



# Friendship Shelter

## 2023 Board and Staff Bio Book

Analisa



Andrus

*Hello!*

I have been with Friendship Shelter for over 16 years. I studied psychology and sociology at Wake Forest University in North Carolina and earned a Masters in Social Work from USC. I came to Friendship Shelter in 2006 as a front desk volunteer, and soon after was recruited to be a volunteer case manager. I was hired in 2007 to provide case management at Henderson House, when it was transitional living. I spent many years managing the Bridge Housing shelter on Coast Highway before joining the Senior Leadership Team in 2021.

*Why I came and why I stay*

I believe in the value of every human life, that all people are deserving of love, and that all people have the right to housing and the right to take up space in our communities. I believe homelessness is an unnecessary social problem that we as a community have the power to end. I believe that Friendship Shelter is a leader and an innovator in ending homelessness and I am proud to have dedicated my career to its service.

*Fun facts*

I wrote and illustrated a children's book inspired by my niece. I am currently working on my second. I always have a song of the moment—currently it's *Rock the Machine* by Lisa O'Neill. I was raised in Mission Viejo, but have lived in Dana Point for the past 13 years. Growing up, my parents had a retail business in Laguna Beach on Forest Avenue—working in their store was my first job at the age of nine. I have an older brother, Paul, who works as a Lieutenant for Crystal Cove State Park.

*Things that bring me joy*

Strolls through my neighborhood in Dana Point, especially if they lead to Bear Coast Coffee. Watching black and white movies with my mom on Sundays. Free samples at See's. Reading *Wuthering Heights*. Garden roses. A hot cup of tea accompanied by any sweet treat. My coworkers. A new *Victoria* magazine arriving in my mailbox. Making up games for my niece and nephew. The sound of birds chirping in spring. Dabbling in all things creative. A great song.

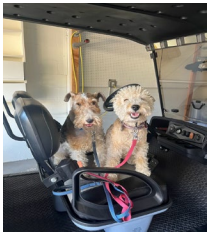


# ANDREA ANNE FARKAS SHELLY

I was raised in New Zealand (Aotearoa in Maori) by Hungarian immigrant parents who had fled the turmoil of the 1956 political uprising. Although I grew up in a picturesque and protected part of the British Commonwealth my home life and values were distinctly European where food, education, cultural pursuits and hard work were highly valued. At age 17, and against my parents' wishes, I decided to study abroad for my senior year and ended up in Upper Arlington, Columbus Ohio, home of the Ohio State Buckeyes and Wendy's fast food!

After completing my Law/Arts degree, and working for a few years in law, I felt ready to set off on my OE - Overseas Experience is an extended trip around the world and is unique to Kiwis and Aussies - and, with boyfriend in tow, spent 12 glorious months roaming Europe. We eventually landed in Honolulu for a career opportunity and the land of Aloha is where I married, went back to law school, got my green card and worked as an in-house lawyer, whilst taking time to enjoy the tropical lifestyle.

In 1990 we moved to Orange County and since then, Corona del Mar, Newport Coast and Laguna Beach have been home. My years in California have been filled with much joy and gratification - I had the privilege of being a stay-at-home mom to four beautiful children, I loved being CEO of home for 20 years, and I have made meaningful and long-term friendships through my children, philanthropic pursuits, and my real estate investment business.



My life today is both peaceful and hectic - I am privileged to share my beach community and home with my two beloved terriers, Tommy and Marley, and my 26 year old daughter, Elisabeth, who is working towards a career in early childhood development. My son David lives in San Francisco and works for a land developer, my daughter Alexandra lives in Santa Monica and is a

medium and podcaster, and my youngest daughter Juliet lives in New York and is pursuing a career in the business of food. They are truly the sunshine of my life and they come home often to visit and enjoy Mom's home cooking. Exercise - from pilates and cycling to hiking and mountain climbing - is a big part of my life, and adventure travel fuels my tomorrow plans and dreams. I make regular visits to Budapest to visit family, eat delicious goulash and pastries, and learn more about my Jewish family of origin. I also love New York for great food, theater and museums.



I am truly honored to be invited back to Friendship Shelter and I am excited to head up the Housing and Real Estate Committee to better serve its current and future housing programs. It is a five star organization, with highly talented and experienced leadership and a terrific group of board members. Thank you for the opportunity.





## Anna Valdez – HR Director

I was born and raised in the city of Orange just outside of the historical Orange Circle. It was a beautiful place to grow up with a small-town feel in the middle of Orange County, and my parents still live there today. I currently live in Costa Mesa with my wonderful partner, John. We've been together for 6 years now, and I couldn't be happier.

I also have two fabulous stepdaughters named Chloe and Rylie. Chloe is a freshman at the University of Alabama, and Rylie is a sophomore at Newport Harbor High School. They're both such bright and talented young women, and I'm proud to be a part of their lives.

And finally, there is our fur baby, Dallas. We rescued him when COVID hit, and he's been the light of my life ever since. He helped keep me sane while working from home in my previous position during the height of the pandemic. He's such a silly little dog, and he brings so much joy and laughter into our home.

One of our favorite things to do as a family is to travel to Costa Rica. We love everything about it - the surf, the ATV rides, the horseback riding, and just lounging on the beach with a cocktail in hand. It's such a beautiful country, and we feel so lucky to have the opportunity to explore it together. We have a small plot of land outside of Tamarindo, and our dream is to build a home so in the future we can one day retire in paradise.

Thanks for taking the time to read a bit about my life!





