About the Presenters

WORKSHOP PRESENTERS
(Listed in Alphabetical Order by Last Name)

MARISSA BIRNE, Program Manager for Youth, Arts and Volunteer Initiatives, Hebrew SeniorLife

Marissa Birne has always been passionate about promoting positive youth development and healthy aging. She develops and facilitates multigenerational programs that empower seniors and youth volunteers to make a difference in one another’s lives. Marissa also collaborates with musicians and performing arts ensembles to organize over 50 annual volunteer performances across Hebrew SeniorLife locations. An avid volunteer herself, Marissa has built meaningful connections with community members of all ages as a mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters, Assistant to the Choral Director at North Hill Independent Living, and co-founder of a 100+ member Tufts University student organization which provides free interactive concerts in senior care facilities. She earned her BA in Peace & Justice Studies from Tufts University and her Ed.M. in Human Development and Education from Harvard Graduate School of Education.

COURTNEY BROWN, Community Outreach Manager, Partners for Youth with Disabilities

Courtney Brown joined PYD as the Community Outreach Manager in 2022. There, she oversees the recruitment and engagement of youth, families, volunteers, and community partners. She manages the implementation of PYD’s outreach goals, which aim to grow and support an inclusive and trauma-informed space for the disability community of Boston. As a firm believer in the power of communities, Courtney has devoted her career to supporting efforts to utilize community engagement as a means of social change in areas of activism, disability justice, and reproductive rights. She enjoys finding new methods to build and sustain partnerships between organizations and the public through reciprocal engagement, research, and culturally competent leadership. Courtney graduated from Brown University with a BA in Anthropology.

LYNDA BUSSGANG, Director, Volunteer, Youth and Community Engagement, Hebrew SeniorLife

Hebrew SeniorLife (HSL) is a senior care organization that includes eight campuses in the Greater Boston area. Lynda oversees the involvement of over 300 volunteers annually, and intergenerational initiatives including nearly 70 partnership programs. Lynda founded multigenerational programming at HSL in 2010, building a nationally recognized initiative that has been recognized, in part, for its intergenerational campus at New Bridge on the Charles, that includes the Rashi School, an independent K-8 Jewish day school. At HSL, Lynda contributes her time to strengthening the community, as a member of the Senior Staff and DEIB committee. Lynda is an active community leader in the Boston area, serving on the Executive Board of Harvard Hillel, and committees of Facing History and Ourselves, Combined Jewish Philanthropies and the Jewish Community Relations Council.
MEME CISSE, Manager of Operations, Citizen Schools
Meme Cisse is a passionate changemaker known for igniting transformation through her leadership here at Citizen Schools. As Co-Chair of the JEDI Council, Meme led initiatives aimed at fostering equity and empowerment within the community. Her commitment to curiosity, community, and joy infuses every project, from integrating restorative practices to analyzing data that informed action plans. With a background in Sociology and African American Studies from The College of New Jersey, Meme brings a unique holistic perspective to her work. Whether cultivating culture, or championing employee experience, Meme is dedicated to creating a world where everyone feels valued and heard.

THERESA CHAKLOS, Speakers Bureau Volunteer, AARP Massachusetts
Theresa began volunteering with AARP MA in September 2020. She retired from the District of Columbia Superior Court in October 2019 after working there for 10 years as a Family Law Facilitator in the Family Court Self Help Center. Theresa has a Juris Doctorate from Regent University School of Law and a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Northeastern University. She is certified as a Mediator and in Group Facilitation. Her professional background is diverse, but always focused on work that serves to empower others.

LINDA GOLDSTEIN, Volunteer, LifePath
Following a long career in nonprofit management that included roles as the Associate Director of the American Field Service International Programs working with Volunteers and Hosts; and supporting the University of Massachusetts in an administrative role, Linda has past and present service commitments to Pioneer Valley Hospice & Palliative Care, Straight Spouse Support Group Co-Founder and Facilitator (Boston and Houston), Halifax, Vermont Town Planning Commission Member, LifePath Grocery Shopper and as a volunteer member of Bay State Franklin Patient & Family Advisory Committee in Greenfield, Massachusetts.

