

## **Biographies and Statements of Interest for Independent District Commission Members and Alternate Members**

### **Commission Members**

#### **Amanda Manjarrez**

Amanda Manjarrez brings creative leadership and a deep commitment to social justice to her work as Director of Public Policy and Government Affairs at Foundations for A Better Oregon. A longtime advocate for racial equity and good governance, she collaborates with Oregonians around the state to co-design, test and champion system change strategies that deliver lasting impact for children and families. Previously, Amanda served as the first Director of Advocacy for the Coalition of Communities of Color and Latino Network, where she supported the organization in establishing an Advocacy Department. She also served as Chief Strategist at the Center for Civic Policy in Albuquerque, NM where she engaged in redistricting efforts in 2010. A 2016 graduate of Lewis & Clark Law School, she is currently a member of the New Mexico State Bar with a practice focused on Election law and nonprofit advocacy.

Statement of interest: "I think it's critical that we create districts that honor the unique experiences and identities across our diverse communities. My sincere hope is that folks see themselves represented and feel a sense of belonging, possibility, and excitement about getting more involved as potential leaders and as voters in their new districts."

#### **Arlene Kimura**

Arlene Kimura was born and raised in Hawaii and lived Europe and San Francisco before making Portland her home in 1978. She is a long-time advocate for East Portland community members. Arlene has been involved with many City of Portland processes, including the East Portland Action Plan and on the budget advisory committees for City of Portland's Office of Civic Life, Parks and Recreation, Bureau of Transportation, and Prosper Portland. She is currently the board president of the Hazelwood Neighborhood Association, the treasurer of the East Portland Neighbors, and a member on the Multnomah County Midland/Gregory Height Libraries remodel task force as well as Tri-Met's Hazelwood Public Safety Project. In her free time, Arlene enjoys exploring different textile expressions, cuisines, gardening, natural areas, music, reading and traveling.

Statement of interest: "Hopefully, this will show the community members of East Portland that the City is really interested in hearing their voice and take heed on their concerns and bring some positive developments."

#### **David Michael Siegel**

David Siegel, FAICP, retired after 42-years as a planner for a broad array of cities, counties and consulting firms, serving many years as a professional planner and manager for cities with city managers and ward-based city councils. He worked for Portland's Office of Transportation under Earl Blumenauer, and as a project consultant to the City. David was a municipal planning commissioner and served as both President and Board member for the American Planning Association (the country's professional organization for city planning professionals) and for Green Empowerment, a Portland-based international environmental nonprofit organization. He is committed to making Portland "the city that

works” ... only better. David and his wife raise and train puppies for Guide Dogs for the Blind, and he is a singer and guitarist for the local blues band, Big Plans.

Statement of interest: “I hope to help accomplish what the city has been discussing for over three decades – how to more effectively and inclusively represent the diverse citizenry of Portland, and how to more efficiently manage the organizational infrastructure required to run and serve a city of Portland’s size.”

**DaWayne Judd**

DaWayne Judd was born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland, and received a BA in Sociology and Economics from Haverford College and an MBA in Business from University of Michigan before moving to Portland in 2015. He is a small business owner of B-More Management, LLC and has worked for Fortune 500 companies such as Columbia Sportswear, and Coldwater Creek. DaWayne serves as a board member for Black Executive Forum, Partners in Diversity, Alia Innovations and Family Service, and the Oregon Northwest Regional Education Service District. In his spare time, DaWayne enjoys dining on Ethiopian food at Enat’s, cognacs at Olive or Twist, catching up on community news at Champion’s Barber and visiting Broughton Beach with his Cane Corso named Zora Neale Hurston.”

Statement of interest: “I’m excited by the opportunity to create equity and representation to the diverse communities of Portland.”