## Barbara McMurray



I grew up on a dairy farm in Eden, New York, 20 miles south of Buffalo. Eden is home to the only U.S. metal kazoo factory and an annual Corn Festival. I'm the fourth of six kids; all of us pitched in to help run the farm and household. My chosen tasks were typically outdoors, barefoot (in summer) and physical – baling hay, filling the grain cart, working in my mom's huge vegetable garden, tinkering in my dad's wood shop, hanging out with my recalcitrant pony Star. Winters were for making art projects, skiing, sewing, squabbling with siblings, and reading. It was an idyllic way to grow up.

In school, I was a sprinter and hurdler on the track teams. My upstate junior college 400-meter relay team made it to the NJCAA finals in Illinois, where we were decisively humbled by far faster teams. But I still have the cool green nylon windbreaker with the NJCAA finals emblem, so there's that.

I was lucky enough to spend a summer in northern Germany as an AFS exchange student, and my family hosted students. These exposures to the big world ruined me for staying down on the farm, so as soon as I graduated from Utica College of Syracuse University (as it was then called), off I went to New York City with my new journalism/PR degree to scrape the proverbial cow manure off my barn boots.



It was rather bold and a bit dangerous to make this leap in 1981, but being a penniless ingenue working at ad and PR agencies in early-'80s New York was a liberating joy. Remember Mary Tyler Moore tossing her hat in the air? That was me, in my mind's eye. I was having a blast until a business trip to San Diego shook me. I could scarcely believe what you Californians had out here. People could go to the beach anytime they wanted, for free? Winter wardrobes were elective? The sun shone every day? What was I doing in New York?

I returned from my trip out West and gave my boss notice. Two months later, I packed up and took a one-way plane ride to the temperate SoCal climes that still beguile me.

I'm not quite sure where the ensuing years went. This contractor guy I met at a New Year's party in 1990 convinced me to move from San Diego to Laguna Beach. I found work with the now-defunct Opera Pacific, a good nonprofit training ground. Ken and I married in 1992 – another of my best decisions made as a callow youth. We had two kids, built two houses together, and are happily watching our children blossom as young adults. Anna, 27, and Owen, 23, both live in the Bay Area, an appealing place we visit often. Ken has built dozens of custom homes in and around Laguna. A testament to his skills as an honest, principled professional, he retains close friendships with many of his clients. I'm a ridiculously lucky person.

With childrearing out of the way, my current avocations are wildly varied.



During COVID, I began writing feature stories for the *Laguna Beach Independent* about how businesses were hanging on through the lockdown. I continue to provide articles every few weeks because being a writer satisfies my curiosity and gives me cover for asking nosy questions.

Also during COVID, I embarked on learning about the duties of a death doula. That's a person who assists a dying person and their family in the transition from this life. It has been an excellent way to examine my own mortality with an eclectic community of deeply empathic death workers. I can write a moving, personalized obituary, create a legacy project, and put together a distinctive memorial service or even a home funeral. I also sing in the Orange County Threshold Choir, which is just what it sounds like.

Impact Schools is my other board commitment. Founded by Prakash Bista, a standout 2014 Soka University graduate who grew up as a brilliant kid in impoverished rural western Nepal, the NGO builds and runs schools for elementary-age children in Kalikot.

For my day job as McMurray Marketing Communications, I provide marketing and PR for corporate and a few local nonprofit clients in the arts and social service sectors — my favorite places to work on moving the needle.

Serving on the Friendship Shelter board is deeply meaningful to me. My first exposure was a Dinners Across Laguna event in 1992 or so. I was drawn to the organization and remember offering to publicize the installation of the stone sculpture donated by a lovely man named Stuart Shin that still graces the front entrance of the Bridge Housing Shelter. I kept finding ways to volunteer and they let me. As with many of us FSI lifers, Colin Henderson was my beacon and my conduit to board leadership in 2009. I remember feeling surprised and honored when he asked me to consider joining the board. I wondered if I would know what to do.

I figured it out.

Ken and I — and son Owen — worked together on the remodel of the Bridge Housing Shelter kitchen in 2016. Chairing the big annual gala that same year was a new experience — and a gratifying one when we raised \$400,000. As for annual “Dinners Across Laguna,” as they were originally called, I’ve lost count, but this year might be my 15<sup>th</sup> time hosting. It’s become an important part of my life to raise funds, strategize, and evangelize to help our most vulnerable and often most misunderstood population. Like many of my fellow board members (looking at you, Ketta Brown), we don’t do this because it’s easy and everyone’s eager to help. It’s a challenge. It’s a joy. To this organization and the talented team behind it for a long-term opportunity to grow as a human, a deep bow of thanks.



## Cameron Jalbert



I was born and raised in Central Oregon (Bend), where I developed an immense love for the outdoors and every activity related. I played almost all conventional sports from a young age, but really found my love for the outdoors leading me to more adventurous hobbies—think snowmobiling, motocross, downhill mountain biking, water-skiing, and anything else with a bit of adrenaline involved 😊.

I moved to southern CA when I was eighteen to go to Chapman University. I knew I wanted to go to a small school and already had a fondness toward Orange County from visiting my Grandad who has been in Laguna Beach almost all of his life.

Whilst at Chapman, I had the absurd privilege of completing a Semester at Sea. This meant travelling and studying throughout fifteen countries over one-hundred-and-ten days—with six hundred of my closest peers—literally circumnavigating the globe. To say that changed my life would be a dramatic understatement. That semester has influenced the way I live my life and the way I view the world in an indescribable manner. And yes, I received a full semester's worth of college credit 😊 Travel, culture, food, music—I love experiencing things in obscure places. Did I mention wine? That too.