LEAH HARRIGAN, Assistant Director of Education and Training, Silver Lining Mentoring
Leah Harrigan supports the advancement of programmatic and training efforts for volunteers matched with youth impacted by foster care. With a background in classroom teaching, clinical social work, and social service leadership, Leah has focused her efforts on delivering trauma-informed care to young people and the adults who support them. Throughout the past six years working in direct service and program management roles at Silver Lining, Leah has focused on incorporating psychological safety into organizational practices with the goal to elevate meaningful learning opportunities for the mentoring community. Leah holds an M.A. in Child Study and Human Development from Tufts University.

OLIVIA HARRIS, Program Manager, Massachusetts Promise Fellowship
Olivia Harris leads program training and member development at Massachusetts Promise Fellowship. She is jointly responsible for member support, alumni engagement, and fundraising efforts. Olivia is an AmeriCorps alum with experience in school systems and community-based organizations. Olivia began her career in direct service roles serving youth with disabilities and families in the shelter system; these experiences contribute to her passion for increasing the sustainability of direct service. Olivia holds a B.S in Human Services & Political Science and is currently earning a Master’s in Learning Experience Design & Technology from Northeastern University. She is an enthusiastic facilitator and instructor who is energized by thoughtful dialogue and engagement.

ANASTASIA HERNANDEZ, Director of Case Management, Olga’s List, Inc.
Anastasiia Hernandez is originally from Kharkov, Ukraine. She joined Olga’s List as a volunteer in February of 2023. She became a Director of Case Management Department in October of 2023. Prior to then Anastasiia worked at Jet Blue.

KRISTIN HUMPHREY, National Disability Mentoring Program Director, Partners for Youth with Disabilities
Kristin oversees workforce inclusion training programs at PYD. A strong proponent of mentoring, she has been involved with mentoring for over seventeen years, beginning with her role as a volunteer mentor. She has worked with youth with disabilities for the past seventeen years. She co-authored the manuscript, “Expanding Horizons: A
Pilot Mentoring Program Linking College/Graduate Students and Teens with ASD”, which was published in the Journal of Clinical Pediatrics in 2015. Kristin has presented regionally, nationally and globally on the topics of mentoring and inclusion. She co-authored the Inclusive Mentoring for Youth with Disabilities Supplement to the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, which was published in January of 2023 by MENTOR. Kristin graduated from Connecticut College with a BA in Psychology and was a selected scholar for the Holleran Center for Community Action. She holds a Master’s in Public Administration from Clark University.

CAROLYN JACOB, Community Service Programmer, Northeastern University
Carolyn Jacob is a second-year Psychology student at Northeastern University, from Laurel, Maryland. In January, she began working full-time at Northeastern University’s Community Service and Civic Engagement office, where she oversees the Community Volunteers Program, and serves as a coordinator to connect Northeastern students with local non-profit organizations in Boston and volunteering opportunities on and off campus, as well as supporting the office with outreach initiatives, event programming, and more. In her time at Northeastern thus far, she has worked closely with Janet Randall at the Linguistics and Law Lab to research the impact of ambiguous legal language on the justice system and the Massachusetts court system, has been involved in multiple environmental justice, sustainability-forward, and feminist-centered initiatives, and aims to create more environmental-focused volunteering opportunities for Northeastern students.

NATALIE MATTHEWS, Community Engagement Coordinator, Northeastern University
In her first year at Northeastern University, Natalie Matthews participated in a service-learning class, collaborating with the Immigrant Family Services Institute. As a volunteer, she dedicated time weekly to tutoring Haitian immigrants in English through virtual sessions on Zoom. Building meaningful connections with the adults she tutored, this experience inspired her to become a service-learning Teaching Assistant in her second year. In this role, she collaborated with a Northeastern architecture studio, engaging with various civic and community leaders and students to explore and analyze anti-displacement policies and programs in Boston. This journey eventually led her to a full-time position as a community engagement coordinator at the Community Service and Civic Engagement office at Northeastern University. In this role, she functions as the liaison between numerous local non-profit organizations and Northeastern student volunteers, providing support for student organization trainings, events, and other programming.

POLLY MENDOZA, Community and Volunteer Engagement Director, AARP Massachusetts
Polly Mendoza has worked in the non-profit sector for 24 years leading organizations and programs that depend heavily on volunteer corps. In her previous consulting work she was a coach for various organizations that were working towards certification as a Service Enterprise. In her previous full-time employment she has been the Executive Director of 3 small to mid-sized nonprofit organizations in the social services arena. In her current role she works with over 150 volunteers aged 50 and older in a variety of community-based and educational programming that enhance the quality of life for all as they age in their communities.