**Edie Van Ness**

Edie Van Nes is a third-generation Portlander and longtime criminal defense attorney, primarily representing court-appointed clients who overwhelmingly grew up in underserved communities. Since returning to Portland post-law school, she has been involved with many women’s causes, including founding the first and only multi-industry women’s business directory, Edie’s List ([edieslist.com](http://edieslist.com)). Edie has been recognized by both the American Immigration Lawyers Association and the Oregon Criminal Defense Attorneys Association for her work. She welcomes different perspectives and enjoys working in a collaborative setting. Edie’s proudest title is wife and mother. Between June and September, you’re most likely to find Edie doing her most favorite activity, boating on the Columbia and Willamette Rivers.

Statement of interest: “I am so excited to see this new Portland and want to play a part in its success. If not me, then who? I do not deserve the right to question or challenge policies if I myself am unwilling to get involved and serve.”

**Joshua Laurente**

Joshua Laurente is a Pacific Islander raised and rooted in the indigenous CHamoru islands of Guam and the Marianas, who are still resisting colonization by the United States. Josh has a master's degree in policy advocacy and political development from Portland State University. He has spent the last year providing direct support and outreach with houseless Portlanders as a Rider Ambassador, a Portland Streetcar pilot program seeking to be a non-security alternative to supporting public safety on transit. Prior to that he was a state team member with US Senator Jeff Merkley, as well as an assistant supporting engagement at equity-focused firm Espousal Strategies. In his own time, Josh keeps a membership at the Circuit gym, volunteers with the Sunnyside Shower Project, and serves on the board of directors at Next Up, while also staying engaged in Guam's youth-led decolonization movement.

Statement of interest: “This endeavor will only be successful if we are committed to engaging with Portlanders where they are, being in community with them, and lifting up their voices as we draw

the political boundaries that will unite our city. If appointed, I believe we can execute a community-oriented and equity-focused blueprint for innovating democracy that other cities can look to as a successful model of transformative democratic change.”

### **Kari Chisholm**

Kari Chisholm has lived in the city of Portland since 1997. Kari is the founder and president of Mandate Media, a Portland-based digital strategy and political consulting firm. Since 2001, Kari has advised over 300 candidates and elected officials in 32 states. He and his wife also own Cellar 503, an Oregon wine club and small business in Portland. In 2021 and 2022, Kari taught Digital Media Policy and Politics at the University of Chicago’s Harris School of Public Policy where he also serves on the bipartisan political digital working group that has proposed regulatory reforms in digital campaign practices. In 2001, Kari served on the citizens’ commission that advised the Metro Council on its post-Census 2000 redistricting effort.

Statement of interest: “I am enthusiastic about the historic opportunity to hear from Portland residents about how they want to be represented on City Council, and to draw maps that maximize political competition and representation of our unique and diverse neighborhoods and communities.”

### **Lamar Wise**

Lamar Wise began his life of advocacy working for the Oregon Student Association as their Legislative Director in 2015 and eventually became the Executive Director in 2017. During his time at OSA he focused on fighting back tuition increases, increasing mental health services on campuses and empowering students to be involved in the electoral process. Lamar then transitioned to working for Oregon AFSCME as a Political Coordinator in 2019 where he has focused on fighting for economic justice to all working families. Since then, Lamar has been appointed to various boards including ACLU of Oregon, Community Alliance of Tenants Action Fund, Our Oregon, Safety and Justice PAC board, and The Governor's Racial Council. Through Lamar's community involvement, he has fought for opportunities for Portlanders and Oregonians to have a voice in government decisions that will affect them.

Statement of interest: “I’m excited to create an inclusive process and to engage community-based organizations.”