I went on to be the first of my family to ever complete a 4-year college degree and fell in love with southern California for its diversity and accessibility to a booming business culture.



Philanthropy has been an additional pillar in my life since I was a little kid. I can remember doing site-visits at non-profits on family vacations, and developing curiosity for how much change we could initiate, as a family, when we really put our heads together. I was introduced to Friendship shelter in 2009 and toured one of the housing locations, instantly feeling the warmth and compelling culture from the staff and residents alike. I joined the board of directors in 2020.

I am also proud to be a board member for our family foundation—The Crevier Family Foundation—and honored to spend a lot of time helping non-profits grow and expand their influences in the best ways possible.

Professionally, I've been in the financial services advisory business since 2011 and love the overlap it allows me to have with my philanthropy and board experiences. I specialize in advising private business owners and philanthropic families so as to steward their wealth through multigenerational planning efforts and investing.

Aside from that, these days you'll likely find me hiking with my 6-month-old Husky (Tucker), riding my mountain bike in Laguna, or sneaking off for a long weekend in Jackson Hole to snowboard and play cowboy.

I am grateful to be involved with Friendship Shelter and feel passionate about helping influence positive change for our community and society.





# Christy Cornwall



I was born and raised a native Californian, growing up Manhattan Beach, which at that time, was a little-known town in South Bay. My dad worked in the movie industry at CBS studios and my mom was a secretary for a local real-estate company. We spent summers camping and hiking in Yosemite and Mammoth throughout my childhood. I'm the middle child of four siblings and the only girl, so I grew up on the tougher side, learning how to both take care of and stick up for myself. I enjoyed the typical girl activities growing up: dance, high school cheer team, roller skating, etc. But also had a tomboy side (thanks to my brothers) that included skateboarding, football and volleyball. My parents remained married for 42 years. Both have passed away (mom at age 65 from cancer, and dad, several years later from a broken heart).

My interest in learning started at a young age and has continued throughout my life. I was the first girl to graduate college in my family. I stayed local, attending CSU Long Beach for both my bachelor's degree and master's in public health. I am nationally certified as a Health Education Specialist and hold a Certificate in Project Management from UCI and a Certificate in Mission Leadership from University of Providence.

I never wanted to work at a hospital. As a child, I spent countless hours watching both of my grandparents suffer from a variety of chronic diseases brought on by a lifetime of hereditary and lifestyle decisions. While I had an interest in health going into college, I changed my major to avoid the career settings where jobs were primarily in a hospital setting. My first roles were in health education in both for-profit and non-profit sectors. When my husband and I moved to Aliso Viejo in the late nineties, a job opportunity presented itself... at Mission Hospital. I interviewed with great trepidation, but ultimately decided to move forward. I've now been at Mission Hospital for 22 years. My role has grown and expanded far beyond its original scope, and to my surprise, has provided the greatest fulfillment both professionally and personally.



My husband and I have been married for 27 years. If you were to ask him how we met, he'd say, "she showed up in my living room". We must have been destined to meet because I did everything in my power to avoid the encounter that led to our first meeting (but that's a long story). We have two beautiful daughters, now 15 & 20, and a 3-year-old red coonhound/lab/border collie mix that is both the funniest and smartest dog I've ever owned. We love to take local trips to Paso Robles, Mammoth Lakes (summer and winter) and along the coast. We haven't done much international travel yet, but now that the girls are older, we are planning a European vacation in 2024. We have a special group of friends who we've known for 20+ years and spend most of our time with – from casual neighbor nights to vacations around the country.



In my free time, I enjoy most things outdoors – hiking, biking, golf, beach, and skiing. I love to cook (and enjoy the wine that goes with it) and learned my cooking skills from both parents. I am inspired by the good that I see in the world and my mantra is "Do everything with Courage and Kindness". I am the one who always roots for the underdog (even in the Superbowl) and get highly passionate about injustices I see locally and in the world.

## Cindy Shopoff

I grew up in San Antonio, Texas. One of six children, second to last in the pecking order. The birth order two girls and a boy, followed by two girls and a boy. My moniker has been “Sergeant Cindy” for quite some time in my family. Unfortunately, my father died when my youngest brother and I were only toddlers. Melanoma, very quick and abrupt. My mom raised us as well as she could so things were quite chaotic in our younger days.

I didn’t take a traditional path to success. I instead went to work at age 13 to help my family and because all I had ever known was how hard my mom worked.

I was determined to work hard but also to create more success financially than my mom had been able to. When I was in third grade in parochial school, our teacher asked us what we wanted to be when we grew up. Many wanted to be firemen or policemen, the girls wanted to be nurses...I wanted to be a lawyer.

While a career in law didn’t end up in the cards, I have instead been in the real estate business for over 40 years. Starting in sales and eventually working in all aspects from investing to development.

I embarked on a real estate career in 1981, specializing in investment properties. By 1990, my spouse and partner Bill Shopoff, and I had grown our business exponentially, and owned and operated two commercial real estate companies – Keller Williams Commercial, and Shopoff Property Management Company in Austin, TX. Concurrently during this time, I also managed the Shopoff family’s personal real estate investments.

In 1996, we sold both Keller Williams Commercial and Shopoff Property Management to concentrate on new real estate ventures. These new ventures led us to Southern California and after a few years of Bill flying back and forth to Texas, it was necessary that we relocate the family.

At this point I decided to turn my efforts and attention to the education and nurturing of my two young children, Nick and Elissa, as well as following my passion for giving back. Both of our children, graduated from Laguna Beach High School. During this time, we were exposed to Friendship Shelter and their programs in many different ways, such as dinners across Laguna, and capital campaigns under the previous Executive Director of Friendship Shelter.

