

## **Meet the Department of Pesticide Regulation's (DPR) Environmental Justice Advisory Committee (EJAC) Members.**

On August 21, DPR's Director appointed eleven members and three alternates to serve on the department's first EJAC. Advisory committee members reflect the geographic diversity within California and represent communities in the central coast, central valley, and southern and northern California.

### **Members:**



1. Erika Alfaro BSN, RN, PHN: A public health nurse with over 12 years of experience dedicated to advancing health equity and environmental justice. She is a long-time member of Safe Ag Safe Schools and serves as co-chair of the Farmworker Food and Agriculture Committee with California Nurses for Environmental Health and Justice. Erika is an Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments Fellow, and a UCSF Reach the Decision Makers Fellow, advocating for stronger protections for communities impacted by environmental hazards. She is the immediate past president of the San Francisco/Bay Area chapter of the National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN) and currently serves on NAHN's national board.



2. Horacio Amezcuita: Currently works on an organic family farm in the Salinas Valley. He graduated from California State University of Monterey Bay with a concentration in Agriculture Business Management. Born in Mexico, Horacio came to live in the Salinas Valley in 1974, where he was a farmworker for many years. He has worked in managing farming, marketing, and housing cooperatives. Horacio's family was one of the original families that helped build the San Jerardo farm workers housing cooperative. He worked in the community of San Jerardo for 17 years as the cooperative's general manager.

Horacio participates in various organizations in the Salinas Valley, including the Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association, Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater

Sustainability Agency, Community Water Center, Monterey Water Keeper, Safe Ag Safe Schools. Horacio participated in other organizations that helped disadvantaged communities to obtain clean water and take care of the environment.



3. Martha Dina Argüello: For nearly 50 years, Martha has been part of Los Angeles's social justice community, starting as an organizer in her youth and growing into roles as an activist, health educator, and coalition builder. She joined Physicians for Social Responsibility Los Angeles (PSR-LA) in 1999 as the health education coordinator and has served as Executive Director since November 2007.

Martha co-chairs Standing Together Against Neighborhood Drilling and chairs Californians for a Healthy and Green Economy. She also founded the LA Leap Coalition, which helped create the office of Climate Emergency Mobilization in Los Angeles. Currently, she serves as Co-Chair of the California Air Resource Board (CARB) AB 32 EJ Advisory Committee, working on California's climate policies. In her 26 years at PSR-LA, she has worked to unite the trusted voices of health professionals with frontline communities to advocate for climate justice, nuclear abolition, environmental health, and a fair transition to a care-based economy.

4. Angel Garcia: Joined Californians for Pesticide Reform (CPR) core staff in 2017 after working for the coalition for more than three years as a staff member of Lindsay-based non-profit El Quinto Sol de América. He became organizing director in 2020 and co-director in 2022. A Tulare County native, Angel graduated from UCSC with a B.A. in Latin American & Latino Studies and Politics. He is the founder and coordinator of the local coalition Tulare County Coalition Advocating for Pesticide Safety (TC-CAPS).
5. Bianca Lopez: Co-founder and Executive Director of Valley Improvement Projects (VIP) based in Stanislaus County.



6. Emily Marquez: Senior scientist, Pesticide Action & Agroecology Network (PAN). At PAN Emily has done participatory research, monitoring for pesticides in the air with community members in California, Hawai'i, Iowa, and Minnesota, sharing those findings to communicate with the public about the hazards of pesticide drift. She has written about scientific studies in various reports and blogs for PAN, in order to “translate” science for the public.

Emily has engaged in pesticide policy work at the state, national, and international level, commenting on health harms from pesticides and pesticide drift. Since 2012, she has participated as an observer internationally, advocating for the listing of pesticides nominated to the Stockholm Convention.

Emily is from California-- her father grew up here in a farmworker family and her mother immigrated here from Hong Kong. She majored in History and Integrative Biology at the University of California, Berkeley. At Berkeley and at Boston University, She studied the effects of reproductive hormones and environmental toxicants on reproductive development in reptiles.



