

Speaker Bios

Isa Woldegiorgis

Former Assistant Commissioner for Practice and Policy at the Massachusetts Department of Social Services (DSS)

In her role as assistant commissioner, Isa Woldegiorgis oversaw the Practice and Policy Division, which included medical services, education, diversity, and fatherhood, as well as domestic violence, mental health and substance abuse. Ms. Woldegiorgis developed an approach to policy development that was grounded in best integrated practice and inclusion and designed to support leadership of family-centered clinical practice. Prior to this, Ms. Woldegiorgis has worked with DSS in the area of domestic violence and child maltreatment for ten years, first as a domestic violence specialist and ultimately as the Clinical Manager of the DSS DV Unit. She also worked to develop and strengthen innovative services, such as the domestic violence visitation centers and child witness to violence programs funded by DSS across the state. Her work toward systems change on behalf of families experiencing domestic violence included extensive clinical consultation, training and designing services for the unique needs of this population.

Ms Woldegiorgis' background is in working with women and children, particularly around issues substance abuse and family violence over the past seventeen years. Most of this work has been with women involved with government institutions, such as prisons or state child welfare agencies. Due to these experiences, in part, Ms Woldegiorgis' work is guided by an understanding that it is essential to address issues of poverty and racism on institutional levels. She was the Senior Leader on the Casey sponsored Breakthrough Series Collaborative on Reducing Racial Disproportionality and Disparate Outcomes in 2005 and has worked on building the disproportionality framework at DSS.

Ms. Woldegiorgis has trained extensively and served on local and national advisory committees to address the collaboration between child protection and other agencies working to address domestic violence. In 1998 she served on the Advisory Committee to the authors of the Greenbook. From 2002-2003, she chaired the Advisory Board of the Dorchester Community Roundtable. She has been a Board member of the National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence (the **Alianza**). Ms Woldegiorgis has also authored several pieces on gender and race, including two articles on race and culture in child protection that were published in the journal, *Child Welfare* in April 2003.

Katherine Lucero
Superior Court Judge
Santa Clara County

Judge Lucero currently sits as Supervising Judge in Juvenile Dependency Court where she currently oversees hundreds of cases involving abused and neglected children. In 2006 she also sat as an Appellate Judge in the Superior Court Appellate Division. Prior to this assignment she spent 18 months in both Juvenile Delinquency and Adult Criminal Court. Prior to the criminal court tour she sat from January 2002 through January 2005 in Family Court. Judge Lucero began her judicial career as a Dependency Court Commissioner where she spent her first two years on the bench in Dependency Court.

Before being appointed by the Governor in August of 2001, Judge Lucero had spent her entire legal career in the area of child abuse and neglect. She is a former Deputy District Attorney specializing in crimes against children and the elderly. As a Juvenile Dependency Superior Court Commissioner she managed approximately 1100 cases involving child abuse and neglect from December 1999 until January 2001. Six months after she was appointed as a Superior Court Judge she was transferred to Family Court.

She is the immediate past Chairperson of the Santa Clara County Domestic Violence Council, former co-chair of the Santa Clara County Greenbook's Cultural Competency Initiative with an emphasis on Community Engagement, and served on the Project Oversight Committee of the Santa Clara County Greenbook Project from January 2000 to September of 2006. The Santa Clara County Greenbook Project implemented policy and procedural changes for how Law Enforcement, Social Services, Judges and Domestic Violence Advocates respond to families where there is a co-occurrence of domestic violence and child abuse. She currently sits on the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges board of directors, is a board member for Kids In Common, and is on the Advisory Board for the Santa Clara County Junior League.

Alisa Del Tufo
Activist and Advocate

Alisa Del Tufo has worked toward the welfare of women and children for the past 28 years. In 1983, Alisa Del Tufo founded Sanctuary for Families, the first program in New York City to offer services to battered women and their children regardless of income. Later at New York City's Institute for Child, Adolescent and Family Studies, Del Tufo founded an oral history project determining how children impact a mother's decision to stay in or leave an abusive situation. After founding the Family Violence Project at the Urban Justice Center in 1993, Del Tufo became Co-Executive Director of CONNECT in 2003. She is the author of many publications including "Behind Closed Doors: The City's Response to Domestic Violence" and "Domestic Violence for Beginners" (Writers and Readers: 1995) and most recently "Collaborative engagement: Helping child welfare service providers address domestic violence, substance abuse, mental illness and

poverty.” Recently elected an Ashoka Fellow, she is currently developing a framework for helping communities create local solutions to the problems posed by violence in the family.