

Date: May 18, 2023

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager *T.B.M.*

From: Kelly Colopy, Director of Health and Human Services *KC*

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Submittal of 2022 Board of Health and Human Services Annual Report**

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As required by the Long Beach Municipal Code 2.18.090, the Board of Health and Human Services for the City of Long Beach submits the attached Annual Report for the calendar year 2022.

This report was approved by the Board of Health and Human Services at their regularly scheduled meeting on May 12, 2023.

Attachment

CC: DAWN MCINTOSH, CITY ATTORNEY  
DOUGLAS P. HAUBERT, CITY PROSECUTOR  
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR  
LINDA F. TATUM, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER  
TERESA CHANDLER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER  
KATY NOMURA, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER  
APRIL WALKER, ADMINISTRATIVE DEPUTY CITY MANAGER  
KEVIN LEE, CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER  
MONIQUE DE LA GARZA, CITY CLERK  
DEPARTMENT HEADS

May 12, 2023

**2022 annual report for the City of Long Beach Board of Health and Human Services as outlined in the Long Beach Municipal Code (Chapter 2.18 - ADVISORY BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES).**

Report presented on Friday, May 12, 2023, at the regularly scheduled Board of Health and Human Services meeting.

**Objectives and Functions**

According to Chapter 2.24 (BOARD OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES) of the Long Beach Municipal Code, “The Board shall act as an advisory body to consult with and advise the Department Director, the Council, and City Manager on matters relating to public health in the City including community health safety issues concerning impacts of animals on matters related to disease and public health, to conduct hearings on matters pertaining to the public health and social service affairs of the City, and to report any findings or recommendations to the proper authorities for action.”

**Reports and recommendations presented to the City Council, including the number of subject matters referred by the City Council:**

The City Council did not refer any items to the Board of Health and Human Services in 2022, despite taking up several issues that would have clearly benefited from the wealth of expertise of the members of this board. It is our hope that in the future our input will be considered for these discussions as we feel it is critical to the success of the Health and Human Services Department (Health Department).

**Total number of meetings held:** 11 (lack of quorum in July)

**Attendance records of all members:**

<b>2021</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Excused</b>	<b>Unexcused</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Abraam Girgis	6	2	0	
Barbara Schwerin	10	2	0	
Beth Lesen	3	0	0	Appointed October 2022
Chris Robson	5	1	0	Left Office July 2022
Lauren Walton	5	3	0	Appointed May 2022
Lydia Vaias	9	1	2	
Manorama Gupta	8	3	1	
Miles McNeeley	9	3	0	
Nasir Tejani	8	1	3	
Ralph Brooks	8	1	3	
Reena Curtis	7	3	2	
Sabrina Sanders	11	0	1	Appointed March 2021
Silene St. Bernard	10	2	0	
Sylvia Betancourt	10	2	0	
Troy Ha	4	1	1	Left Office July 2022

**Board Engagement with Council District Offices:**

The Board continues to prioritize communication with individual council offices to find ways to strengthen the relationship between the Health Department and the community as a whole.

**The number of public hearings conducted:** ..... None

**The amount of money, if any, expended in support of the body:**.. None

**City personnel who regularly assist body:**

- Kelly Colopy - Director of Health and Human Services
- Dennis Keith - Executive Assistant
- Anissa Davis, MD, MPH - City Health Officer
- Jessica Schumer, MD, MPH – Deputy Director

**Board Member Bios and Organizational Connections:** See attached document

**Recommendation as to whether the body should be abolished, modified, or continued:**

We recommend that the body be continued and encourage the Health Department’s leadership, as well as the Long Beach City Council, Mayor, and City Manager to utilize our combined expertise as outlined in the body’s objectives and functions above.

**Board Summary:**

Board member St. Bernard was nominated and accepted as Chair. Board Member Gupta was nominated and elected as Vice Chair. All meetings were conducted remotely online due to COVID restrictions.

**Board Actions:**

- There were no specific Board actions taken during 2022.