MEGAN MULCAHY, Volunteer Service Manager, Boston Area Rape Crisis Center
Megan ensures that all of BARCC’s more than 250 volunteers receive supportive and informative trainings, and she works to increase the diversity of BARCC’s volunteer pool. Megan began her time at BARCC as a hotline counselor in June 2010. After falling in love with the organization and the mission, she became a full-time staff member in 2012. Prior to joining BARCC, Megan worked in the corporate sector.

FRAN NASE, Speakers Bureau Volunteer, AARP Massachusetts
Fran Nase was a District Sales Manager for Avon Products, Inc, NYC for 14 years. She worked with over 300 independent representatives. Also, she was an Ambassador with the Worcester Chamber of Commerce for over
10 years. She began volunteering with AARP Massachusetts in December of 2018 where she is involved with the Speakers Bureau, tabling, and the Worcester Volunteer Network.

ANNE OSTBERG, Senior Portfolio Manager, AmeriCorps
Since September 2019, Anne Ostberg has served as an AmeriCorps Northeast Region Senior Portfolio Manager. She directs a team of portfolio managers who provide direct support to AmeriCorps grantees in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Anne previously served as the AmeriCorps State Program Director in Connecticut. She also worked for AmeriCorps as a program officer in Washington, DC. In addition, her experience includes serving as senior program officer for the Pegasus Foundation, a private independent foundation committed to environmental protection and public education, communications director for the Mayor of St. Paul, Minnesota, senior staffer for the Governor of Minnesota, and a public television producer. She earned a graduate certificate in nonprofit management from the University of Connecticut and a bachelor’s degree in journalism from the University of Minnesota. Anne lives in Concord, New Hampshire, with her husband and cat.

ANTHONY “AJ” PAPE, Senior Fellow, Massachusetts Promise Fellowship
AJ is a Senior Fellow at Massachusetts Promise Fellowship. At his current host site placement La Vida Scholars, AJ serves as a college advisor to students at Chelsea High School. He offers 1:1 advising, leads workshops, and shares scholarship and financial aid opportunities with his youth. AJ is completing his third year of service with MPF and holds the leadership position of a Senior Fellow. AJ supports alumni efforts and leads a peer advising group of first-year fellows. AJ has a BS in Sociology with a minor in Film Studies. In addition to two previous years of service, AJ brings previous experience in residential life and higher education.

ALEX PARKES, Volunteer Manager, Silver Lining Mentoring
Alex Parkes recruits and trains long-term volunteer mentors to be matched with youth impacted by foster care. Alex has former experience as a family intervention specialist with Youth Villages, as well as volunteer and supervisory experience with the Essex County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program advocating for foster youth in the juvenile court process. In addition to his direct-service work, Alex has been an adjunct professor at Merrimack College since 2019 teaching courses on Juvenile Delinquency and the Juvenile Court System. He resides in Haverhill with his wife, son, and especially-gifted dog, Winnie.

MELISSA POND, Principal Consultant, Melissa J Pond LLC
Melissa J. Pond brings experience and expertise to service and volunteering, particularly in board leadership. With over 15 years of dedicated service in the public sector, Melissa has actively contributed to the success of numerous organizations. Her remarkable background includes serving on the executive or advisory boards of 14 entities, showcasing her commitment to and impact on the nonprofit sector. In these leadership roles, Melissa has been pivotal in guiding organizations toward their missions and goals. Her strategic insight and unwavering dedication have proven instrumental in driving positive change and fostering growth within these entities. Melissa's profound understanding of board leadership dynamics and passion for community service makes her impactful. Her commitment to personal and professional growth, alongside her extensive board leadership experience, underscores Melissa J. Pond's valuable contributions to service and volunteering.

SHANAY REED, Manager of Education Development, Citizen Schools
After receiving her Bachelor's degree in Psychology, Shanay Reed was looking into becoming a school counselor. In the meantime, she was working as a paraprofessional in Boston public schools. Being a para sparked her interest in social and emotional learning. She has over 14 years of work experience. Over half of those years were spent working at Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School in Roxbury. She is currently the Manager of Educator Development at Citizen Schools. Shanay is an AmeriCorps alumn. She was a member of the Dudley Promise Corp (DPC). DPC focused on team-building and professional development. She provided a face for DPC delivering a speech to the mayor of Boston and the governor of Massachusetts on the importance a volunteer can
make on student learning. Her experience working with young students placed emphasis on the importance of community, influence, and education. She's been passionate about the three ever since.

