



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LA County Board of Supervisors Appoints First Five Youth Commissioners

LOS ANGELES - The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors have appointed the first five Youth Commissioners to join Los Angeles County's first-ever Youth Commission.

The Commission will formally launch in July, once a total of 15 Commissioners have joined. The goal of the Commission is to give young people with lived experience opportunities to fundamentally transform the child welfare and juvenile justice systems they have had to navigate.

"We are grateful to all the youth who inspired this Commission and for those who have made it a reality. Meaningful systems change begins with giving youth the platform to share their voice and ideas. Led by the lived expertise of youth, we can begin to transform the systems that serve them," said Alain Datcher, Executive Director of the Youth Commission.

The Board is pleased to announce the following appointees:

Florencia (Flo) Valenzuela - First District

La'Toya Cooper - Second District

Daniel Bisuano - Third District

Jacqueline Robles - Fourth District

Amanda Hernandez - Fifth District

The Board chose each of these young adults for their demonstrated lived systems expertise and a clear desire to transform LA County's youth-serving systems.

"Florencia is a young and bright soul who has defied the odds despite the adversities she has faced navigating the child welfare system," said Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chair Hilda L. Solis, Supervisor to the First District. "A senior at UCLA and a resident of Rosemead, Florencia is dedicated to standing up for young people and driven to help them overcome the same hurdles she's experienced – exactly what we need in Los Angeles County's newly established Youth Commission. I look forward to her leadership in creating change for our next generation."

"I'm proud to have La'Toya Cooper serve on the newly formed Youth Commission," said Holly Mitchell, Supervisor to the Second District. "La'Toya's lived experienced and dedication to ensuring our most vulnerable youth are cared for makes her an asset to the Commission and to the young people in the Second District and throughout LA County that she is fighting for."



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“I am very happy to be appointing Daniel Bisuano as the Third District’s Youth Commission representative,” said Sheila Kuehl, Supervisor to the Third District. “His leadership skills, along with his own experience as a homeless, gay, formerly incarcerated young man, will deeply inform our County programs designed for youth and give us insights that only those who have had first-hand experience can bring.”

The Commission will be the first of its kind in LA County to give youth with lived experience in foster care, child welfare, and juvenile justice the opportunity to recommend specific policies that will lead to substantive change for those currently being impacted by these systems. A task that each appointee is ready and eager to work on.

“LA County’s most serious responsibility is the one we have to the tens of thousands of children in our care in both our foster care system and our juvenile justice system. Our success-- and too often our failure-- to serve these children can shape their futures. With our first-ever Youth Commission, we will actually be able to get guidance from the young people, like my appointee Jacqueline Robles, who grew up in these systems and know what it takes to make them better,” said Janice Hahn, Supervisor to the Fourth District.

“Amanda began caring for herself and her younger siblings when she was just 15,” said Kathryn Barger, Supervisor to the Fifth District. “When I met Amanda in 2018, I knew her life experience would encourage our County to equip more teens and young adults in our system with the tools and opportunities they need to thrive in the workforce. Though she had to take on a lot of responsibility at a young age, Los Angeles County’s Career Development Internship provided her with stability and confidence to overcome those obstacles to pursue her dreams. She is now a deeply valued employee for the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs and serves as an inspiration for other young women—including her sisters—who have been in the foster care system. Amanda’s story, tenacity, and resiliency will help her bring a much-needed perspective to Los Angeles County’s Youth Commission to shape a better system for youth in generations to come.”

These first five Board appointees represent the beginning of the Youth Commission’s launch. While the Youth Commission will start with 15 Commissioners, it will have the option to increase its membership to 19 after its first year.

“We are all looking forward to seeing the growth of the Youth Commission and its impact on the County,” said Celia Zavala, Executive Officer of the Board of Supervisors who oversees the Commission. “Our youth are the future and the ones we will count on to lead the way.”

To keep up with future Youth Commission updates, visit YouthCommission.lacounty.gov, subscribe to the email newsletter, or reach out via email to youthcommission@bos.lacounty.gov.

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