**Presentations Received:**

- January 14.....No presentation
- February 11.....Black Infant Health Program
- March 11.....Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma,  
East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice.
- April 8.....No presentation
- May 13 .....Racial and Health Equity
- June 10.....Homelessness
- July 8 .....No quorum – meeting not held
- August 12 .....No presentation
- September 9.....No presentation
- October 14 .....No presentation
- November 11 .....CalAim presentation
- December 9.....Health equity investment framework

**Topics of Discussion:**

- Environmental justice
- Older adult support
- Mental health
- Homelessness
- Board and City leadership relationship building
- Board of Health Goals and Infrastructure

**Emerging Trends and Incidences:**

- COVID and the City’s management and response to the pandemic continued through 2022
- Increasing homelessness and concerns for improved ways to address the challenges

**Public Participation (present and/or commented):**

- January..... There was no public comment
- February..... John Kindred, from the Long Beach Environmental Alliance
- March..... There was no public comment.
- April..... There was no public comment
- May ..... There was no public comment
- June..... There was no public comment
- July ..... Meeting not held due to lack of quorum
- August..... There was no public comment
- September..... There was no public comment.
- October ..... There was no public comment
- November ..... There was no public comment
- December..... John Kindred, from the Long Beach Environmental Alliance

**Board Recommendations for 2023:**

1. The Board requests regular visitations from Councilmembers and/or their designated staff at Board meetings, especially since Councilmembers generally do not have staff dedicated to health issues and is planning to hold a meeting including Councilmember representatives since in-person meetings have resumed.
2. The Board will continue direct outreach to Councilmembers for input as to the health needs of the community including, but not limited to, environmental health and justice impacts on health, infectious disease, wellbeing, and mental health, addressing highly impacted communities and other areas addressed by the Community Health Needs Assessment and the Health Department Strategic Plan.
3. The Board will explore opportunities for collaboration with other City departments, Boards and Commissions, Educational organizations, and other non-City Neighborhood Associations and Organizations, especially where there is City funding allocated for activities that are health-related.

4. Support and ensure alignment of activities within the City of Long Beach and Health Department equity framework.
5. Provide input and guidance to the Health Department and City Council on health-related issues as they may arise.
6. Once COVID guidelines allow and it is safe to do so, plan for a Board of Health retreat for Board members to participate in a strategic planning process similar to the one held by the Human Relations Commission.

# Long Beach Board of Health & Human Services

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**Silene St. Bernard, DVM**  
**Boardmember (Veterinarian)**

***Appointed 2016***  
***Council District 3***

Dr. Silene St. Bernard is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine (DACVPM), which focuses on zoonotic and infectious disease, epidemiology, food security and safety and public health. She received her Bachelor of Science in Zoology and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from The Ohio State University and also spent two years studying Biomedical Engineering and Business at the master's level at Case Western Reserve University.

She has over 20 years of experience in companion animal veterinary medicine and has practiced in OH, WA, MO and CA. Dr. St. Bernard designed, operated, and sold a companion animal veterinary practice and during her career practiced both emergency/critical care and general medicine.

Dr. St. Bernard is currently a Regional Medical Director for VCA, Inc., the nation's largest owner of freestanding veterinary hospitals in the United States. Prior to her role at VCA, she worked as a Regional Consulting Veterinarian for Elanco Animal Health helping to educate both internal and external clients on variety of disease states and products. Dr. St. Bernard spent two years as the Director of Veterinary Marketing for Veterinary Pet Insurance (now Nationwide) and spent six years with Bayer Animal Health in roles ranging from Field Veterinarian to Product Manager and Regulatory review.

Dr. St. Bernard has a passion for service and her most recent roles include Past President of the American Association of Industry Veterinarians (AAIV) and Ambassador for the international charity World of Children.



**Sylvia Betancourt**  
**Boardmember (Environmental Health)**

***Appointed 2018***  
***Council District 7***

Sylvia Betancourt is Program Manager at the Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma (LBACA), which is based at MemorialCare Medical Center of Long Beach/Miller Children's & Women's Hospital. She has extensive experience in community outreach, engagement and policy advocacy in environmental health and justice, particularly in the context of freight transport industries. Sylvia is driven by her lived experience as a Mexican immigrant family on the fence line of industry and a passion for justice and healing. Sylvia serves on the Miller Children's & Women's Hospital's Asthma Center of Excellence Leadership Team, USC Environmental Health Centers Advisory Board, and the South Coast Air Quality Management District's AB 617 Community Steering Committee. Together, with allies in Communities for Environmental Health and Justice (CEHAJ) and THE (Trade, Health, Environment) Impact Project, Sylvia is actively involved in efforts to decrease pollution at the Ports of LA and Long Beach and the inclusion of community voices and health concerns related to the proposed 710 freeway expansion. Together, with her talented colleagues at LBACA, she works to change the lives of children with asthma in our region through a promotora model that upholds equitable access to quality health education and care, physician training, and health policy work for cleaner air in our communities. Sylvia is a graduate of UCLA.