### **Melody Valdini**

Melody E. Valdini is a professor in the political science department at Portland State University as well as the co-editor of the *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy*. Her research focuses on the consequences of institutional design, with a particular focus on electoral systems, political parties, and representation. She has published in the *American Journal of Political Science*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *Electoral Studies*, and *Politics & Gender*, and is the author of two books: *The Character of Democracy: How Institutions Shape Politics* (with Richard Clucas) and *The Inclusion Calculation: Why Men Appropriate Women’s Representation* (both published by Oxford University Press). In 2020, her most recent book, *The Inclusion Calculation*, was selected as the winner of the Victoria Schuck Award by the American Political Science Association, which recognizes the best book published on women and politics in the previous year. She has lived in Portland for sixteen years and spends her free time watching elections around the world, riding bikes with her husband and two daughters, and catering to two demanding cats.

Statement of interest: “My goals would be to share my knowledge of how other cities and countries

have drawn similar districts and to create the most fair and equitable districts for Portland.”

**Neisha Saxena**

Neisha Saxena (She/Her) serves as the Deputy Director and Civil Rights Administrator for the Multnomah Office of Diversity and Equity. Prior to this role, she worked in the Department of County Human Services where she managed the Anti-Poverty Initiatives Team dedicated to innovative approaches to dismantling the root causes of poverty and systemic racism. Prior to working at Multnomah County, Neisha lead a team at Home Forward and was a civil rights lawyer for 15 years, at Disability Rights Oregon and Legal Aid Services of Oregon, focusing on housing, employment, and public benefits law. She was a founding member of the Portland Fair Housing Advocacy Committee, the Portland Commission on Disabilities, and has served in leadership roles on the Oregon State Bar Affirmative Action Committee and Disability Law Section, the Home Forward 504 Board, the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities, the PPS Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Enrollment and Transfer and Districtwide Boundary Advisory Committee, among many other boards and commissions. Neisha is a native of Chicago, raised in a South Asian immigrant family. She has a JD from Georgetown University Law Center and a BA, magna cum laude, from Wellesley College.

Statement of interest: “My passion for this work stems from the fact that I believe local government has a special obligation to redesign and undo the harm caused by centuries of intentional systemic inequities baked into structures created during a Jim Crow era that were not dismantled or undone. These inequitable structures show up in the disparity data we see today in all systems: housing, healthcare, education, justice, wealth creation, etc. We cannot improve outcomes for marginalized communities and increase belonging without undoing systemic racism in our structures. The work of implementing the recommendations of the City of Portland Charter Commission is a critical opportunity to redesign City government toward achieving the goal of a multiracial democracy.”

**Paul Lumley**

Paul Lumley has resided in Portland for 30 years and is the Chief Executive Officer for the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA) and a citizen of the Yakama Nation. He came to NAYA in 2016 after being the Executive Director of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) since 2009. Mr. Lumley served as Executive Director of the National American Indian Housing Council in Washington DC from 2007 to 2009. While also in DC, Paul served as the Senior Tribal Liaison for the U.S. Department of Defense from 2004-2007. Paul has served as the Chair of the Coalition of Communities of Color and continues to collaborate with community-based organizations. Paul has a wide-ranging background on issues that directly impact American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. He has worked directly with tribal governments, tribal consortia, virtually all federal agencies impacting Indian country, and Native American national and regional organizations throughout his professional career. Experience areas include education, housing, social services, tribal treaty rights, and environmental protection and restoration. In his spare time, Paul loves to hike and make pies.

Statement of interest: “I am excited about ensuring a fair process is implemented to create the 4 new districts, as well as ensuring a transparent and inclusive process.”

**Sharon VanSickle-Robbins**

Sharon VanSickle-Robbins is a lifelong Portlander and is passionate about ensuring that the diversity of our community is reflected in the leadership of the organizations she works with and that their missions are inclusive. Sharon earned a B.A. in marketing and journalism from the University of Portland. She began her career working at *Willamette Week*, and then in public relations for Tektronix. In 1983, she

cofounded KVO Advertising and Public Relations and helped lead the firm for 20 years. In 2000, they sold KVO to Fleishman-Hillard International Communications (FH), one of the world's largest public relations agencies. Sharon led the FH offices in Portland and Seattle. She now devotes her energy and experience to supporting a range of community organizations including, the International Women's Forum/Oregon, City Club of Portland, Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette and Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon, Self Enhancement, Inc., Thomas Edison High School, the Scappoose School District, Sauvie Island School, Portland metropolitan area's Regional Arts & Culture Council, and the Oregon Entrepreneurs Forum.

