

# ADvancing States Next Gen HCBS Leaders: 2022



**Alexis Marthaller**  
Regional Program Officer  
Montana Senior and Long-  
Term Care Program

**Alexis Marthaller** was born and raised a Montanan. Alexis grew up in a small town in Montana, then moved to another small town in Montana to attend the University of Montana-Western, where she graduated with a degree in Elementary Education.

Alexis has worked in many different roles for home and community-based programs. She was a caregiver in a group home, a case manager, and a Quality Improvement Specialist for the Developmental Disability Program for the state of Montana, where part of her duties included oversight of the early intervention and autism programs. While working with early intervention she was part of a team to oversee and implement a systemic improvement plan to create better opportunities for children and families participating in early intervention services. Wanting to expand her horizons, she then moved over to the Senior and Long-Term Care Program for the State of Montana where she is a Regional Program Officer. Alexis assists with the oversight of our senior and physically disabled waiver and find that she learns more about the differences and similarities of different home and community-based programs every day.



**Amber Kraw**  
Health Program Specialist II,  
Multipurpose Senior Services  
Program (MSSP)  
California Department of Aging

**Amber Kraw** is the Health Program Specialist II for the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP) at the California Department of Aging. The MSSP is one of California's 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waivers and is operated with a direct partnership with the State of California's Medicaid Agency, Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). MSSP provides both social and health care management services to assist frail individuals aged 65 or older to remain in their own homes and communities. Amber is the MSSP subject matter expert and team lead for technical assistance and programmatic issues involving compliance with the HCBS Waiver, HCBS Settings Final Rule requirements, MSSP Site Manual requirements, and critical incident reporting.

Amber began her career with the State of California working for DHCS in the Medi-Cal Eligibility Division carrying a caseload for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Program. Later she became a Business Analyst for the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System Modernization Project. Before her State of California career began, Amber worked as a Social Worker with the Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services in the In-Home Supportive Services Program. Amber holds a master's degree in Gerontology from the University of Southern California and a bachelor's degree in Psychology with a minor in Human Development from the University of California, Davis.



**Caroline Coghlan**

Program Specialist

New Jersey Division of Aging Services, Department of Human Services

**Caroline Coghlan** is a program specialist at the New Jersey Division of Aging Services, Department of Human Services. She received her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Social Work from Rutgers University. While working for the State of New Jersey, Caroline has been involved in the implementation of the Older Americans Act through collaborative work with New Jersey’s 21 Area Agencies on Aging, the furthering of No Wrong Door initiatives including Aging and Disability Resource Connection projects, the state support of the New Jersey Caregiver Task Force, and the development and implementation of the State Plans on Aging.

Caroline is drawn to serving older adults due to the diverse nature of their needs. As a very detail oriented, analytical thinker, Caroline hopes to marry a natural love for solving puzzles and digesting new information with development and improvement of services for one of the most forgotten, but most in-need populations – older adults and individuals with disabilities. Through her career work, Caroline hopes to learn about the many aspects of aging and disability services and gain a deeper understanding of how the pieces fit together and how they might be improved, updated or revitalized.



**Cassandra Keller**

Community Options Benefits Section Manager

Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing

**Cassandra Keller** is the Community Options Benefits Section Manager with the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. Cassandra is responsible for the administration and oversight of all HCBS services offered in Colorado.

Cassandra has been with the Department for eight years, and in that time, she has worked to implement the Final Settings Rule and strengthen oversight of HCBS residential settings. Cassandra is passionate about ensuring quality services for Colorado's most vulnerable populations.



**Danielle Ashlock**

Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS) Project Manager

Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System

**Danielle Ashlock** started her career with Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) five years ago with the Quality Performance Improvement team as a QI Specialist. Danielle has taken on the role of Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS) Project Manager, facilitating coordination activities, ensuring HCBS Rules implementation, and managing efforts to oversee and advance implementation of Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) for Home and Community Based Services.

Prior to joining AHCCCS, Danielle worked for the American Red Cross as a Development Specialist, was the Lead Coordinator with CVS Health, and was the Operations Manager for the University of Phoenix. Danielle has her Bachelor of Science in Project Management from Colorado Technical University.



**Darci Buttke**

Home and Community Based Services Supervisor

Minnesota Department of Human Services

**Darci Buttke** has worked for the State of Minnesota since 2009. From 2009 to 2020 she supported the state’s Aging and Disability Resource Center, the Minnesota Senior LinkAge Line. In that role, she led Minnesota’s nation-leading Return to Community program, which supported older adults to leave nursing homes and return to the community prior to Medicaid spenddown. In 2020, she became the supervisor within the HCBS unit, which oversees the 1915(c) Medicaid waiver for older adults, and the Alternative Care 1115 waiver, which provides HCBS services to older adults who are not financially eligible for Medicaid.