# Long Beach Board of Health & Human Services

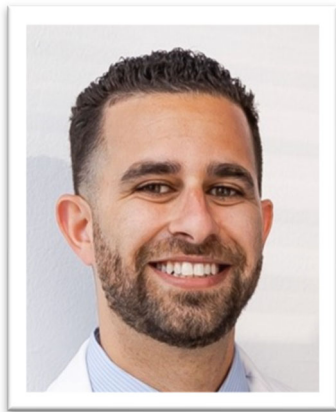
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**Reena Curtis, PharmD**  
**Boardmember (Pharmacist)**

***Appointed 2016***  
***Council District 5***

Reena Curtis, Pharm D earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Biochemistry and Cell biology from the University of California, San Diego. She went on to complete her Doctor of Pharmacy degree at the University of Southern California and is Board Certified in Geriatric Pharmacy. Currently, she works at Cedars Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles.



**Abraam Girgis, DDS**  
**Boardmember (Dentist)**

***Appointed 2022***  
***Council District 3***

Dr. Abraam Girgis received his Doctor of Dental Surgery from Marquette University and has been practicing as a general dentist in his native city of Long Beach since 2016. At the start of his career, Dr. Girgis was able to travel and work with organizations in Kenya and Panama to provide medical and dental needs to underserved communities. Now, as a dentist in his own community, he aims to serve at the local level through education and preventative care. Dr. Girgis is proud to sit on the Board of Health and Human Services and serve the city of Long Beach.

# Long Beach Board of Health & Human Services

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**Manorama S. Gupta,  
Boardmember (At-Large)**

***Appointed 2020  
Council District 2***

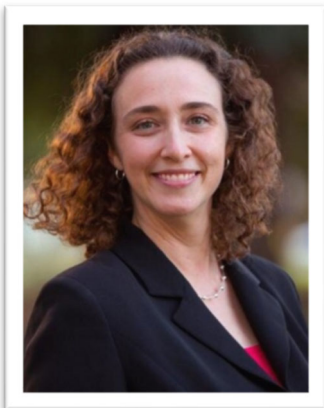
Now retired, Dr. Gupta practiced Medicine for over 22 years. Although not licensed now, she had Board Certification in OB/GYN and Cosmetic surgery. She practiced in Michigan, Westminster and Fountain Valley. She did her internship in OB/GYN in Coney Island Hospital in New York, Down State Medical center, and residency in St Luke's Hospital Case Western University in Cleveland OH. She did Fellowship in General Cosmetic Surgery.

In past she served her Community by volunteering in different Organizations.

- She was Chairwoman of Board of Trustee and president of Indian Medical Association of Southern CA.
- She was also President and chairwoman of Federation of Indian Association.
- Advisory Board member of outpatient Surgery center of Fountain Valley Hospital in Fountain Valley.
- Vice chairwoman of Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology in Fountain Valley Regional Hospital in Fountain Valley CA.
- President and Chairwoman of India Association of Southern CA.
- Physician's Advisory Committee to California Assemblywoman Doris Allen.
- Producer, Community service program on Health, Paragon Television, Huntington Beach CA.
- Founder and President of Global Peace Foundation Inc. and arranged children's activities. Arranged Women's' Leadership Summit and World Peace Day in 2017, 2018 and 2019
- Represented Indian community in International Festival 2017
- Organizing committee member and emcee for Pho Festival in 2018
- Invited dignitary as president in Orange county Straw Berry Festival float in 2019
- Feed homeless, distributed joys and blankets for 6 years.
- Donated and Packaged over 10,000 meals to send all over the World for needy children.

For the last two years:

- Member of United Nations Long Beach chapter.
- Presently she is volunteering for Non-profit Organizations. She likes to travel, music and enjoying family life.