Over the past 30 years, our company has created over 25,000 residential for sale or for rent lots in Southern California, in one of the most restrictive development climates in the U.S. We are immensely proud of this and very focused on housing for the future of California’s welfare. We are currently working on workforce housing in a programmatic way. I was invited and joined the Friendship Shelter Board over 7 years ago and have been pleased to see this group grow into not only the preemptive homeless organization, but to see the team they have built to manage the homelessness crisis.





## David J. Cox, Director of Housing and Operations

I was born in Fullerton, California and have lived in Orange County for most of my life. My Dad worked for Disney for over 40 years and my family has lived in San Juan Capistrano since I was 10 years old. As a kid, I was rarely found indoors as I had boundless energy that kept me outside riding bikes, skateboarding, surfing, and finding general mischief to get into. While scholastics were not my biggest priority as a kid, I was lucky enough to get by with A's and B's with minimal effort. Part of this lack of motivation I now attribute to the fact that besides the pipe dream of being a professional surfer I had no idea what I wanted to do when I grew up. An accident the summer going into my Senior year left me with a shattered femur and the realization that I wouldn't be able to surf and play forever and that at some point I would probably need to pick a college and profession to work towards. Not knowing what this profession would be, I chose to major in business and headed off to San Francisco State where I spent a year, followed by Santa Barbara.



In addition to shattering my femur going into my senior year of high school, I had two additional surgeries on my left knee over the next 5 or 6 years due to re-aggravating my initial injury by way of snowboarding and skateboarding. These injuries kept me on pain-killers long term, which eventually led to abuse and dependence. Seeking out medication became a daily priority, and I went through a string of different "careers" over the next many years from bartending, to managing a pest control office, to getting a real estate appraisers license to do single family home appraisals. These were all just jobs which were ultimately about a stable source of income to make a living and support a habit. As anyone who has ever been dependent on a substance can tell you, it is less about fun and more about just minimizing discomfort. This way of living gets old after a while, and I eventually accepted some help from family and decided that this was not the life I wanted to live. It was during this time that I discovered human services through the helping professionals that were helping me.



In my late 20's I decided to start over on my scholastic journey and went to Saddleback College with the original intention of getting an Associate's degree in Human Services. It was during this time that I found the Friendship Shelter in Laguna Beach when looking for my first Human Services internship. I found that I really loved the challenge of the work and the feeling that what we do can make a difference in the world. After completing my Associates in Human Services I decided I wanted to further my education and enrolled in Cal State Fullerton's Human Services Program, while continuing to work part time at

Friendship Shelter's ASL and SSP programs. As I neared graduation at Cal State Fullerton I was motivated to keep on this journey and earn my Master's in Social Work. I was thrilled to be accepted to USC's MSW program and found that this work was a true passion for me. I have been fortunate throughout this journey to work or have internships in many different Human Services organizations from hospitals and mental health clinics, to drop-in resource centers. I have also been quite fortunate to get many different experiences as a Friendship Shelter employee. During my MSW program I was also working at Friendship Shelter on getting our brand new PSH program off the ground which was a real-life experience very few students are lucky enough to have. 10 years later our Permanent Supportive Housing Program is still going strong and has grown from our original 18 to well over 100 units!

My first decade working at the Friendship Shelter has been a true blessing for me, especially when I think back to where I started so many years ago. Friendship Shelter has been such a huge part of my story. I even met my wife, Laura, at a Friendship Shelter BBQ as the guest of another employee many years ago. We have been married for several years now and have a little baby boy, Jordan. A couple years ago, following a major organizational restructure, I moved from managing our Permanent Supportive Housing program to the larger umbrella of Housing and Operations. Currently, as the Director of Housing and Operations, my primary focus is on sustaining all our current housing while steadily growing it. Housing is the key tool to end homelessness and the more housing we can access the more lives we can impact. If the past 10 years are any indication of future growth, then Friendship Shelter has a lot to look forward to in the coming years!



## Dawn Price, Executive Director/CEO

I'm a first child, and a pretty good example of all the cliches that come with that. I was spoiled for my first two years of life until my force-of-nature brother came along and dethroned me! That makes me a natural leader (or bossy, depending on your point of view). I was born and raised in Racine, Wisconsin (go Packers!). My father was a lawyer who worked in banking/personal trust and my mother was a physical therapist. My dad was a community volunteer and board member.

In school and into college, I was a performer (acting, singing) and a good student to the nerdy extreme. I moved between the smart kid and choir/theatre kid worlds. I had a terrific journalism teacher in high school and gained my political interests by coming of age during the Watergate era and seeing Bob Woodward speak at a student journalism conference.

I was not a risk-taker and ended up at a small college 13 miles from home. There, I got to be a part of a touring choir that took me all over the US and to Europe, including behind the Iron Curtain. But the real benefit of choosing that college was meeting my husband Jerry. We were married two weeks after I graduated, a month before my 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. We just celebrated our 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary and we are amazed and grateful that we have been able to grow and change together all these years.



Jerry is a native Texan (and a Dallas Cowboys fan, so we have a mixed marriage). We moved to Texas to begin our life together. I had an amazing first job at Planned Parenthood, where I learned from some incredible activists and volunteers. I was trusted with media relations and communication in a divisive political environment. Still, we both felt the pull of academic life and the hope for continued education. I was hired by Drake University as a residence hall director and we moved to Iowa for graduate school.