Prior to working for the State of Minnesota, Darci worked in long-term care settings ranging from a certified nursing assistant, resident counselor and marketing and admission manager. She has a bachelor’s degree in Gerontology and a master’s degree in Public Policy.



**David Ward**

Director, Long Term Services & Supports

Oklahoma Health Care Authority

**David Ward** graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Pre-Med/Biology from Savannah State University. He then went on to Physician’s Assistant school in West Virginia and later graduated with a Master of Health Administration.

In November 2010, David began his public service career with the Oklahoma Health Care Authority as a Research Analyst. He is now directing the Long-Term Services and Supports unit that administers six 1915(c) Home and Community Based Waiver Programs, State Plan Personal Care, and the Money Follows the Person program (Oklahoma’s Living Choice) in the State of Oklahoma. In this role, David has travelled throughout the State and country passionately learning about our Aged, Blind and Disabled communities. He found quality in healthcare so intriguing that he became certified as a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt and a Lean Six Sigma Healthcare Professional to better equip and prepare for the evolution of a performance driven health outcome industry.



**Donald Moffitt**

Director of Policy Management

New York OPWDDs Division of Policy and Program Development

**Donald Moffitt** began his professional career in the human services field in the late 1990’s, and during this early phase worked with individuals in the I/DD and Mental Health systems of care for private not-for-profit provider agencies. This work included duties ranging from direct support professional to program manager and included various benefits management roles.

He began his career with New York State government in 2005 as a Public Management Intern with the New York State Department of Civil Service. In 2008, he joined the Office for People with Development Disabilities (OPWDD) and has over the past fourteen years fulfilled various roles and performed a variety of programmatic and fiscal functions within the agency. Donald currently serves as the Director of Policy Management within OPWDDs Division of Policy and Program Development. His current work duties include responsibility for the day-to-day management and oversight of the HCBS 1915 (c) Waiver Operations and Managed Care teams.

Donald is a 2004 graduate of Binghamton University and holds a master’s degree in Public Administration.



### **Dustin Welch**

Program Manager, Integrated  
Managed Care Section

South Carolina Department of  
Health and Human Services'  
Bureau of Managed Care

**Dustin Welch** joined the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) in 2014. Having a background in communications, his role was to facilitate outreach and education for consumer and stakeholder engagement across multiple stakeholder groups during the implementation of South Carolina's Financial Alignment Initiative (FAI). This program became known as Healthy Connections Prime. Since then, Dustin's role and responsibilities have continued to grow as he aids in policy development and oversight of continued dual eligibility integration for SCDHHS. Dustin now proudly serves as the Program Manager for the Integrated Managed Care Section within the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services' Bureau of Managed Care. Presently, he leads and supports Healthy Connections Prime, Dual Special Needs Plans (DSNPs) and administers the Program for All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE).

Prior to this role, Dustin served as a trainer and educator in various settings for the Healthy Connections Medicaid program throughout his career. He served as the Senior Provider Relations Representative for BlueCross and BlueShield of South Carolina under a separate Healthy Connections Medicaid contract which provided outreach, education, and training for the provider community at a statewide level.

Dustin has a bachelor's degree in Public Relations from the University of South Carolina as well as a master's degree in Healthcare Administration earned from Webster University. Dustin has also earned a Professional Academy of Healthcare Management designation.





**Elizabeth Adkins**

Deputy Assistant Secretary

Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Aging and Adult Services

**Elizabeth Adkins**, a Louisiana native, serves as the Deputy Assistant Secretary within the Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Aging and Adult Services. In this role, Elizabeth manages the Department’s Medicaid Long Term Home and Community Based Services programs, which includes the Community Choices Waiver, Adult Day Healthcare Waiver, State Plan Long Term Personal Care Services, Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly, and Permanent Supportive Housing. In her ten-year tenure with the Louisiana Department of Health, Elizabeth consistently demonstrates dedication to older adults and persons living with adult-onset disabilities and strives to support the Department in meeting the needs of Louisiana citizens.



**Elizabeth Forslund**

Provider Support Unit Manager,  
Home and Community Based  
Services Section of the Division of  
Healthcare Financing

Wyoming Department of Health

**Elizabeth Forslund** grew up in Casper, WY and graduated from the University of Wyoming with a BA in English. She received an MA in English from Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana, and taught college English at Casper College. In 2011, Elizabeth took a job in the public sector, working as a program evaluator for the Wyoming State Legislature, and shortly thereafter completed her master’s in Public Administration. Elizabeth also worked for the Wyoming Department of Family Services as the Quality Improvement Coordinator before moving to the Wyoming Department of Health in 2018. Elizabeth currently serves as the Provider Support Unit Manager in the Home and Community Based Services Section of the Division of Healthcare Financing for WDH.



