

FALL 2024



2024-2025

Leaders Digest

Emerging Leaders Fellowship Directory

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Emerging Leaders is an eight-month professional development program that transforms mid-career professionals working in the public interest into invested nonprofit leaders. Participants develop the leadership capabilities, management skills, and confidence necessary to accelerate their careers while generating tangible results and lasting value for their organizations and the nonprofit sector. Emerging Leaders nurtures the connection between self-development, leadership development, relationship building, and strengthening nonprofit and social sector leadership for the long-run.

The program employs experiential learning, professional experts, and speakers to build management skills, leadership competencies, and sector-specific knowledge. The following learning tracks are woven together throughout the course of the program:

- **Self-Management and Self-Awareness**
- **Managing Others and Team Dynamics**
- **Nonprofit Management and Skill-Building**
- **Leadership Beyond the Organization**

Nonprofit professionals from any topical or educational background are encouraged to apply. The work of Princeton AlumniCorps is made possible by our volunteers, donors, and nonprofit partner organizations throughout the United States. The Princeton AlumniCorps Emerging Leaders program is made possible by grants from the **Harris Finch Foundation** and **Robert Sterling Clark Foundation**.

We encourage you to follow our Leaders throughout the year as they share their experiences.

Please also connect with us online on Facebook, Twitter(X), LinkedIn, & Instagram.

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2024-25 Emerging Leaders

COHORT PARTICIPANTS LISTED IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER BY LAST NAME

Neshwar Balram	Alyxandrea Ouellette
Tara Brown	Meg Platt
Austin S Cathey	Jeremy Reya
Kérène Kabambi	Andre Vasilyev
Katherine Laureano	Michael Villafranca
Natalia Martinez	Kim F. Wong
Victoria Navarro	Valerie Woo

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Lead Facilitator:

Program Facilitators serve as the lead designers and facilitators of the Emerging Leaders curriculum.



Jayson Council
(HE/HIM)

New York Cohort Facilitator

Jayson Council has spent over twenty years working to strengthen the social and educational sector through representation, respect, repair, and – above all – the power of opportunity.

With a deep understanding of the community, corporate, academic and non-profit worlds as well as a finger on the pulse of the cultural and social movements, Jayson has a unique ability to create understanding and develop forward-looking approaches.

In order to remain active as a thought leader in his areas of impact, Jayson currently serves as Principal of Adjacent Consulting as well as the inaugural Head of Culture at Gersh talent agency. He is also Associate Faculty at Columbia University's School of Professional Studies.

Jayson received a BA in History from Virginia State University, a Master's in Business Administration from Robert Morris University, and a Master of Science in Nonprofit Management from Columbia University.



Hilary Joel

(SHE/HER)

Emerging Leaders Founder/MBTI

Hilary Joel developed the original Emerging Leaders curriculum in 2011 and is the lead designer in refining it each year. She is an executive coach and management consultant with 30+ years of experience across numerous industries. As the founding principal of WJ Consulting, Hilary has partnered with the leadership and management of scores of nonprofit organizations, businesses, and government agencies to help them advance toward their own definitions of professional and organizational success more deeply, intentionally, quickly, and sustainably than they could on their own.

Hilary focuses primarily on nonprofit organizations, providing one-on-one coaching, leadership development, team/retreat facilitation, and guidance in organizational effectiveness to nonprofit leaders, their teams, and their boards. She has partnered with international as well as national and local organizations. Before starting her own coaching and consulting firm, Hilary spent a dozen years with management consulting firms focused on corporate clients in a range of industries.

Hilary holds an MBA degree from Harvard Business School where she was a Baker Scholar, and a BA degree in Economics from Princeton University. Hilary graduated from the Georgetown Leadership Coaching Program and is a Professional Certified Coach (PCC) with the International Coach Federation. She is also a certified administrator of several assessment tools, including Myers-Briggs, DiSC, and The Leadership Circle(T) 360-feedback profile. Hilary's passion for a strong nonprofit sector extends into her personal and volunteer life. She is a cofounder and board member of Compass, which provides pro bono strategic consulting to nonprofits. She also serves on the Boards of Washington Improv Theater and CollegeTracks, which helps first-gen-to-college high school students enter college and succeed. Those who know Hilary well would describe her as positive, insightful, and supportive.

