constituents, technology companies, and major internet providers throughout the state to close technology gaps impacting students and educators. Prior to her appointment as Chief Deputy, Mary worked at the CDE as the SSPI's Senior Advisor since 2019. Before joining CDE, she served as Chief of Staff and District Director to then-Assembly Member Thurmond, representing California's 15th Assembly District.

As an innovative entrepreneur with a strong aptitude for technology, Mary Nicely founded her own company and was President and CEO of Nicely Done Solutions, Inc., a custom database development company headquartered in Berkeley, California, for 16 years. She also worked for Apple Computer for 14 years, serving as the Western U.S. K-12 Service and Support Manager for 7 of those years.

Mary is a first generation Burmese American and proud product of California public schools. She graduated from Monterey Peninsula Community College and U.C. Berkeley with a degree in Political Economy of Industrial Societies. She was Commissioner and Chair of the Public Education Sub-Committee at the City of Berkeley Peace and Justice Commission for 8 years, and she currently serves on the Asian Pacific American Heritage Awards Steering Committee of San Francisco since 2010. From 2010 to 2016, Ms. Nicely was the Emerging Communities Liaison for the White House Initiative on Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders for the San Francisco Bay Area.

ED HONOWITZ

Chief Executive Officer, Californians Dedicated to Education
Foundation



Ed joined CDE Foundation in October 2016. He comes to the Foundation with a background in education policy. Prior to coming to the foundation Ed served as education policy adviser for State Senator Carol Liu, who chaired the California Senate Education Committee. Ed's work in the California State Senate focused on K-12 education policy, school-based health, community schools partnership strategies, and cross-agency collaboration. Ed was a school board member in the Pasadena Unified School District for 12 years. He was elected twice as a member of the California School Boards Association delegate assembly and served on the legislative and conference committees.

Ed has presented at the California and National School Boards Association annual conferences and at the California League of Cities annual conference as well as the California Teachers Association Summer Institute and the Assoc. of California School Administrators Leadership Summit and Superintendent's Symposium on topics ranging from community engagement, labor-management partnerships, community school collaboration and arts education. Ed is currently a board member of CREATE CA. Ed and his wife live in Pasadena. Their three children are products of Pasadena public schools and the University of California System. Go Bears and Gauchos!

JACQUELYN OLLISON, ED.D.

Program Director, California Teacher Residency Lab,
Californians Dedicated to Education Foundation



Dr. Jacquelyn Ollison is co-director of the [California Teacher Residency Lab](#) and an instructor for UC Merced's Teacher Credentialing program. She focuses on retaining and supporting educators of color and training new teachers to be equity-minded, effective, and compassionate so they stay in the profession. She is driven by her commitment to ensure all students receive an excellent education. She believes that the classroom should be a safe and equitable space for everyone. She works to equip teacher preparation programs with the necessary tools and resources to ensure preservice educators succeed in the classroom and create lasting change.

Her research focuses on improving teacher retention in high-poverty schools by addressing compassion fatigue. She has a doctorate in education studying this topic and over 24 years of experience teaching and leading schools at the site, district, and state levels. A featured [TEDx speaker on educators' compassion fatigue](#), she knows the impact of compassion fatigue on educators because it happened to her, and she left the classroom. She believes all educators should be revered and supported as first responders and has said as much in her TEDx talk.

She also sits on two boards. The first is [Safe Black Space](#), which empowers Black communities to heal from racism and thrive. The second is the [Torlakson Whole Child Institute](#), which advocates for solutions to support the whole-child in California public schools.

She lives in Northern California with her husband, three stepchildren, and her dog Séo. Pronouns: she/her/hers

PENELOPE OLIVER

Executive Director, Founder, All Access Arts

Student Voices, Create CA



Penelope Oliver is a 17-year-old community organizer, poet, writer, and activist from Sacramento, California. She is the executive director and founder of All Access Arts. This grassroots non-profit partners with shelters, community centers, foster homes, and disability centers to provide Arts, STEM, and mentorship to underserved youth in the greater Sacramento/Central Valley area. Regarding activism, her main passions include farmworkers' rights, racial justice, immigration, gender justice,

climate action, gun safety legislation, educational equity, unionization/workers' rights, voting rights, and human rights. She has received the Presidential Service Award from President Joe Biden and is in the running for the Congressional Award, Presidential Academic Award, and Presidential Environment Award. She serves on national and state advisory councils, does grassroots organizing, and is a journalist and reporter for Ed100. Her hope for the future is to continue fighting for equal rights for all, and maybe one day run for office! To connect, feel free to email her at penelopeolivercareer@gmail.com, or follow her on Instagram at [@penelopethepowerfulpoet](https://www.instagram.com/penelopethepowerfulpoet).