We joke that we made a series of ten two-year commitments to Des Moines, and ended up staying nearly 20 years. We adopted our son Preston in 1992 at the age of 9 weeks. He turned 30 last fall. After grad school I thought I would work in magazines, but a classroom speaker from a local non-profit inspired me and later I returned to Drake, spending 10 years working in fundraising.

Jerry's career took us next to McAllen, Texas, where I had my first opportunity to serve as an executive director at Ronald McDonald House Charities. I served there four years before Jerry was recruited as Dean of Students at Chapman University.

When we moved to Orange County, we had told our then-15 year old son that he could choose a high school and we would rent within that district. He stood on the steps of Laguna Beach High School, looked down the hill to the ocean and said, "this will work." With that, Laguna Beach became our next home. At about the same time, the Friendship Shelter job came to my attention. It felt meant to be (it still does).

Today Preston is a hair stylist in West Hollywood, and we've moved to a home on the Chapman campus. Jerry and I enjoy being around campus life and have recently caught the travel bug. We'll be headed to Scotland, London and Paris in June. We enjoy movies, live performances, most sports (myself as a spectator) and games. My happy place is in the kitchen, where I love to cook and especially to bake. It's my mindfulness exercise! We have two dysfunctional but well-loved dogs, Maya and Pepper. My family still lives in Wisconsin so we visit when we can. My 85 year old mother spends a few weeks with us each winter/spring.



I love Friendship Shelter. I'm passionate about the work that we do and very proud of the ways we have changed our approach to become more effective. I feel a deep connection to the people who turn to us for help, and I believe that it's our responsibility to push back on the systemic issues that contribute to homelessness. I feel very, very lucky to work with our talented, creative, inspiring and loving team. I think we have the best board of directors I've ever encountered, and I'm excited for the coming year as we look to grow our housing program and build on the success of our Intersections luncheon event.



## Doug Anderson



I grew up in a small town near Chico, CA where I was a big fish in a very small pond- class president, captain of basketball team, AFS student to the Netherlands. Upon graduation, went off to Stanford where I was a very small fish in the big pond. I earned my degree in economics and political science and met Judy, who has been my amazing life partner for many decades now. We left Palo Alto for Washington D.C. to work for a few years before returning to get my MBA at Stanford Business School with a subspecialty in private/public projects administration [who knew Friendship Shelter supportive housing projects were in my future?]

We moved down to the OC soon after grad school where I got immersed in the development world working for national and regional companies and having a stimulating time developing office buildings, courthouses and industrial projects. Some of my most meaningful work was the re-development of the LA Wholesale Produce Market which involved intense work with the community, city and state governments.

In recent years, I left the corporate world to form my own company developing multiple buildings now leased mainly to tech and e-commerce tenants. Meanwhile, Judy was building her practice as a clinical psychologist and professor at UCI.

Our two sons, Matthew and Jonathan, joined the family along the way. We spent many years doing family biking and hiking trips around the world plus putting in many hours at volleyball tournaments and Model United Nations events. Both boys are grown up now and honing their skills in commercial real estate and high-tech consulting, respectively. This last year has been a big one for our family with Matt getting married and now having a baby this Spring plus Jonathan getting engaged. Judy is finally getting some females in the family!

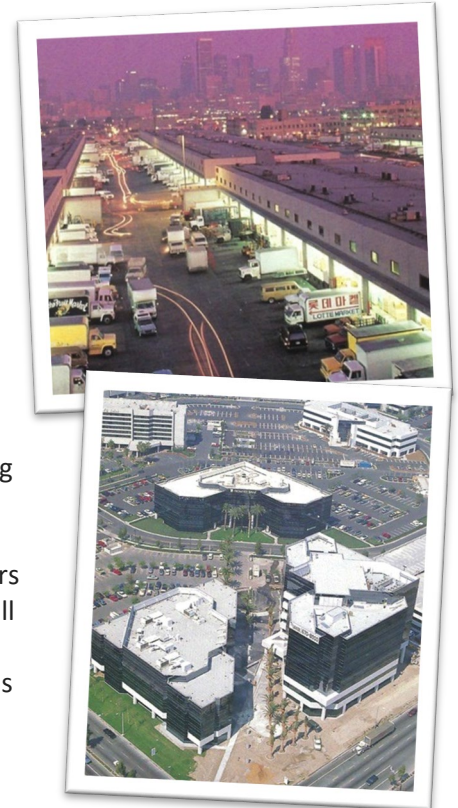
As for my FSI history, I joined the Friendship Shelter Board about 15 years ago when I was approached by Dawn Price's predecessor who thought I would be a good "fit" given my background as a developer for commercial buildings.



She was correct as I have been able to use my background to assist in the acquisition of our apartment buildings which serve as permanent, supportive housing for single individuals. I've also been able to help with the negotiation of ground lease renewals for our main building on Pacific Coast Highway in Laguna Beach.

This work has been very gratifying to me as I've learned the intricacies of evaluating the potential acquisition of single bedroom apartment buildings, which are quite challenging to remodel to meet federal standards. Friendship Shelter is just now in escrow to purchase another building which will add to our growing number of "supportive housing" apartments.

In closing, I have been on various Boards during my career and can wholeheartedly say that being on the FSI Board has been the most worthwhile experience, combining relevant work with such awesome staff and fellow board members.



Top: LA Wholesale Produce Market  
Bottom: Hotel & Industrial project

## Gary Jenkins

I was raised in a small town in southwestern Idaho that had a rodeo downtown. My father worked for the telephone company and my mother was a teacher. From there I went to college at a small university in Tacoma, Washington then to medical school in New Orleans. New Orleans was a foreign country to me but I loved it. I did my residency in Los Angeles then began pediatric practice in Orange County. I served as Chairman of the Department of Pediatrics at St Joseph Hospital for three years and was the managing partner of what became a large pediatric practice for many years.