2024-25 New York Cohort:

The Princeton AlumniCorps Emerging Leaders New York City cohort consists of 13 mid-career professionals who work for 13 nonprofit organizations located across the Northeast.



Neshwar (Nesh)
Balram
(HE/HIM)

Director, Affiliate Financial Support and National Reporting & Analytics,
Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Nesh Balram serves as the Director of Affiliate Financial Support and National Reporting & Analytics at Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA), a leading organization committed to providing reproductive health care and advocacy services nationwide. Over the past eight years, Nesh has worked across multiple departments within PPFA, gaining a comprehensive understanding of the organization's operations. Before transitioning to his current role in Development, Nesh served as a Senior Analyst on the Financial Planning & Analysis (FP&A) team in the Finance department, where he honed his skills in financial strategy, budgeting, and operational efficiency. His diverse experience within the organization has enabled him to bring a unique perspective to his work, bridging finance and development to support PPFA's mission more effectively.

In his current role, Nesh leads strategic initiatives focused on enhancing financial efficiency, operational transparency, and fostering collaboration among affiliates to advance PPFA's mission of expanding access to essential healthcare services. He is particularly known for his financial leadership in the Collaborative Fundraising Program (CFP), which has transformed how affiliates work together, driving significant growth in fundraising revenues through data-driven analysis and a streamlined donor engagement approach.

Nesh's expertise lies in using data to tell compelling stories, inform strategies, and drive organizational growth. By leveraging his background in financial analysis and reporting, he empowers stakeholders with clear, actionable insights, ensuring resources are allocated efficiently and equitably across national and local levels.



Tara Brown
(SHE/HER)

Director of School Based Mental Health and Fast Break Plus,
Association to Benefit Children

Tara Brown Mohamed is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. She is the Director of the School Based Mental Health Program and Fast Break Plus Program with the Association to Benefit Children (ABC). Tara graduated from The Silberman School of Social Work, Hunter College in 2014. Tara started her professional career in Preventive Services with the ABC. Over the years, she worked at ABC on the Children Mobile Crisis Team, as an Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant and Therapist, and on the School Response Team before moving in to Program Supervisor and then Director roles in the School Based Mental Health Program.

Through various programs, Tara works alongside non-clinical staff, clinical professionals, and upper administration at her agency and collaborative agencies. Tara is a co-chair of the School Based Mental Health Committee, which is a committee to advocate for mental health professionals within Community Based Organizations in NYC. The committee supports policy advocacy at city and state wide levels. She also was trained on Creating Suicide Safety in Schools and offered workshops around the city to support suicide education among school staff. Tara enjoys offering workshops and offering psychoeducation to others around mental health topics.

Tara is excited and looking forward to bringing her experience working within different systems and programs to the Emerging Leaders Program.



Austin S Cathey
(HE/THEY)

Community Engagement Associate,
UNICEF USA

Austin Cathey is the Community Engagement Associate for the Midwest region at UNICEF USA. He holds a Bachelor's in Health Science from the University of Missouri and a Master in Public Health from Loyola University Chicago. Austin's commitment to youth advocacy and health promotion began during his undergraduate studies, particularly through a study abroad program in Pune and Mumbai, India. There, he led a youth-focused health campaign using creative methods like street theater and social media to raise awareness about infectious diseases.

At Loyola University Chicago, Austin's research on implementing children's parliaments in Chicagoland municipalities deepened his passion for youth empowerment. This aligns with his role at UNICEF USA, where he works to provide education, resources, joy, and decision-making power to children worldwide. Austin's professional background includes roles at Rush University Medical Center and Sinai Urban Health Institute, where he gained expertise in grant writing, policy analysis, and program evaluation. At Rush, he led recruitment, retention, community engagement, and evaluation efforts for various projects, including Alzheimer's Disease studies and community-based participatory research.

