

PARTICIPANTS

Deborah Gonzalez is director of government affairs at PPIC. She and her staff work to connect PPIC research with policymakers and community leaders. A longtime Capitol staffer, she served as policy and fiscal director for six legislative leaders and worked on a wide variety of issues—including the state budget, education reform, infrastructure funding, and public safety. She holds a law degree from the McGeorge School of Law, University of the Pacific, and a BA from Claremont McKenna College, where she majored in international relations.

Mónica Henestroza is the higher education advisor to Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon and has served in that role for the previous two speakers. She advises the speaker on policy and fiscal issues before the legislature, the University of California Board of Regents, and the California State University Board of Trustees. Previously, she was the legislative director for the California Federation of Teachers. She also served as director of government relations for the San Diego Unified School District. She is a graduate of Stanford University, where she served as student body president.

Hans Johnson is director and senior fellow at the PPIC Higher Education Center. As center director, he works with a team of researchers to identify policies that can make higher education policy more successful and sustainable. His own research focuses on improving college access and completion. He frequently presents his work to policymakers and higher education officials, and he serves as a technical advisor to many organizations seeking to improve college graduation rates, address workforce needs, and engage in long-term capacity planning. Previously, he worked as a demographer at the California Research Bureau and the California Department of Finance. He holds a PhD in demography and a master's degree in biostatistics from the University of California, Berkeley.

Olga Rodriguez is a research fellow at the PPIC Higher Education Center. She conducts research on the impact of programs and policies on student outcomes, with a particular focus on college access and success among underserved students. Her recent research focuses on statewide developmental education reform, assessment and placement systems, and place-based efforts to help students get into and through college. Before joining PPIC, she was a postdoctoral research associate at the Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University. She holds a PhD in economics and education from Columbia University.

Myra Snell is math lead and co-founder of the California Acceleration Project. A nationally recognized expert in remedial math reform, she has helped 35 colleges implement statistics pathways for students placed into math remediation. She has also worked with Carnegie Mellon University's Open Learning Initiative in Statistics and consulted with the Statway Project of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. She was named one of the 16 most innovative people in higher education by *Washington Monthly*. In 2015, she was one of four finalists for the Faculty Innovation Award from the American Association of Community Colleges. She has taught mathematics at Los Medanos College for 25 years. She holds a master's degree in mathematics from the University of California, Berkeley.

Theresa Tena is vice chancellor of institutional effectiveness at the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. She oversees the development and operation of a comprehensive technical assistance program to further student success at all of the state's community colleges. Previously, she served as vice president of the Community College League of California, director of fiscal services for Solano Community College District, a specialist in the Fiscal Services Unit of the Chancellor's Office, and a budget analyst at the California Department of Finance. She holds bachelor's degrees in history and international relations from the University of California, Davis, and a master of public administration from the University of Southern California.