I met my wife, Betsy, on a Sequoia Sierra Club cross-country ski trip and we instantly bonded. We married and moved to Laguna Beach in 1980. We both love this town. I retired from my pediatrics practice in 2016 after 40 years. Currently I enjoy playing the piano, mountain biking and gardening. Betsy is an avid reader and is on six local boards! She is a hard one to keep up with. Currently we have a one-year old grandson who is a real joy and occupies a fair amount of our time.

We became supporters in the 1980s of the homeless outreach that Colin Henderson began and which morphed into Friendship Shelter. I am so proud to be a part of this organization and am amazed at how it has grown and the success it has achieved. I have been on a number of boards but none have had such a wonderful staff and board members as ours. I am excited about the future expansion of our services.





## Josh Wolff

I remember studying for the California Bar exam in the public library of my hometown and seeing a former high school classmate. He was popular kid in school, athletic and likeable—also the only one I knew who could do multiple front flips. I had heard he joined the Navy. The person I saw that day, though, was disheveled and carrying a bag with sundry possessions. He had gone from high school to homeless in just a few years.

The reason I mention this event is because, to this day, I am troubled by my response. It wasn't empathy or compassion that I felt. I didn't offer help. I didn't even say hello. I felt awkward.

In the decades that followed, I have enjoyed a career and, with a loving spouse, helped raise two amazing daughters. As a family, we have traveled, laughed and shared, and built lasting memories.



All of this, at its core, has been possible because we have a place to come home. My classmate, at that time in his life, didn't have a home. I hope his circumstance improved, but I doubt it could have without help. And that is the worthy goal of Friendship Shelter—to help people have a place to come home.

# Ketta Brown



I was born and raised in Louisiana, MO, a small, rural town in N.E. Missouri on the Mississippi River. I grew up across the street from my paternal grandparents so needless to say, I was spoiled rotten! I'm the oldest of 3 girls and we lived a truly Beaver Cleaver life. My dad was a banker/farmer who was on school board, Rotary and a church elder and my mom was a permanent volunteer for everything else! I learned at the knees of the masters what it means to be part of a community and the importance of participating in the betterment of that community.

However idyllic my family life was, I was a square peg in a round hole when it came to fitting in socially so when I got the chance to change that I headed to Seattle attending the University of Washington. The campus was 10x the size of my hometown which was both exciting and terrifying but I found my people! I majored in Medieval English Lit with a minor in 19th Century India History which prepared me for nothing except the ability to write and reason.

Sadly, my mom died in the fall of my senior year and after graduation, I moved home to take care of my dad and youngest sister who was only 13. I was there for about 10 months when my dad said, "This is too easy for me, and not fair to you". I headed to Kansas City and started working for a small brokerage firm there which is where I got my finance start...write and reason... remember. I met my husband, Jeb, on a blind date. He was in his 3rd year of medical school and 15 months later when he graduated, we got married.

Jeb's residency was in Seattle at UW, so I was back "home"! We were there for 4 years until he got his Gyn/Onc fellowship at UCLA which brought us to SoCal. I was resigned to stay here for the 730 days it took to get through the fellowship but 35 years later, here we are! He took a job at Hoag and the rest is history. Our son, Michael was born at UCLA and the 3 girls (Kacky, Sarah and Annie) were all born at Hoag. True Californians!

We moved to Laguna in July, 1991 and have never looked back! Although we have had our share of trials (our house burned in the fire of 1993 and our daughter, Sarah, died in 1995 at 14 months) we have lived a blessed life. We have an incredibly strong friend group and have all "found our people". Best of all, all 3 of our kids are back in SoCal after being all over the country for years! It's my magnetic personality I've decided.

Being involved with Friendship Shelter in the 1990s and now has been a true joy for me. I have always admired the respect and kindness that everyone shows each client. The dedication that everyone here has for the mission is palpable. I am honored to be a small part of helping to fulfill that mission one person at a time.





## Kristen Gaynor, Director of Finance



Raised in the suburbs of Atlanta, Georgia, I grew up drinking coca cola with every meal, cheered for the Atlanta Braves, learned routes to all new places relative to the Big Chicken, spent the summers with my best friend at Six Flags theme park, and loved grabbing a meal at Cracker Barrel because it meant I could challenge my older brother to a game on the jumbo size checkerboard on display. My father worked in sales at CNN and was a powerful negotiator, but what I most respected about him as a child was his creativity in deploying (innocent) pranks. There were lots of jump scares, laughter and mischievous delight ringing in the Gaynor household, and I grew up with an appreciation for the way humor can connect people. My mother worked as a schoolteacher, meaning our bookshelves were packed with literature about learning, child development and abnormal psychology. After I tired of Amelia Bedelia books, I dipped into her collection and became increasingly fascinated by the importance (and fragility) associated with foundational years of child development, the resilience that helps us work around early setbacks, and the way the mind learns and makes sense of the world.

I attended Agnes Scott College, a small liberal arts institution in Decatur, Georgia, that boasted high acceptance rates into graduate programs and impeccably fluffy waffles in the dining hall (the latter reason being admittedly what won me over). I majored in psychology, served on several research teams, and launched an annual research symposium that continued beyond my graduation. During college, I worked part-time as a French teacher for 2-5 year olds and also a recreational therapy assistant for individuals in treatment for severe mental illness. Teaching provided me hands-on experience with presenting and adapting lessons to a range of levels and needs. My initial work in mental health was equally valuable, as the approach in recreational therapy was strengths-focused rather than centered on a person's diagnosis. Goals focused on increasing connection with others and engagement in healthy, pleasurable activities.