In his current role, Austin fosters meaningful connections and amplifies youth voices through initiatives like high school and college UNICEF USA clubs, the youth representative program, and Child Friendly Cities. He creates spaces where young people feel empowered to engage, learn, and advocate for change. Outside of work, Austin is a passionate movie buff, avid reader, and music enthusiast. Known to his friends as a kind-hearted Taurus and proud Hufflepuff!



Kérène (Keren)
Kabambi
(SHE/HER)

Assistant Project Manager,
New Jersey Birth Equity Funders Alliance (NJBEFA)

As a Black, queer immigrant woman, Kérène Kabambi's professional interests focus on combating racial, social, and economic inequality while supporting communities of color. This commitment to understanding and addressing social inequities led her to her current role as Assistant Project Manager at the New Jersey Birth Equity Funders Alliance (NJBEFA), where she channels her passion into actionable change. NJBEFA amplifies the work of Black, Indigenous, and Latiné community-based organizations and birth equity leaders dedicated to improving the well-being of Black and brown birthing individuals in New Jersey.

In her role, Kérène manages NJBEFA's programming and grantmaking initiatives. She supports grantees and technical assistance recipients, collaborates with the Community Advisory Committee and Mutual Aid Stewards to award funding to birth equity leaders and community-based organizations led by and serving people of color, and coordinates NJBEFA's policy advocacy efforts. Deeply committed to co-designing solutions with the community, Kérène strives to ensure the transformative work of grassroots organizations continues to thrive for generations.

Kérène holds a degree in sociology from Princeton University. Her diverse experience includes serving as a Princeton in Asia intern, an AmeriCorps Vista volunteer, and a Princeton Project 55 Fellow.



Katherine (Kat)
Laureano
(SHE/HER)

Manager of Student Services & Program Operations,
The Opportunity Network

Katherine Laureano is a native New Yorker, with a passion to work with young adults. Her career in the field has spanned over ten years and has worked with organizations that have focused on youth development, college readiness, college retention, supporting youth with professional development. Some organizations she has worked with include New Settlement Apartments, RF CUNY, Bronx Community College, and Democracy Prep Charter Schools.

She is currently a Manager of Student Services & Program Operations at the Opportunity Network where she oversees the work of the 11th Grade team who works with the first year students of the Fellow's Program. She holds a Bachelors degree in International Relations and Latin American Studies from the University of Rochester. She is proud to be a first generation college graduate and identifies as Afro-Latina.

Katherine is a mom to a little boy who she loves to go on walks with and explore new playgrounds and outdoor spaces. She enjoys spending her time with her nieces, dancing and reading a good mystery thriller book.



Natalia Martinez
(SHE/HER/ELLA)

Community School Director,
City Year

Natalia Martinez currently serves as a Community School Director at Isaac Newton Middle School, employed by City Year. She has been with City Year, an education nonprofit, for seven years—four years as a Community School Director and three years as a Community School Impact Manager. Advancing within City Year is one of her key accomplishments, after three years of demonstrating leadership, problem-solving, relationship-building, and project management skills. As a Community School Director, Natalia collaborates with her school’s administration to bring as many resources as possible into the school community.

Last year, she successfully expanded after-school programming to reflect students’ passions, hobbies, and academic support needs. Natalia’s journey with City Year began as a first-year team leader serving in an elementary school in East Harlem, Manhattan. This service year ignited her passion for being part of systematic change in education. She brings valuable perspective on the importance of the work being done—and still needed—in education, along with experience managing and coaching young adults navigating their place in the field.

Before her career in education, Natalia gained professional experience in high school by interning in the corporate world at an information technology and healthcare recruiting firm. She spent five years in the corporate sector, learning skills that she continues to apply today. Her journey toward cultivating a professional presence began as a teenager, and she now looks forward to using the Emerging Leaders Program to further build her professional career.