LETTY KRAUS

Director, Statewide Arts Initiative, California County Superintendents



Letty Kraus is the Director of the California County Superintendents Arts Initiative which focuses on access to standards-based quality arts learning for all students

As Director of the statewide Arts Initiative, she works to elevate best practices and convene educators and interest holders around challenges and opportunities associated with ensuring equitable access to arts education for all students in California.

She brings to her work her past experiences as a student who was engaged in school because of the performing arts, a teacher in an under-resourced middle school who worked to bring arts learning experiences to students whenever possible.

Prior to joining the California County Superintendents, she worked at the California Department of Education where she led the development of the 2019 California's arts standards and 2020 Arts Education Framework.

Personal Statement:

“As a child I was fortunate to have access to theatre, dance, and music education in school. As a teacher I was motivated by my deep and personal understanding of the power of arts education to keep students coming to school. I worked to develop month-long exploratory dance courses, integrate arts into my history courses, and develop extra dance courses before and after school. Access to arts learning should be embedded in school systems as part of prioritizing access, equity, and well-being. It should not be dependent on whether a small group of adults are in place to make the extra effort to ensure arts are included, or the zip code where a student resides. Arts education must be available to all as part of the core curriculum and schools must design systems to ensure that is a reality.”

TOM CAPPELLETTI

Project Director and Faculty Coordinator, Sacramento City College

Makerspace



Tom Cappelletti is Project Director and Faculty Coordinator of the Sacramento City College Makerspace, and faculty in the Design & Digital Media Department since 2006. With a degree in product design from UCLA, he has a demonstrated history of working in both the private sector and in higher education.

Tom has a strong background as an education professional with an MA focused in educational and instructional technologies from California State University-Sacramento. He supports disruptive curriculum, 21st century skills development, team-based solutions in an iterative environment, always using project-based learning and social awareness as guideposts.

At Sacramento City College, Tom spearheaded the creation and development of the bustling campus makerspace, a dynamic, stimulating, welcoming STEAM-oriented space open to all students, faculty, and staff. The SCC Makerspace values equity, social justice, and inclusion to all in the true spirit of an empowering global maker movement and “maker culture.” Sacramento City College participated in, and received funding from, the State Chancellor's CCC Maker Initiative, a landmark project that saw the creation of 24+ community college makerspaces across California. Because of our makerspace, SCC recently ranked among the top Maker Schools in Higher Education for 2021 From Newsweek and Make: Magazine.

Tom is from Napa, CA. He is a former US Coast Guard officer, worked in the film and fashion industries, was a trainer for Apple, and ran his own design business for years.

PAMELA POSZ

Librarian, Sacramento City College



Pamela Posz has been a librarian at Sacramento City College (SCC) where she also runs the Library and Information Technology Career Program, works with local libraries to place employees, teaches a job-hunting class and is the author of *Power Posz: and Other Hacks for Getting the Job You Want*.

She also teaches in the campus Makerspace. She founded the NorCal Maker's Guild to connect makerspace administrators in Northern California.

Pamela is an artist and maker with multiple shops on Etsy and strong ties to the local making community.

Pamela's family has strong ties to the legislature. Her grandmother worked there for many years and her grandfather, Paul Mason, is the author of *Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure*.

CYNTHIA FREEMAN GRUTZIK, PH.D.

Dean of the Graduate College of Education, San Francisco State University



Dr. Grutzik has served as Dean of the Graduate College of Education since 2018. As Dean she supports five departments and two doctoral programs, serving 1100 students in the college. Her focus is on working with the GCOE faculty and staff to enhance programs to meet the need in the region for excellent and diverse teachers, leaders, and clinicians, and on partnering with K-12 partners to build strong clinical experiences. She is a Co-PI of the Bay Area K-16 Collaborative.