Statement of interest: "As a native Portlander who loves this City, I believe the work of this advisory body to address longstanding challenges with our model of government and to provide equitable representation across the entire community is long overdue. I believe this work will be transformative."

### **Steve Fleischman**

Steve Fleishman has been an owner/operator of several businesses, including his current consulting practice at Change Dynamics, a middle and high school social studies teacher, director of an international civic education project that worked in more than two-dozen countries in Africa, Asia, Central America, and Eastern Europe, and an executive in three education nonprofits—including as CEO of Portland-based Education Northwest. Steve serves on the boards of the City Club of Portland and NWEA. As a child of immigrant parents to the U.S. and Latin America, whose first language is Spanish, and who moved to this country in the fourth grade, Steve has personal insight into the challenges faced by individuals who are not members of a dominant group or culture, and who seek to be affirmed by and included in democratic processes. Coming from a different society, he learned about American society and culture as an outsider and has developed a deep attachment to democracy and social justice. Steve believes that the new Portland form of government is a unique and exciting experiment to help perfect local democracy by being more inclusive and more representative of the views and aspirations of all of our citizens.

Statement of interest: "I strongly believe in local democracy and the benefits in terms of engagement and sense of community that full participation can engender. We live in a time where so many forces political, technological, economic, and cultural tear us apart and encourage us to be self-interested. The new form of government we have chosen in this part election offers an opportunity to build anew on a vision of democracy that values and includes all. I'd like to play a small part in implementing that vision well."

## **Alternate Members**

### **Marta Hanson**

Marta Hanson (she/her) has focused her career on building more inclusive communities, movements, and institutions. As the Interim Executive Director of the NE Portland-based Lloyd EcoDistrict, she led the organization in becoming the first nationally certified EcoDistrict in the state of Oregon in the spring of 2022. Leading up to the 2022 midterm elections, Marta helped to recruit poll workers nationwide with Power the Polls, a nonpartisan initiative to ensure safe, free, fair elections for all voters. Her work included increasing voting access by recruiting bilingual poll workers speaking over 25 languages. Previously, Marta co-led the Stanford Women's Community Center and served as one of two full-time

staff on Kamala Harris' 2014 Attorney General re-election campaign. She also regularly volunteers for causes supporting democracy and civic leadership, including Common Cause Oregon, New Leaders Council Pacific Northwest, and the Stanford Alumni Women's Impact Network. In her free time, Marta is an avid hiker, cyclist, and swing dancer, and she sings in the Portland Symphonic Choir.

Statement of interest: "I believe the process of an initiative is just as important as its outcome, and I'm excited at the possibility of shaping the process. As part of the [Independent District Commission] I would be eager to ensure the process itself is accessible and equitable – especially for historically underrepresented communities – and not just that the commission reaches an acceptable outcome. ... Portland has had a challenging few years as a city, and I believe that a well-crafted and well-executed community engagement process by the advisory body could do a lot for building a stronger sense of community care in the city as a whole."

### **Ransom Green III**

Ransom Green was born and raised in Portland. He attended PSU followed by nearly two decades as an active-duty Army officer. For his entire working career, he has served in roles where collaboration was required for successful outcomes. Currently, Ransom supports veterans and military family members in higher education while serving on Clackamas Community College's Shared Governance and DEI Committees, the Clackamas County Veterans Advisory Council, and many others. His goal is to participate in a collaborative process that greatly improves the governance of his hometown and ensures equity for all community members. His experience as a parent of two North Portland kids, a working-class homeowner, a disabled veteran, and neighbor motivates him to improve our city.