Victoria Navarro
(SHE/HER)

U.S. Programs Lead,
CommonLit

Victoria began her career in the education nonprofit sector while working in Marketing and Communications at PeerForward, a national college access organization based in Washington, DC. There, she further developed a passion for amplifying student voices and building greater connections to higher education for students from low-income and first-generation backgrounds. Currently, she works at CommonLit, an education technology nonprofit that provides teachers and students with high-quality, affordable literacy curriculum and resources, primarily for those at under-resourced schools nationwide.

Her current role is U.S. Programs Lead in the Research and Evaluation department, where she works to facilitate research partnerships with schools and districts to evaluate the efficacy of the organization’s literacy resources in classrooms across the country. She is passionate about reading and writing, and her current role blends a personal and professional investment in literature, student outcomes, and mission-driven work. Victoria grew up on the border in El Paso, Texas and currently resides in the Washington, DC area.



Alyxandrea (Ally)
Ouellette
(SHE/HER)

Associate Director, Donor Relations and Stewardship,
Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Ally Ouellette is a dedicated non-profit professional. She started her career at Wolf Trap Foundation where in addition to an extraordinary foundation in fundraising and strategic planning she discovered a love of opera music. While based in Northern Virginia, she was the board chair for Jane Franklin Dance and served as the co-chair of Emerging Arts Leaders D.C.

The winds of life brought her to New York City, providing an opportunity to deepen her experience in the arts and culture space with a role fundraising for the Guggenheim. In 2020 she transitioned out of the arts and into sexual and reproductive health care advocacy, joining the team at Planned Parenthood Federation of America. Her current work is dedicated to the fight to restore abortion access and ensuring that all people have access to high quality sexual and reproductive health care. In addition to her work at Planned Parenthood, Ally has recently served as a member of the AFP-NYC Emerging Leaders cohort contributing to programming helping young professionals develop their skills and further their careers.



Meg (Margaret)
Platt
(SHE/HER)

Senior Development Manager, Corporate and Individual,
German Marshall Fund of the US

Meg Platt is a Senior Development Manager on GMF's Strategic Engagement team. In this role she oversees the think tank's corporate partnerships in both the U.S. and Europe and cultivates a portfolio of private sector and individual supporters of the organization. In this role she has stewarded funding of five and six figure support from companies and individuals that have not previously supported GMF as well as built on existing relationships with past supporters. She has brought in over \$1M funding in 2024 and has over \$1.5M in active opportunities for 2025 funding.

Meg joined GMF in 2023 after nine years working for New Hampshire Senator Maggie Hassan. Meg most recently served as the Finance Director on Hassan's successful 2022 re-election campaign, which broke state fundraising records and raised over \$40 million. She was a long-serving and trusted advisor in Senator Hassan's office and previous winning campaigns for the Senate and for Governor.

Meg has an MA in Strategic and Defense Studies from the U.S. Naval War College and received her undergraduate degree at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland.



Jeremy (Remy)
Reya

(HE/HIM)

Deputy Chief of Staff,
Compass Pro Bono

Remy Reya is Deputy Chief of Staff at Compass Pro Bono, where he works with the CEO to drive progress on organization-wide strategic initiatives aimed at increasing efficiency and deepening impact. Day to day, he leads the national team and oversees the organization's internship program.

Before joining Compass Pro Bono, Remy spent much of the last decade working with nonprofits and studying poverty, both domestically and internationally. Conversations with people experiencing homelessness drove him to use research, journalism, and public speaking to elevate those voices to the level of policy discussions. He has presented his research on emergency shelters at Finland's Developing Homelessness Work Conference, written about relational poverty for local newspapers, and shared stories of others' lived experience on the TEDx stage. In addition to his own advocacy, he ghostwrites and consults for other homelessness advocates to help them connect with broader audiences.

Remy has been incredibly lucky to receive support of his social impact work through the Wiley W. Manuel Certificate for Pro Bono Legal Services (2017), as well as Princeton University's John C. Bogle Fellowship (2018) and John McPhee Award (2019). He received his BA from the Princeton University School of Public and International Affairs. Outside of work, he's an occasional drummer for an indie rock band and proud father to an eleven-year-old miniature schnauzer. (Yes, you can pet him.)