**Emily Tumber**

LTSS Policy Coordinator  
Rhode Island Medicaid

**Emily Tumber** is the LTSS Policy Coordinator for Rhode Island Medicaid. Her focus areas are federal compliance, their upcoming 1115 waiver renewal (they are a non-1915(c) state) and supporting Rhode Island’s LTSS rebalancing efforts. She has been in her position since January 2022, before which she worked for the Rhode Island Legislature as a health and human services budget and policy analyst.



**Jacquine Cobbs**

Chief of Community Living and Systems Support, Home and Community Services Division, Aging and Long- Term Support Administration

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

**Jacquine Cobbs** serves as Chief of Community Living and Systems Support in the Home and Community Services Division of the Aging and Long-Term Support Administration within the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, with over 15 of experience years in this field.

In her current role, she oversees the work of Behavioral Health Transformation efforts, Supportive Housing, Supported Employment, Money Follows the Person Federal Program, Nursing Facility Case Management, Resource Support and Development, and the Governor’s Washington State Traumatic Brain Injury Council.

As a proud Seattle native, Jacquine received her Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University of Washington and her Master of Education in Community/Mental Health Counseling from Seattle University.



**Jessica Holland**

Program and Policy Analyst

Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Medicaid Services, Bureau of Children’s Services

**Jessica Holland** is a Program and Policy Analyst in the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Medicaid Services, Bureau of Children’s Services. She is responsible for planning and coordination of large-scale projects, policies and programs related to the design and operation of programs and systems for children with disabilities. She has been in this role for over two years.



**Joy Kearney**

Senior Policy Advisor

Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), Medicaid and CHIP Services

**Joy Kearney** is a senior policy advisor within the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), Medicaid and CHIP Services. She leads the development, implementation, and evaluation of the STAR+PLUS Pilot Program (SP3), a Medicaid managed care program that will test person-centered strategies and improvements for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and other related conditions. In her time at Texas HHSC, Ms. Kearney has also managed the statewide IDD Strategic Plan and the Home and Community Based Services-Adult Mental Health program. Prior to her work with HHSC Ms. Kearney worked for over fifteen years as a Creative Arts Therapist in a variety of inpatient settings including prisons, state hospitals and state supported living centers.

Ms. Kearney holds a Master of Dance/Movement Therapy (DMT) & Counseling Psychology from Antioch New England Graduate School.





**Katie Evans**

Deputy Chief of Long-Term  
Services and Supports

Division of TennCare

**Katie Evans** is Deputy Chief of Long-Term Services and Supports with the Division of TennCare. She has worked as an advocate for people with disabilities, older adults, and children for more than 18 years, first as an intern and later a law clerk with Legal Aid of East Tennessee, then as an attorney with Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee for 7 years, and most recently as Senior Associate General Counsel in the TennCare Office of General Counsel from 2015 through 2021.



**Mark Cooley**

Contract Manager Analyst

Michigan's Financial Alignment  
Initiative

**Mark Cooley** is a Contract Manager Analyst in Michigan's Financial Alignment Initiative known as MI Health Link. Mark began working in the demonstration in 2015 and now manages contracts for three of the participating health plans, the ombudsman program and the state SHIP. In addition, Mark serves on a design team working on creating an independent LTSS options counseling program in Michigan. Mark is a lawyer and has a wide variety of experience outside of health care in addition to the work with MI Health link.



**Mindy Ulstad**

Bureau Chief of Senior Programs

Missouri State Unit on Aging,  
Missouri Department of Health  
and Senior Services (DHSS)

**Mindy Ulstad** is the Bureau Chief of Senior Programs for the Missouri State Unit on Aging within the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS). Mindy began her state career with the Family Support Division, taking Medicaid, SNAP, and TANF applications. Mindy also worked as a Medicaid Fraud Investigator for the Missouri Attorney General’s Office. New to the role of Bureau Chief, she plans to work more closely with the Home and Community Based Services Section and the Adult Abuse and Neglect Section at the Department.



**Shannon Effler**

Managed Care Long-term  
Services and Supports and  
Hoosier Care Connect Director

Indiana Office of Medicaid Policy  
and Planning

**Shannon Effler** is a public health professional dedicated to improving the quality of care for older adults and people with disabilities. She has over 15 years of experience in the social and health services field. Currently, she serves the State of Indiana as the Managed Care Long-term Services and Supports and Hoosier Care Connect Director in the Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning. She holds degrees from Washington University in St. Louis (Gerontology concentration, MSW) and Earlham College (Human Development and Social Relations, BA).