

## PARTICIPANTS

**Julianna Barnes** is president of Cuyamaca College in Rancho San Diego. In her tenure as president, she led the creation of a new strategic plan that emphasizes developmental education reform and has resulted in significant increases in access to and completion of college-level math and English. She has held various leadership positions in several California community colleges, including chief student services officer and dean. She was also an affiliate doctoral faculty member of San Diego State University. She serves on the board of the Chief Executive Officers of the California Community Colleges. She holds a PhD in education with a community college specialization and an MA in education/multicultural counseling from San Diego State University.

**Marisol Cuellar Mejia** is a senior research associate at the PPIC Higher Education Center. Her recent projects have focused on developmental education, the workforce skills gap, online learning in community colleges, and the economic returns to college education. Her research interests include labor markets, business climate, housing, and demographic trends. Before joining PPIC, she worked at Colombia's National Association of Financial Institutions as an economic analyst, concentrating on issues related to the manufacturing sector and small business. She holds an MS in agricultural and resource economics from the University of California, Davis.

**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.

**Laura Metune** is vice chancellor of external relations for the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. She oversees the division that represents the office before the legislative and executive branches of the state and federal governments. Previously, she served as chief consultant for the assembly Committee on Higher Education, where she helped write and win passage of landmark legislation related to student consumer protections, financial aid, and other postsecondary issues. She also served as bureau chief for the California Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education.

**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.

**John Stanskas** is president of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges and is currently serving his eighth year on the ASCCC Executive Committee. He has been active in statewide educational policy discussions for fifteen years on topics such as the implementation of the community college bachelor's degree program, strengthening pathways from K–12 to community colleges, and improving transfer from community colleges to California State University and the University of California.