Prior to coming to SFSU, Dr. Grutzik was Associate Dean of the College of Education at CSU Long Beach, and Director of the School of Education at CSU Dominguez Hills. As a teacher educator for 25 years, she has been active on statewide taskforces to reform educator preparation, and with the Commission on Teacher Education as a member of the Board of Institutional Reviewers. Her research interests center on teacher pathways and undergraduate teacher preparation.

CARMEN DOMINGO

Dean of the College of Science and Engineering, San Francisco State



Carmen Domingo became dean of the College of Science and Engineering in 2019, making her the first women and Latina to serve in the position at SF State. After joining the University as an assistant professor of Biology in 1997, she served

as associate chair of Biology from 2007 to 2015, and was the interim dean in 2017. An expert in vertebrate embryology, she has taught and mentored hundreds of students in the classroom and lab — many of whom have gone on to excellent Ph.D. programs and careers in biomedical sciences. She has been awarded over \$25M in grants from the National Institute of Health, National Science Foundation, California Institute of Regenerative Medicine, and other agencies to support her research activities, student training efforts, and professional development opportunities for faculty. In 2018 she was elected as a California Academy of Sciences fellow.

Domingo earned her Ph.D. in Molecular and Cell Biology from UC Berkeley in 1995. She was a recipient of a UC President's Postdoctoral Fellowship from 1995 to 1997 in the

CELINE PARREÑAS SHIMIZU

Dean of the Division of Arts, University of California, Santa Cruz



Celine Parreñas Shimizu, film scholar and filmmaker, is Dean of the Division of Arts and Distinguished Professor of Film and Digital Media at the University of California at Santa Cruz.

The premiere scholar of Asian

/ American sexualities in representation, her books include *The Movies of Racial Childhoods* (Duke, 2024), *The Proximity of Other Skins* (Oxford, 2020), *Straitjacket Sexualities* (Stanford, 2012), and *The Hypersexuality of Race* (2007) which won Best Book in Cultural Studies from the Association for Asian American Studies which also awarded her the 2022 Excellence in Mentorship Award. She co-edited *The Feminist Porn Book* (2013) and *The Unwatchability of Whiteness* (2018). Her peer-reviewed articles appear in top journals in cinema, performance, ethnic, feminist, sexuality studies, and transnational popular culture. Her writings are translated to French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. Her recent films, *The Celine Archive* (2020) and *80 Years Later: On Japanese American Racial Inheritance* (2022) each won several festival awards and are distributed by Women Make Movies. She received her Ph.D. in Modern Thought and Literature from Stanford University, her M.F.A. in Film Directing and Production from UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television and her B.A. in Ethnic Studies from U.C. Berkeley.

JASSON CROCKETT

Public Policy Manager, Snap Inc



Jasson Crockett joined Snap Inc in 2021, where he leads Public Policy and Government Relations for the Greater Los Angeles Area, and supports Snap's legislative advocacy efforts in the California state legislature. Jasson's responsibilities include liaising with local and state elected leaders, agencies, and community organizations, to advance strategic partnerships and civic initiatives.

Prior to joining Snap, Jasson was Director of Community Business in the Office of Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti. In this role, Jasson led engagement with small businesses, and oversaw policy and business development in the life science, healthcare and tech sectors, as well as sports, and tax policy. Jasson led the creation of several major initiatives, including PledgeLA in partnership with the Annenberg Foundation, and WiSTEM L.A.

Prior to joining the Mayor's Office, Jasson worked with Nonprofit Finance Fund, a national consulting firm, specializing in strategic financial management consulting for nonprofit organizations. Additionally, Jasson has experience as a teacher and case manager for a nonprofit organization located in South-Los Angeles, and as an Associate with SEI Investments, a mid-cap asset management and trust software company. He currently serves on the boards of the Los Angeles Conservation Corps, Coro Southern California, the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, and PledgeLA.

Jasson holds a bachelor's degree from Georgetown University where he majored in Finance and Management, and earned his MBA at the University of California Los Angeles where he was awarded the John Wooden Fellowship.