Statement of interest: "My goal would be to participate in a collaborative process that greatly improves the governance of my hometown and ensured equity for all community members."

### **Sohrab Vossoughi**

Sohrab Vossoughi is founder, president and CEO of Ziba, a global design and innovation consultancy, where he has been directing projects for start-ups and Fortune 50 clients for over three decades. He is also the founder and CEO of Citifyd, a smart city technology startup with a focus on mobility, making daily commuting easier and less expensive for people. Sohrab has served on the Board of Directors at Doernbecher Children's Hospital Foundation, Board of Advisory, University of Oregon School of Architecture and Allied Arts, the Engineering Technology Management Advisory Council, Portland State University, the Design Management Institute Advisory Council, and a member of the World Technology Network. He is also a regular contributor to Harvard Business Review, Fast Company, Rotman School of Management Magazine and Design Management Institute Journal. Born in Tehran, Iran and moved to the United States in 1971. He is a graduate of San Jose State University's Department of Industrial Design.

Statement of interest: "I believe political thinking cannot solve our existing challenges these days. I am excited to bring over 40 years of strategic thinking and innovative problem-solving using design thinking. I also bring many years of running businesses and daily operational execution. ... We need to think creatively to solve our social problems."

## **Reserve Alternate Members**

### **Brian Wilson**

Brian Wilson is a native Oregonian, with deep roots in Portland and the Willamette Valley. He owns the commercial real estate consulting company, Wilson Development Group and is a development partner in Mainland Northwest, LLC. Brian has served on many community boards and commissions such as the Portland Housing Commission, the Sellwood Bridge Community Task Force, and the Multnomah County Charter Review Commission. He has additionally participated on the boards of Our House of Portland, Scouts BSA Council 75, Downtown Clean and Safe, Oregon Smart Growth, and Portland Center Stage. Brian believes that because we live in a growing urban, built environment, we need to do a great job preserving the historic character of our region, while meeting the increasing demands of the future. In his free time, Brian enjoys international travel, cooking, baking and entertaining.

Statement of interest: "I am excited about helping position the new form of government for optimum potential for success."

### **Sarah Thompson**

Sarah Thompson is a longtime resident of Northeast Portland and an alumna of PPS, PCC, and PSU. As a labor organizer and negotiator with Oregon AFSCME Council 75, Sarah is skilled in uniting diverse stakeholders to work toward shared goals and mitigate differences in thoughtful and nuanced ways, often to provide equity to new groups of stakeholders or historically underrepresented groups. Prior to working with AFSCME, she worked for the Oregon Nurses Association, Service Employees International Union Local 49, and Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries. Sarah believes that, while this commission may be coming together from different types of communities and with various primary interests, at the end of the day, we all want the same things: safe and healthy neighborhoods for all residents of Portland, and a governance structure that is truly representative of, and responsive to, the needs of our community.

Statement of interest: "I would love to help foster a collaborative process that would identify the four new voting districts in our new charter. As a longtime Portlander with ties to many different communities, I feel we could do much to create a more democratic process and could increase public safety, civic engagement, government efficiency, and racial and social justice in Portland."

### **Weston Koyama**

Weston Koyama's ancestors immigrated to Portland from Japan in 1915 and the Koyama family has resided in and around Portland for over a hundred years. Since graduating from law school in 2019 in Eugene, Weston has returned to Portland taking on a variety of legal roles including that of an assistant attorney general for the state DOJ, a housing advocate, a landlord advocate, and presently as a public defender for indigent Portlanders accused of crimes. Weston's perspective as a lawyer representing people in power and the powerless gives him the key insights needed to create and draw the boundaries of Portland's four new legislative districts to ensure equal representation and a voice for all Portlanders.

Statement of interest: "I am excited about the ability to make a difference; namely, the ability to ensure that diverse voices are heard on the future city council."