Andre Vasilyev

(HE/HIM)

Principal Economic Development Analyst,
Office of the New York City Comptroller Brad Lander

Andre Vasilyev is the Assistant Director for Economic Development at the office of the New York City Comptroller Brad Lander. In his role, he produces issue briefs, policy reports, and internal memos on topics related to the financial and economic well-being of New Yorkers. Recent issue areas include New York's racial wealth gap and the State Community Commission on Reparations; tax expenditure policy and efficacy; access to affordable child care; and employment opportunities for New Yorkers with disabilities and other marginalized groups.

Andre took on his current role after completing his Master in Public Affairs (MPA) at Princeton University in 2022. Prior to graduate school, Andre worked as a Senior Analyst at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and as a management consultant at EY-Parthenon. He completed his undergraduate degree in economics and international relations at Stanford University. In his free time, Andre enjoys being outdoors, snowboarding, biking, and playing in New York's LGBTQ Flag Football League. He is also a big fan of Seinfeld.



Michael Villafranca
(HE/HIM)

Senior Specialist, Science Policy & Government Relations,
American Geophysical Union

A native to Central Texas, Michael Villafranca is a seasoned public policy and government relations professional with nearly a decade of experience advancing legislative strategies, building influential partnerships, and shaping policy initiatives in Washington, D.C. Currently serving as a Senior Specialist in the Science Policy & Government Relations department at the American Geophysical Union (AGU)—an international scientific association whose mission is to promote discovery in Earth and space sciences for the benefit of humanity—he is responsible for advancing the interests of AGU, its members, and the Earth and space sciences with the U.S. Congress, the Administration, and other key policymakers. He also works with AGU's scientific community to inform and engage them in science policy work.

Prior to joining AGU in 2019, Michael held policy positions of increasing responsibility at the Children's Law Center in Washington, D.C., where he developed and executed policy strategies related to K-12 education and mental health.

Michael holds a B.A. in Government and International Politics from George Mason University in Virginia and currently resides in the nation's capital of Washington, D.C. With an ongoing passion for leveraging science to inform public policy, he remains committed to driving impactful change through advocacy and collaboration.



Kim F. Wong
(HE/HIM)

Manager, IT Support,
Uncommon Schools

Kim has spent his career in public education because he believes in its transformative power. He has benefited from good fortune in the teachers he has learned from and the mentors who have taken him under their wing throughout his life.

Throughout his career in public education – a preschool in Middletown, CT, a high school in Charlotte, NC, the KIPP Foundation, the New York City Department of Education, Achievement First, and Uncommon Schools – he has sought to answer two questions: What problems need to be solved so that no one has to rely on the same good fortune to receive an education that prepares them to succeed? How can he help leave things better than how he found them?

At the New York City Department of Education, Kim helped to create the online system that schools use to catalogue how rooms are utilized in their buildings. This system enables the Department of Education to better plan school enrollments and monitor class sizes. He also managed the project to build FirstStepNYC at PS/IS 41, a birth-5 early childhood center that opened in the fall of 2013 in Brownsville, Brooklyn. It was the product of a public-private partnership between the Department of Education, the Administration for Children's Services, SCO Family of Services, and private philanthropy.

At Achievement First, Kim helped develop translation and interpretation services for family communications and meetings, which have since become best practices throughout that network of public charter schools.

At Uncommon Schools, he created new report card systems that have expanded language accessibility across their 53 schools.



Valerie Woo

(SHE/HER)

NAC Futures Coach,
New Alternatives for Children

Valerie Woo is a Fair Futures Coach at New Alternatives for Children, supporting and advocating for children who are welfare-involved. She builds strong, trusting relationships with her young people, and helps them identify and achieve educational, career, financial and housing goals.

Valerie received her BA in Philosophy from NYU and her MA in Cognitive Science in Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. Her deep interest in social justice and human behavior inspired her to pursue a career in the nonprofit sector. Her previous experience included facilitating learning labs for vulnerable youth during the COVID-19 pandemic, and leading after school clubs for low-income youth in Manhattan's Chinatown. Her desire to educate, connect with others and learn from new perspectives also permeates to her other endeavors. Notably, Valerie spends her weekends giving guided food and history tours of Chinatown and Little Italy.