I went on to complete my doctoral coursework in clinical psychology; however, my interests shifted following various life events and I found myself drawn to hybrid roles with dual emphasis on business management. I relocated to California and worked as a lead business/psychology consultant and later, chief of admin (overseeing all HR, proposals, accounting, and compliance).

I joined Friendship Shelter in late 2020, excited to work for a non-profit tackling the critical issue of homelessness in our community. Everyday, I'm grateful to be part of a team where those we serve are seen and valued as unique individuals and where their needs and struggles are approached respectfully and effectively. My focus for the finance department continues to be on: removing obstacles for common transactions; building scalable tools to support our program staff especially as layers of funding become increasingly diversified; empowering our development team with detailed figures; and achieving continued improvements to our overall financial position. When not working, I can be found walking trails, taking photographs, listening to podcasts, and eating waffles.

## Kristin Points, Director of Development & Marketing

I grew up in the San Fernando Valley, and lived there until my family moved to Corona del Mar the summer before I started high school. There was definite culture shock after moving to Orange County from LA, but I quickly got used to going to the beach everyday that summer. I was an equestrian, and started riding at the Burbank Equestrian Center when I was 7 years old, which continued through high school at various stables in Nellie Gail and at the OC Fairgrounds.

I attended Whittier College, just about an hour away from home. I dove head first into college life and lived on campus, joined a sorority, and studied abroad in Nice, France and Copenhagen, Denmark. I majored in Political Science and was one class short of getting my minor in French. Sadly, I haven't kept up with practicing and can read and understand a bit but won't embarrass myself trying to speak the language!

In the year 2000 I interned with the Chief Operating Officer of the Democratic National Convention Committee, which was at The Staples Center in LA. The internship turned into a paid job and is an experience I will never forget. After the convention, I took a job on Al Gore's presidential campaign and took off the first semester of my senior year of college and moved to Cedar Rapids, Iowa where I was a field organizer. After the campaign ended, I finished college (on time!). Not long after graduation, I got a job in Des Moines, Iowa working as the Field Director and then Finance Director (fundraiser) for Congressman Leonard Boswell's re-election campaign. It was on that campaign that I met my now husband, Michael who was working for the Iowa Democratic Party, and he moved back to California with me once the election was over instead of returning to his home state of Texas. From there, I've worked with various political campaigns, advocacy organizations, and nonprofits in fundraising and management capacities. Michael and I got married in 2007 in Palm Springs and moved around the country together working on various campaigns including in Alaska and New York.

We have two kids, Sam (11) and Ellie (7). After having Sam, we decided to leave campaign life and settle down in Orange County. I worked in the Development Department at Planned Parenthood and after leaving that position in 2014 was introduced to Dawn Price through a mutual relationship with a donor. The rest as they say, is history!

I love working at Friendship Shelter and am so proud of the work we've been able to do together over the past 8 years. I briefly left the organization last year when Michael and I decided to relocate our family to Bend, Oregon. But I couldn't stay away! After about 6 months of working for a different organization, I realized how good I had it at FSI. I truly missed my team and the work we do together, and thankfully it worked out for me to continue my work remotely.

My family and I are exploring our new home in Bend. We love living so close to the Deschutes River, and exploring the beautiful landscape and hiking trails, great restaurants, and breweries.

We have a 14 year old dog named Rosie, a bunny named Stella, and a kitten named Olive. I'm also a volunteer advocate with JDRC (Sam has Type 1 Diabetes) and am becoming active with the local chapter here in Central Oregon.

Friendship Shelter has grown in remarkable ways over the past 8 years, and we have tremendous opportunity ahead of us! I'm excited for the continuous growth of our DOMOS giving club and Intersections luncheon, and our team is looking forward to continue telling the stories of the men and women we work with in new and creative ways.



## Lea Stone



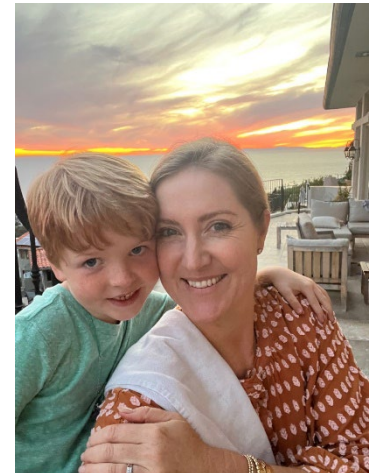
My involvement with friendship shelter started at a very young age. In grade school we had a classroom project building hygiene packages for clients at FSI. I remember this vividly, packing essentials for people we didn't know, but noticing these were things my young self took for granted at home, always stocked, never without.

My parents were early supporters and helped start one of the first big fundraisers, "Dinners Across Laguna" where, in short; a couple would host a Dinner party, parts of the meal would be provided by nearby restaurants and a ticket price would be attached. Essentially dinner with like-minded friends supporting the shelter, they were wonderful. As a teen, my friends and I would serve at these dinners to fulfill our community service hours. Again, highlighting the needs of others and learning from our parents the importance of supporting FSI's endeavors.

Now as a parent myself, with two small children I hope to continue engaging young families in our community with the wonderful work of FSI. Seeing how much it has grown and working with the staff and board is an honor.

I have an informal background in fundraising and worked for 20 years in education and private school administration, and hold a fine arts degree from LCAD.