VICTORIA THORNTON, Director - Volunteer Community, Citizen Schools
Victoria Thornton serves to support its in-school educator development program. This program uniquely places volunteers in schools to deliver high quality experiential learning to underserved communities. Victoria’s role oversees the volunteer recruitment and retention efforts, while prioritizing community and corporate partnerships to sustain a diverse volunteer pool. Throughout her nonprofit career, she has developed and managed various volunteer engagement models that increased volunteer diversity, strengthened community relationships, and promoted opportunity access to underserved communities. Victoria has a bachelor’s degree in Political Science and Urban Studies from CUNY Hunter College and a master’s degree in Public Administration from Penn State University.

SUSAN WHITE, Associate Director of Volunteer Resources & DEIB Project Lead, LifePath
Susan White has a strong commitment to quality and perseverance when building resources and support for volunteers and vulnerable populations. In her current professional role with LifePath, Susan collaborates with 12 program managers to bring over 250 volunteers into the experience of supporting 9,000 older adults, and persons with disabilities of all ages located in Franklin County and beyond. Susan’s recent and current volunteer service commitments include Member, Board of Trustees Mary Lyon Foundation; Public Safety Commission, Office of the Mayor Greenfield; American Red Cross Certified Volunteer; Opioid Task Force; American Public Health Association Sexual Reproductive Health Committee, and Member Board of Trustees Planned Parenthood of Western PA. Two of Susan’s most memorable past professional experiences include facilitating a “Learning Exchange Workshop: Sexual & Reproductive Health” with Nigerian and Mozambican youth; and as the Chief of Party for World Vision in Mozambique establishing (48) Girls’ Groups in Quelimane, Mozambique.

CHRIS WOODS, Client Strategy Lead, Golden Volunteer
Chris is a seasoned nonprofit professional who has been managing volunteer programs for the last nine years. Serving with AmeriCorps after college, he saw firsthand how volunteerism can be a catalyst for community empowerment. His experience ranges from managing one-time volunteer projects, to overseeing large-scale events. He has guided numerous organizations through database implantations and created advocacy resources for nonprofits to successfully leverage funding for their programs. He currently works as a Client Strategy Lead for Golden Volunteer—a volunteer management software company, where he advises clients and takes user experiences to inform new product development. Chris is also an active Board Member and Marketing Chair for the Association of Leaders in Volunteer Engagement (AL!VE)—a national association that provides professional development workshops, networking opportunities, and advocacy resources to volunteer managers across the United States.

OLGA YULIKOVA, Founder and Executive Director, Olga’s List, Inc.
Olga Yulikova is a refugee, originally from Russia. She became actively involved in humanitarian help to Ukraine since the first days of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In February 2023, she and a group of 5 other refugees started Olga's List in response to the wave of Ukrainian refugees in Massachusetts. Today Olga's List serves 400+ refugees with a team of 100+ volunteers. She has a unique skill set due to her professional experience. The Executive Director has extensive experience in leveraging state and federal programs for eligible individuals. Prior to serving at Olga’s List, Olga Yulikova managed the largest volunteer services program at Ethos, a state-funded nonprofit organization that serves elders in Southwest Boston. As a volunteer coordinator Olga oversaw a team of volunteers that provided services to 2000+ home-bound elders. These efforts included meals delivering, companionship, special events and many more. Olga is a volunteer herself! She was a library assistant at Thompson Elementary School, Arlington, MA; she served on the Board of Massachusetts Senior Games, a statewide athletic competition for adults ages 50+ among many other.
Lightning Talk / Networking Table Facilitators
(Listed in Alphabetical Order by Last Name)

LAWRENCE BROWN, Shelter from the Storm Program Director, Cape Cod Academy (Retired)
Lawrence Brown retired from school teaching after 42 years and is still teaching adults at a nearby college. He’s been a newspaper columnist for 37 years and an interfaith minister for about as long. He inspired and coordinated benefit performance art programs at Cape Cod Academy for 34 years, with young activists raising around 1/4 million dollars for local and global charities. He, his school and the kids won 3 Congressional Citations for the work. It is his hope to see programs like his students did in school districts across the state.

CHERLY CROSS, Manager, Digital Equity, Outreach & Engagement, Massachusetts Broadband Institute
The manager of Digital Equity Outreach and Engagement at The Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) is committed to using a human-centered approach to meet individuals where they are. She understands the circumstances of those impacted most by the digital divide need to be met with unique solutions that address each person’s needs. Her background in healthcare and workforce development informs her drive to ensure digital equity is achieved in MA, as a means for communities to be healthier, and more economically sustainable.