**Beth Lesen  
Boardmember (At Large)**

***Appointed 2022  
Council District 5***

Dr. Beth Lesen (she/her) serves as the Vice President for Student Affairs at California State University, Long Beach. In this role, her portfolio encompasses 40 different departments and programs, including but not limited to the Women's and Gender Equity Center, Multicultural Affairs, Access Services for Students with Disabilities, Basic Needs, Mental Health and Well-being, Student Leadership and Development, Housing and Residence Life, and the University Student Union. In her time as Vice President, Beth has led CSULB Student Affairs through managing the COVID-19 pandemic, launched a university-wide comprehensive mental health plan, dedicated fiscal and human resources to expanding cultural resource centers, and established the first division wide equity task force.

Lesen's professional experience includes over 25 years serving diverse communities in both New York and California in such roles as Associate Vice President/Dean of Students, Executive Director of Student Affairs and Director of Access, Wellness, and Counseling. Beth holds a Ph.D. in Counseling and School Psychology and is a former faculty member with publications on comprehensive supports for low-income students, transgender acceptance, and health related disorders. As a higher education leader, Beth is guided by her authenticity, compassion for students, and bold advocacy for equity and inclusion.



# Long Beach Board of Health & Human Services

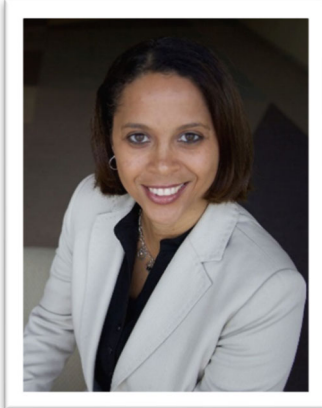
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**Miles McNeeley, MSW**  
**Boardmember (At-Large)**

***Appointed 2020***  
***Council District 8***

Born at St. Mary Medical Center, Miles McNeeley is a lifelong resident of the City of Long Beach. He is a graduate of the LBUSD public school system, Long Beach City College, and Cal State University, Long Beach where he studied Political Science and then obtained a Master of Social Work degree. Mr. McNeeley has devoted much of his career to public health research, advocacy and social work with marginalized communities. At Children's Hospital Los Angeles he conducted behavioral health research with adolescents and young adults related to substance abuse and reproductive health. He then worked to reduce health disparities through community engagement and public education campaigns at the Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California. Currently, Mr. McNeeley oversees the Elder Abuse Prevention Program (EAPP) at WISE & Healthy Aging. The EAPP provides direct services to individuals and leads initiatives designed to promote elder justice through case management, counseling, capacity building, training, awareness, and advocacy throughout Los Angeles County. Mr. McNeeley formerly served as Chair for the City of Long Beach Human Relations Commission.



**Sabrina Sanders**  
**Chair (At-Large)**

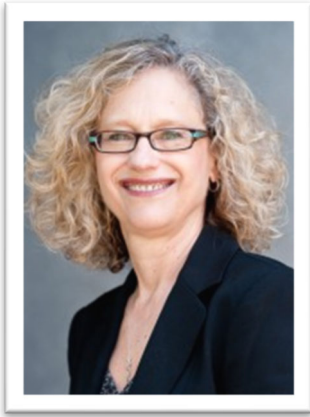
***Appointed 2021***  
***Council District 9***

Dr. Sabrina Sanders is a community leader and educator in the City of Long Beach. She served as a District Captain for City of Long Beach's 9<sup>th</sup> District, was on the 52<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District's Citizen Advisory Board, served as a Commissioner on the Long Beach Community Investment Company and is currently serving on the Port of Long Beach Community Grants Program Advisory Committee, as appointed by the Mayor of Long Beach. This past year, she was also appointed to the California Organized Investment Network Advisory Board by the Senate Rules Committee. Dr. Sanders is an Alum of the City's Leadership Long Beach program. Dr. Sanders was a recipient of the social justice leadership award by The Center Long Beach and was named "Woman of the Year" by State of California Speaker of the Assembly, Anthony Rendon, 63<sup>rd</sup> District. Her passion for community is evident in her work for equity, justice, and advocacy.

Dr. Sanders' professional expertise is in postsecondary education and encompasses the areas of diversity/equity/inclusion, assessment, leadership development, student health and psychological services, international student programs, athletic academics, student government, Title IX, and student conduct. Dr. Sanders worked with the California State University (CSU) Office of the Chancellor, the largest four-year higher education system in the country, and which leads the country in providing affordable, high-quality degree opportunities for students from all backgrounds. During that time, she was the lead administrator in the development of the CSU Basic Needs Initiative, addressing food and housing insecurity in the CSU and was support staff for the 23 CSU Student Health & Psychological Service Centers across the State. She has also served as adjunct faculty in the College of Education at California State University, Long Beach.