A Hong Kong native who has spent significant years abroad in both the UK and the US, Valerie is excited to share her multicultural perspective on education, community empowerment and human development. She is even more enthused to learn from her peers and facilitators at Emerging Leaders.

Princeton AlumniCorps Staff:

Princeton AlumniCorps employees coordinate the recruitment and application process for the Emerging Leaders program. They collaborate with the Program Facilitators to design, evaluate, and amend the program each year, ensuring that it accomplishes AlumniCorps's mission.



Kimme Carlos
(SHE/HER)

Executive Director

Kimme is the Executive Director of Princeton AlumniCorps; CEO and Founder of Kimme Carlos Motivational Consulting, LLC and is currently an ordination aspirant to the priesthood in the Episcopal Diocese of NJ; where she is certified as an anti-racism trainer. Kimme is also a certified health and wellness coach with the Institute for Integrative Nutrition; a certified instructor for Mental Health First Aid and author of the published book *The Window of Grace: Living in Recovery through Christian Faith*. As an advocate with lived experience, Kimme keynotes and facilitates on mental and emotional wellness, dismantling racism and the power of selfcare.

Kimme has been a member of several nonprofit boards including Foundation Academies, Children's Futures, and The Center for Family, Community, and Social Justice; and the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Mercer County. She is a graduate of Regent University with a Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies and a minor in Psychology. She has received numerous awards for her nonprofit and volunteer work, including the YWCA Princeton 2020 Tribute to Women Award. Kimme is the proud daughter of Dr. John W. Carlos, 1968 Olympian and civil rights activist. Kimme has two children, six grandchildren and lives in Pennsylvania.



Tim Schmidt
(HE/HIM)

Director, Programs
and Strategy

Tim Schmidt joined the Princeton AlumniCorps team in July 2023 as Program Manager of Partnership Engagement and Investment. He was promoted to Director of Programs and Strategy in January 2024. Born and raised in South Jersey, Tim attended Stockton University, where he earned his B.A. in Political Science/Pre-Law. Tim served two AmeriCorps years with the national education nonprofit, City Year, mentoring and tutoring students in North Philadelphia. He joined City Year's staff full-time as an Impact Manager where he directly managed several teams of AmeriCorps members through their service year. Tim administered programs at City Year that impacted more than 800 AmeriCorps members and staff in their journey of discovering their most authentic leadership styles as civically minded professionals. Tim earned his M.S. in Nonprofit/NGO Leadership from the University of Pennsylvania, and continues to reside in Philadelphia with his partner and their dog, Ozzie. They greatly enjoy the beautiful parks, culture, and community of the city.



Mateusz Pitrus
(HE/HIM)

Senior Office
Administrator

Mateusz “Matt” Pitrus recently joined the Princeton AlumniCorps team in November 2024 as the organization's Senior Office Administrator. Matt was born in Poland but raised in Central Jersey, where he still currently resides. Matt received his B.A. in Political Science from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey in 2010 and returned to earn his Master’s in Public Policy in 2014. Matt brings with him a variety of experience across non-profit and private sectors including but not limited to, non-profit program coordination, grant/proposal writing, grant program delivery, office administration, and project management. In his free time, Matt enjoys numerous hobbies including strength training, boxing/MMA, hiking, tennis, video gaming, Marvel and DC media, and improving his mechanical and home improvement skills in his spare time.



Mary Simms
(SHE/HER)

Development Officer

Mary Simms came on board with the Princeton AlumniCorps Team in October 2024 as the Development Officer. A proud graduate of Indiana University, where she earned a B.S. in Public Affairs, Mary’s journey has always been about serving the communities around her. After dedicating a year as an AmeriCorps VISTA at the Wood River Community YMCA in Ketchum, Idaho, her love for the mountains and the close-knit vibe of the Wood River Valley led her to dive into fundraising to support local causes. Mary's passion for these mountain communities also inspired her to write an article featured in Forbes, Crisis in Paradise, shining a light on the critical issue of food security in Sun Valley, Idaho.