KELLY DURNING, Peer Education Coordinator/Alliance for Civically Engaged Students, Northeastern University
Kelly Durning is a student leader at Northeastern University. She leads social justice and civic pathway workshops for students in the Alliance of Civically Engaged Students, a community service and civic learning program. She helps connect students’ service experiences to their academic and professional interests. Kelly has experience working with students to connect their passions with her current community service. She has worked to create engaging professional development and leadership development programming for students, and would like to offer resources for community service organizations to engage volunteers in the same way. She has the specialized experience of volunteering at a wide variety of organizations in the Boston area as students, and working to encourage other students to connect to volunteering opportunities at the Center of Community Service and Civic Engagement. She has led countless reflections for students to grow in their skills and knowledge.

ANNA GUEST, Founder/Director, Rising Tide Volunteer Solutions
Anna Guest brings over 10 years experience working in Maine’s non-profit sector, with much of that time spent growing and cultivating dynamic and highly effective teams of volunteers. Her compassionate and strategic leadership style leverages her innate ability to build rapport and connection through clear, proactive communication, creative problem solving, and a thoughtful and thorough approach. With her professional training in occupational therapy, Anna brings a process-oriented, client-centered, and compassionate mindset to her work. A collaborative change agent, Anna has successfully led volunteer teams through challenging and unpredictable times. With firsthand experience with both the challenges and joys of engaging with volunteers, Anna’s passion lies with collaborating with non-profit organizations to strategically invest in the potential of human kindness and caring while making the most of often limited resources.

HARLEEN KOCHAR, Commonwealth Corps Service Member, Nevins Memorial Library/MSA
Trained in many modalities of trauma healing, I have been involved in the mental health field for more than 20 years. I have also been an entrepreneur, first as the owner of a company engaged in mind-body medicine and later serving on the start-up team of a literacy nonprofit. Currently, I am in service as a Literacy Fellow at the Nevins Library in Methuen. Recently, I have acquired deeper perspectives on ancestral trauma, cultural baggage, and epigenetics. Both my formal training and personal lived experience of these issues inform and infuse a trauma-informed mentality into all my work.

KIANA REID, Program Officer, Lead for America / American Connection Corps
Kiana grew up in Pittsfield, a city located in Western Massachusetts, and began her professional career by serving with four different service organizations, ranging from AmeriCorps in Illinois to Peace Corps in Eastern Europe. Kiana received her Master’s of Arts in Community and Economic Development from Western Illinois University in 2023. Now, she holds the role of Program Officer for Lead for America’s American Connection Corps (ACC) focusing on the Northeast Region of the United States. In this role, she provides direct support to ACC AmeriCorps Members and their host sites to advance digital equity and economic prosperity in New England.

BETH SAUNDERS, Founder/Chief Strategist, Beth Saunders Associates
Beth is passionate about making missions happen! She partners with nonprofit leaders to connect people and programs to mission and goals by harnessing their expertise and using their data. Her MapMoveMeasure™ framework is a guide for elevating stewardship and developing longer-term relationships with supporters - donors, volunteers, advocates, board members – thereby becoming more effective in achieving their goals. Beth’s clients have said that working with her is a process that introduces a new way of thinking about their work. Beth’s consulting practice reflects her life experience and her approach mirrors her own way of learning. Studying abroad in college, earning her MBA, taking a mid-career detour to volunteer and travel in South America, leaving her corporate job to become an AmeriCorps VISTA and ultimately leading her own consulting practice have contributed to Beth’s passion for making the complex simple and the very lofty tangible.

MYTREYI SURESHKUMAR, Peer Mentor & Program Coordinator, Alliance of Civically Engaged Students, Northeastern University
Mytreyi Sureshkumar is a student leader of the Alliance of Civically Engaged Students, and is currently on co-op with Roxbury Innovation Center. Mytreyi has experience working with students to connect their passions with her current community service. She has worked to create engaging professional development and leadership development programming for students, and would like to offer resources for community service organizations to engage volunteers in the same way. She has the specialized experience of volunteering at a wide variety of organizations in the Boston area as students, and working to encourage other students to connect to volunteering opportunities at the Center of Community Service and Civic Engagement. She has led countless reflections for students to grow in their skills and knowledge.