# Long Beach Board of Health & Human Services

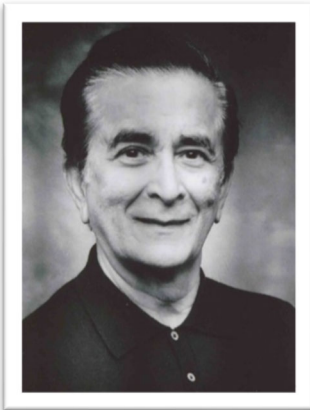
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**Barbara Schwerin, Esq.**  
**Vice Chair (At-Large)**

***Appointed 2019***  
***Council District 3***

Barbara Schwerin was in private practice for 10 years, specializing in litigation, primarily in commercial, business, and real estate disputes. In 1997, she returned to Loyola as the Founding Director of the Cancer Legal Resource Center (CLRC), a joint program of Loyola Law School and the Disability Rights Legal Center (DRLC). While she was Director of the CLRC, she spoke at programs nationwide on cancer-related legal issues, supervised law school students who staffed the CLRC telephone intake line, served on the board of directors and advisory boards for several cancer organizations and was published in numerous cancer-related articles. During her tenure as Director of the CLRC, she designed and implemented a course for Loyola Law School on Cancer Rights and the Law. She was also an Adjunct Professor at Loyola Law School. She became the Deputy Director of Community Programs at the DRLC in 2005. In 2007, Schwerin was the CEO for The Maple Counseling Center in Beverly Hills, CA. She returned to Loyola and was appointed Director of Development, Major Gifts at Loyola Law School in 2008 and in 2010 was appointed Executive Director of the Advocacy Institute and Adjunct Professor of Law. During her tenure as Executive Director of Loyola's Advocacy Institute, she implemented programs for Loyola Law School students to extern at private entities. She retired from Loyola Law School in May 2017. Schwerin currently serves on the Loyola Law School Alumni Association Board of Governors, is a member of the Board of Directors for the Long Beach Public Library Foundation; is on the Advisory Board for the Miller Children's and Women's Hospital in Long Beach and the Cancer Legal Resource Center Advisory Committee and was a mentor for the CSULB - SCPD - Corporate Mentoring Program (CMP).



**Nasir Tejani, MD, FAAP**  
**Boardmember (Physician)**

***Appointed 2018***  
***Council District 3***

Nasir Tejani M.D. is a pediatrician and has been a practicing physician in Long Beach since 1978. After obtaining his medical degree in Bombay India, he moved to New York where he completed his pediatrics residency and fellowship and obtained certification for the American Board of Pediatrics and Specialty Board of Neonatal Perinatal Medicine.

Presently he is an active staff member at Miller Children's Hospital of Long Beach and Los Alamitos Medical Center.

Dr. Tejani donates his time to Casa Youth Shelter in Los Alamitos and is on their Board of Directors and has a special interest in community involvement for Adolescent Youth in Crisis and Student Homelessness.

# Long Beach Board of Health & Human Services

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**Lydia Vaias**  
**Boardmember (Physician)**

**Appointed 2018**  
**Council District 3**

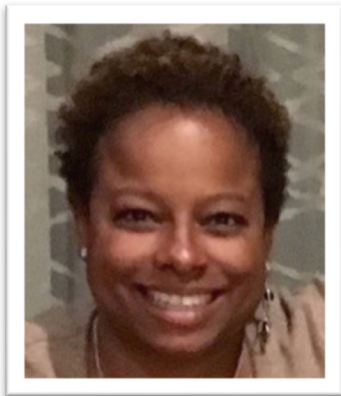
Lydia Vaias is a general surgeon practicing with the Southern California Permanente Medical Group in Anaheim, California, and a 20-year Long Beach resident.

Dr. Vaias hails from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and attended Undergraduate and Medical School at Temple University. She moved to Long Beach in 1996 for Residency in Surgery at the University of California, Irvine Medical Center. During her residency, she also completed a Master of Public Health at the University of California, Los Angeles. She also completed her training as a Certified Physician Executive through the American Association for Physician Leadership.