Mary brings a wealth of fundraising experience that spans a diverse range of projects. Everything from supporting a transformative \$10 million capital campaign to building meaningful relationships that inspire generosity and exceed annual fundraising goals. She's a pro at crafting and managing grants programs with both public and private funding sources, and has a deep well of experience in designing and executing annual development plans. Mary has led CRM transitions that made donor engagement smoother and more impactful, while juggling event planning, annual appeals, and multi-channel fundraising campaigns. For her, it’s all about making sure every donor feels deeply connected to the mission and confident in the difference their support is making.

Having recently relocated to New Jersey to be closer to family, friends, and music, Mary shares her home on Long Beach Island with her partner, their cat, Delta, and their dog, Lucille.

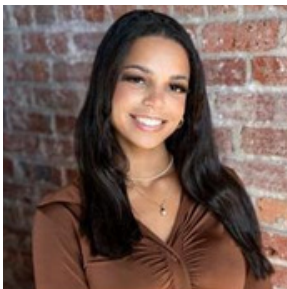


Andrijana Bilbija

(SHE/HER)

Program Manager,
Partnership Engagement
and Investment

Andrijana Bilbija is Princeton AlumniCorps' newest member, joining the team in February 2024 as Program Manager of Partner Engagement and Investment. She is a proud Project 55 alum, dedicating three years to her role at Housing and Neighborhood Development Services, Inc. (HANDS). At HANDS, she designed, executed, monitored, and evaluated economic development program aimed to increase the wealth of low-income immigrant communities in and around Orange, NJ. A stark advocate for humanizing the experience of homelessness, she co-authored *When We Walk By: Forgotten Humanity, Broken Systems, and the Role We Can Each Play in Ending Homelessness in America*. She envisions a future where people show up with empathy, compassion, and an open mind for their neighbors in a civically engaged society that prizes mutual respect and responsibility for each other's collective and individual success, wellness, and livelihood. In her free time, Andrijana loves to read, write poetry, and tell her dog, Daisy, that she's the best girl in the world at least 100 times a day.



Laissa Gibson

(SHE/HER)

Program Coordinator,
Fellowship Engagement
& Development

Laissa Gibson joined the Princeton AlumniCorps team in July 2023 as Program Coordinator for Fellowship Engagement & Development. She is a New Jersey native and currently resides in her hometown at the Jersey Shore. Laissa earned her B.A. from The College of New Jersey in 2021 where she majored in International Studies. Following graduation, Laissa served as an AmeriCorps VISTA Member with the New Jersey YMCA State Alliance as Internship Program Liaison where she developed and implemented a statewide YMCA internship program for college students. Laissa is passionate about environmental protection and makes a concerted effort to be a conscious consumer. She loves coffee, animals, thrifting, and Taylor Swift.



Serena Williams

(SHE/HER)

Graphic Design &
Communications
Coordinator

Serena joined Princeton AlumniCorps as the Graphic Design and Communications Coordinator of Fall 2022. She has several years of experience with photography, illustration, and web design. She graduated with her B.A. in Graphic Design at La Sierra University. Serena has also interned with BKR, a reusable glass water bottle company and worked for various nonprofit organizations, including Restoration Plaza, a cultural community center & entertainment theater leading their graphic and design work. Her photography has been featured in galleries like SALT NYC, Brandstater Gallery, and other private events. Serena brings a wealth of design experience to complement her communication background and believes that communication and graphics are a visual way to tell an organization's story and help realize its mission.

FALL 2024



2024-2025 Partner Organizations:

While the Emerging Leaders program is a personal development program, it is also designed to have an immediate impact on the organizations who support their staff's participation.



Contact Us

Princeton AlumniCorps

✉ programs@alumni corps.org

12 Stockton Street Princeton, NJ 08540

☎ (609) 921-8808