7. Guadalupe Martinez: Guadalupe, “Lupe”, was born in Brownsville, Texas, and moved to California with his mother and family in 1964 after his father suffered a fatal tractor accident. He soon started working in the field of the San Joaquin Valley, working for a variety of farm labor contractors. Lupe worked in the fields, spraying pesticides, as a mixer/loader and did tractor driving spraying the fields.

While working in the grape fields in Ducor, Lupe met several organizers from the United Farm Workers, including Cesar Chavez. That was his first encounter with the Union and the taste for organizing and seeking justice never left him. He soon joined the UFW staff and UFW EXEC Board.

In 1991, he started working with Luke Cole at the Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment (CRPE) as CRPE’s first full-

time organizer, working on environmental justice issues in farm work communities.



8. Sarait Martinez: Is an Indigenous Zapotec organizer and the Executive Director of Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indigena Oaxaqueño (CBDIO), an Indigenous women-led organization that works with Indigenous farmworkers in the Central Valley and North Central Coast of California. In her role, she builds on a long career of creating spaces for people to tap into their inherent power, grow their leadership, and organize to help communities thrive. Sarait has over 15 years of experience organizing youth and farmworker communities. Sarait earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science as well as a master's degree in Public Administration from California State University at Fresno. She also earned a doctorate in Educational Leadership from San Francisco State University, where she focused on the education, and well-being of Indigenous immigrant youth.



9. Rocio Ortiz: Working in the strawberry fields for a few summers was an experience that shaped Rocio's understanding of the struggles and resilience of farmworker communities. This background inspired her commitment to environmental justice and community empowerment. Rocio has been actively involved in outreach activities that address issues of environmental health, equity, and social well-being. Currently, Rocio collaborates with organizations such as Safe Ag Safe Schools and Future Leaders of Change, where she helps lead educational campaigns to raise awareness about pesticide exposure and access to clean and safe environments. Rocio also works with Ventana Wildlife Society in Monterey, supporting projects focused on wildlife conservation and environmental education. As a student at California State University, Monterey Bay, majoring in Environmental Studies and Global Studies, Rocio integrates her lived experience with academic knowledge to promote sustainable practices and advocate for vulnerable communities.



10. Mechelle Perea-Ryan: Dr. Mechelle Perea Ryan is a Family Nurse Practitioner, professor at California State University, Stanislaus, and lifelong advocate for environmental justice. For over 30 years, she has served agricultural and food processing workers who are disproportionately affected by pesticide exposure and environmental health risks in California's Central Valley. Her career began in a school-based clinic adjacent to a migrant camp, where she adapted care to meet the needs of farmworker families. Holding a PhD in Public Health from UC Merced and an FNP degree from UCSF, her scholarship has focused on the health impacts of pesticides, particularly on pregnant women. She serves on the board of Nurses for Environmental Health and Justice and the policy committee for Californians for Pesticide Reform. A graduate of the UCSF Reach the Decision Makers Fellowship, she integrates science, policy, and community engagement to advance health equity and environmental protections for the most impacted populations.



11. Tim Prado: is a community leader with over six years of experience in promoting sustainable farming practices. His advocacy work primarily focuses on reducing the use of harmful pesticides through outreach, education, and partnership building. He collaborates with residents, local organizations, and policymakers to implement effective solutions that protect both human health and the environment. Additionally, he has advocated for a safe and affordable drinking water fund, which has positively impacted the community of Lamont, CA.

#### **Committee Alternates:**

1. Robert Chacanaca: A Native American retired educator and labor leader, living in the agricultural Pajaro Valley region. Has over 30 years of experience in community, state, and federal positions associated with teaching and labor relations.

2. John Mataka: One of the founders of Grayson Neighborhood Council, a group that advocates for the residents of Grayson, Westley, and Vernalis. Retired, drug-abuse counselor and behavioral health specialist at Stanislaus County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services. Mr. Mataka has been involved in environmental causes over the last 40 years, receiving awards from CRPE, American G.I. Forum, and Minority Women's Network of Stanislaus County due to his advocacy for civil rights and social justice.
3. Victor Torres: Co-founded the teenage environmental justice group Future Leaders of Change. Currently, a Monterey Peninsula College student.