In her surgical career with Kaiser Permanente, Dr. Vaias has served as Assistant Chief of Surgery, General Surgery Champion in the OR, Chair of the Highly Reliable Surgical Team and Elected Member of the Board of Trustees for SCPMG. Currently she holds positions as Assistant Director of Patient Safety and Quality for KP Orange County and Regional Surgical Coordinator for Peritoneal Dialysis for SCPMG.

Throughout her career, Dr. Vaias has worked with numerous organizations attending to the needs of underserved communities. In her training, she held positions in the American Medical Student Association eventually being elected National President. During her residency training Dr. Vaias continued her community service and advocacy work eventually founding The National Physician's Alliance, a 20,000-member physician organization headquartered in Washington, DC, founded to return the values of service, integrity, and advocacy to the practice of medicine.

In the non-working hours, Dr. Vaias and her family, which includes her spouse Dr. Susan Melvin, canine companions Alegria and Enzo, and African Gray Parrot Doris, split their time between Long Beach and Palm Springs. They enjoy travel, photography, football, golf, and time in the beautiful California sun with friends and family.



**Lauren Walton, MD**  
**Boardmember (Mental Health)**

**Appointed 2022**  
**Council District 3**

Lauren M. Walton, M.D. is an Addiction Psychiatrist currently in practice with Southern California Permanente Medical Group. Dr. Walton is Chief of Service in the Department of Addiction Medicine at Kaiser Downey Medical Center. She is completing her 22<sup>nd</sup> year as a Permanente Physician. Dr. Walton is also a proud Long Beach, CA, resident of 19 years.

A 1996 graduate of the Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine, Dr. Walton subsequently completed a Psychiatric Residency Program at the University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia, PA, and served as Chief Resident from 1999-2000. Dr. Walton holds certifications from the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, the American Board of Addiction Medicine and the American Board of Preventative Medicine in Addiction Medicine.

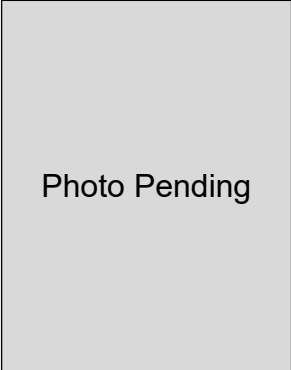
A dedicated professional with a commitment to excellence and quality in mental health care, Dr. Walton is the recipient of numerous awards including the 2005 Physicians' Choice Award for excellence in service from her peers at Kaiser Permanente. In 2012, she received the Physicians' Exceptional Contribution Award, and in 2021 she received the Outstanding Outpatient Physician of the Year at Kaiser Downey Medical Center.

Her professional memberships include the American Medical Association, American Psychiatric Association, Southern California Psychiatric Society, American Society of Addiction Medicine, and the California Society of Addiction Medicine.

An active member of the community, Dr. Walton is a proud charter member of the Board of Directors for Forgiving for Living, Inc, is the Immediate Past Board President for the Greater Los Angeles and Central Coast Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and Served on the Board of Directors for Interval House for a number of years.

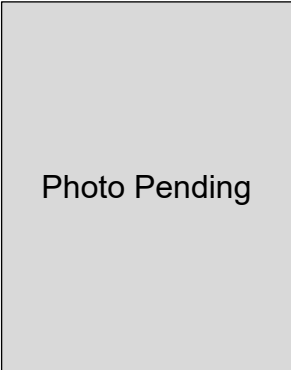
# Long Beach Board of Health & Human Services

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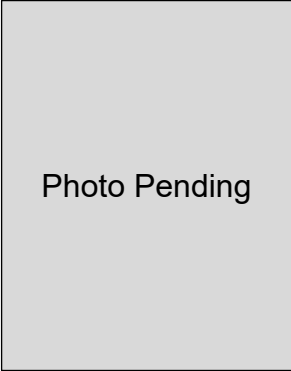
**Vacant  
Boardmember (LBUSD)**

**Appointed  
Council District \_\_**



**Vacant  
Boardmember (Hospital/Healthcare)**  
Bio Pending

**Appointed \_\_\_\_  
Council District \_\_**



**Vacant, RN  
Boardmember (Registered Nurse)**

**Appointed  
Council District**