

BOLD IN THE CROSSWINDS SESSION

SPEAKER BIOS

BUCKS-MONT COLLABORATIVE 2026 COMMUNITY SUMMIT

Bold on Purpose: Leading Audaciously, Together



Wednesday, May 20
9:30am-3:30pm
+ AM Networking



Gwynedd Mercy University

Bold in the Crosswinds: Courageous Advocacy When the Stakes Are High

Panelists



Obed Arango

Executive Director, CCATE



Phyllis Chamberlain

Executive Director, Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania



Dr. Jeannine L. Lisitski

President & CEO, Mental Health Partnerships



Julie Platt, MPH, MSW

Director of Policy and External Affairs, Mental Health Partnerships



Jon Rubin

CEO, Penndel Mental Health Center

Moderator



Yocasta Lora

Associate State Director of Advocacy & Community Engagement,
AARP Pennsylvania | 2025 Zhi-Xing Eisenhower Fellow



Obed Arango

Executive Director, CCATE

Obed Arango Hisijara is a Mexican photographer, visual artist, anthropologist, journalist, university professor, and media producer. He holds an MA in Cultural Anthropology and a BA in Communications. His area of expertise is Latin America: a beautiful land full of life, promise, and beautiful people, whose essence he sees, captures, and shares through the depth of his voice and the artistic expression of his photojournalistic pieces.



Phyllis Chamberlain

Executive Director, Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania

Phyllis Chamberlain is the Executive Director of the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania, a statewide organization dedicated to ensuring that all Pennsylvanians—especially those with low incomes—have access to safe, decent, affordable, and accessible homes. She brings more than thirty years of experience in public policy advocacy, technical assistance, community engagement, and communications. Before joining the Housing Alliance, Phyllis served as Director of Field Mobilization at the National Alliance to End Homelessness and as Executive Director of both the Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness and the Homeless Planning Council of Delaware.



Dr. Jeannine L. Lisitski

President & CEO, Mental Health Partnerships

Dr. Jeannine L. Lisitski joined Mental Health Partnerships in 2024 as President & Chief Executive Officer. She brings decades of management and leadership experience in the nonprofit sector, emphasizing community collaboration and innovation in mental health services.

Dr. Lisitski has served in various executive roles in organizations dedicated to alleviating violence, poverty, and behavioral health issues. Her notable positions include CEO for Council for Relationships, Executive Director & President of Women Against Abuse (WAA), and Vice President of Program Operations for Project H.O.M.E.

Under her leadership at WAA, the organization saw exponential growth in all service areas, enhanced its infrastructure, and achieved certification in the Sanctuary Model of trauma-informed care.

Beginning her career in social work, Dr. Lisitski provided direct counseling and case management services, giving her a solid foundation in mental health and behavioral health care. Her leadership has been recognized with multiple awards for business acumen and social innovation.

Notably, Dr. Lisitski led a citywide initiative to address relational violence, collaborating with over 60 agencies and organizations. This effort earned the first-place award for the international Lipman Family Prize for social innovation from The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.



Dr. Jeannine L. Lisitski (Continued)

A New Jersey native and Philadelphia resident, Dr. Lisitski's academic credentials include a Ph.D. in Social Work and Social Research from Bryn Mawr College, an M.A. in Applied Psychology from Rowan University, and a B.A. in Criminal Justice from Stockton University.

She also holds certificates in executive leadership from Bryn Mawr College and Harvard Business School and has co-facilitated the Bryn Mawr College executive leadership program.

Dr. Lisitski is passionate about learning, empowering teams, and implementing programs and systems that alleviate suffering. Through effective mental health initiatives, she aims to foster a more peaceful, flourishing, and united community.



Julie Platt, MPH, MSW

Director of Policy and External Affairs, Mental Health Partnerships

Julie Platt is currently the founder of her own consulting firm, where she brings extensive experience in health policy, advocacy, and political strategy. Before launching her firm, she worked at a leading lobbying firm specializing in education, housing, health and human services policy.

Prior to her lobbying work, Julie played a key role in multiple political campaigns at the state and county levels, contributing to major electoral victories in Philadelphia, Allegheny, and Delaware counties. Her leadership in political and advocacy efforts has earned her recognition, including being named to City & State PA's "40 Under 40" list and The Incline's "Who's Next in Politics." She was also awarded the Juanita C. Evans Leadership Fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh.

Julie holds a bachelor's degree from Wesleyan University and dual master's degrees in Public Health (MPH) and Social Work (MSW) from the University of Pittsburgh, where she specialized in community organizing, nonprofit management, and behavioral health. Her graduate research, The Comparative Study of Political Activism of Master's Students in Public Health and Social Work, examined the intersection of political engagement and public policy.

Prior to graduate school, Julie served as a coordinator for Grassroot Soccer in Cape Town, South Africa, focusing on HIV/AIDS prevention for youth. Passionate about civic engagement, she dedicates her time to voter advocacy and expanding access to the ballot box.



Jon Rubin

CEO, Penndel Mental Health Center

Jon Rubin is a passionate human services leader, with over 30 years of experience in the field.

Prior to joining Penndel, Jon has been serving as a Principal with Health Management Associates leading strategic planning processes, stakeholder engagement practices, and system redesign efforts with human services systems across the country. Previously Jon served as deputy secretary of the Office of Children, Youth and Families at the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS). In this role, he led the state's child welfare and juvenile justice services programs. During this time, Jon worked collaboratively with other DHS agencies to ensure accessibility of services and support of underserved populations.

Jon had previously served as director of Housing and Human Services for over five years in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. In this role, he was the leader for public human services for the County including child welfare; aging; housing; mental health; drug and alcohol; Medicaid behavioral services; and intellectual disability services. During this time, Jon focused the County's work on developing a more integrated model of human services delivery and building the public and private partnerships necessary to address the community's health-related social needs.

Jon started his career as a child welfare social worker, providing direct service work and caseworker supervision before assuming progressive leadership roles.



Jon Rubin (Continued)

Additional past roles include senior consultant with Deloitte, director of Organizational Effectiveness and Leadership Development with the American Public Human Services Association, and acting director and practice improvement specialist with the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center.

Jon holds a Master of Social Work from Temple University and a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work from Pennsylvania State University. He is the recipient of the 2019 Dennis Marion Award for contributions to behavioral health services in Pennsylvania. Jon remains focused on ensuring the delivery of equitable, accessible, and high-quality human services.



Yocasta Lora

**Associate State Director of Advocacy & Community Engagement,
AARP Pennsylvania | 2025 Zhi-Xing Eisenhower Fellow**

Yocasta Lora is a strategic leader in community development, public policy, and inclusive advocacy. As Associate State Director at AARP Pennsylvania, she advances statewide strategies that strengthen livable, equitable, and resilient communities for 1.8 million members. Her work spans affordable housing, transportation, green spaces, mobility, multicultural outreach, volunteer engagement, and age-friendly policy innovation.

A trusted collaborator across government, nonprofit, private and civic sectors, Yocasta serves on Governor Josh Shapiro's Pennsylvania Commission for Women and contributes to major regional initiatives focused on aging, housing, economic empowerment, and urban revitalization. The Philadelphia250, ShareFood Program, and Montgomery County DEI Advisory Committee. In 2025, she was named a Zhi-Xing Eisenhower Fellow, reflecting her global perspective on leadership and multigenerational community building.

Recognized as one of Pennsylvania's leading changemakers, Yocasta brings a bicultural lens and a bold vision to advancing communities where people of all ages can thrive.