I'm Currently working full time for two individuals in the private sector, Lottie Harlo age 3 and Sterling Orion age 6. They have scoffed at the idea of a 4-day work week, and relish in company memos that arrive before dawn. We're in negotiations for more PTO, but I'll say, it's not going well.



In my free time I like to stay up way too late with my favorite person, former board member, Zeda Stone. We talk a LOT as out our bosses, I mean, soooooo much gossip. Please don't tell HR.



## Lisa Talmage, Grants Manager

I grew up in San Jose during the height of the Silicon Valley boom, where my father worked as a test engineer for radar systems. We made frequent trips to Orange County to visit my dad's family in his hometown of Orange. I never wanted to leave O.C.'s warmer weather and sunnier beaches – and vowed to live here when I grew up. (And here I am!) I kept a busy schedule filled with sports (soccer, water polo, cross country, & track) and music (percussion & marching band) through high school. I was lucky to meet my long-time partner, best friend, and high school sweetheart, Richard, in German class. Before we could drive, we racked up a lot of mileage on our skateboards (and still do occasionally).

I spent my junior year of high school in Germany as an exchange student, which is where my obsession with soft pretzels and black licorice was born. Unfortunately, I can understand the language much better than I can speak it these days.



I finally realized my dream of becoming a full-time O.C. resident when I attended UC Irvine as a Social Ecology major. The multidisciplinary coursework fueled my curiosity, especially the ways in which systems and sectors like health and housing interact and impact each other (a fact that was not widely accepted or understood even just a few years ago). I loved my student job as a campus bus driver shuttling fellow students to their classes.

After working a handful of sales jobs in the private sector, I felt unfulfilled and knew I needed to put my skills to use in a way that was aligned with my values. Luckily, my close friend and former Friendship Shelter client, encouraged me to apply for a position as Development Assistant in 2017. I'll never forget how highly my friend spoke of the care and support he received from Friendship Shelter staff during his stay. After joining the team, I was lucky to witness the magic my friend spoke of – the love and compassion that staff showed to our clients. I shared a tiny office together with Development and Marketing Director, Kristin Points, on the men's floor of the Bridge Housing Program on PCH for 18 months before our

administrative team outgrew the shelter and relocated to Laguna Woods. Since then, we have been fortunate to grow our department and I shifted to managing our pipeline of foundation and government grants as well as providing coordination and support for Board meetings and projects.

Being a part of this team and organization brings me immense joy and fulfillment. It's hard to accurately capture Friendship Shelter's magic in words. (And I do it for a living!) Perhaps "magic" is indeed the most accurate. One only needs to spend a brief amount of time at any program site or with any department to experience it. I am excited to join you all for another successful year ahead of continued growth, learnings, innovation, and system leadership toward ending homelessness in South O.C.!



## Marisa Robbins

I was born and raised in North Hollywood, California. An original "Valley girl". I am the youngest of five daughters born to immigrant parents from Italy. In 1914 my maternal grandfather, Cosimo, received his papers which allowed him entrance into America. In the eleven days he had before departure it was arranged that he marry my grandmother. In those few days my mother was conceived. He would not return for another 7 years. Each time he did return another baby was conceived. Unfortunately, another three were born but during those times in small villages meningitis was rampant and my mother's siblings did not survive.

Thus set the scene for my mother to be a tough as nails little farm girl who turned 50lbs of flour into bread for aunts, uncles and cousins, and farm hands. She did this at 11 years old. At that young age she had no problems telling field hands what to do. She was not afraid of hard work and raised her 5 daughters to be the same.



My father was also from a small village in Italy. My father was a tailor. He had a waxed-tip moustache and wore a carnation in his lapel every day. He apprenticed as wood craftsman but found his artistic expression in crafting beautiful suits for men. He had an eye for being able to disguise body discrepancies within the folds of fabric. So, the sport coat of a man with uneven shoulders, for instance, would drape beautifully from every angle. From Italy to New York to finally settling in Los Angeles, my father set up his tailor shop on Wilshire Blvd. I will brag just a bit here: my father made Johnny Carson's tuxedo when he hosted the Oscars. There were other celebrities as well which I found out much later.

Even though we lived in the valley, my parents raised us as if they still lived on a farm in Italy. Fresh bread, pasta, tomatoes, and making everything by hand was our existence. We were the labor force. In grammar school I would silently lament when classmates had their nice square white bread sandwiches which fit so neatly in their lunch pails. In contrast, mine were from non-standard shaped bread baked in quantity from the day before. And I would longingly covet the striped chocolate shortbread cookies other kids got for dessert. I got fruit. To this day, they remain my favorite cookie and eating one takes me back all those years. My parents held us close, and we were not allowed many freedoms. I, as the youngest, did get to partake in some high school activities. I loved the freedom of school. I joined the drill team for a couple years, became a cheer leader, and my senior year I was part of the yearbook staff. As I was a cheerleader that year, I was given the honor of the entire sports section. That meant I created the copy for each sport and photographic layouts with their respective captions. Many late-night deadlines to get the pages printed on time.

Beginning at 15 I worked in a clothing store for teen girls. Then in college I worked at a savings and loan. I continued working all through high school, summers and all through college. I carried a full load each semester while I worked afternoons. The money I saved enabled me to bear the cost of my college education. First junior college and then on to university for my last two years. My plan was to become a teacher.

I met the love of my life when I was nineteen and about to graduate junior college. We were in a wedding together-he a groomsman and I a bridesmaid. Steve was living in San Diego then while attending UCSD. My mother attended that wedding and Steve had asked her to dance. He, of course, charmed her. Enough to allow me to go out that same night with him. Steve had long hair and a goatee and wore a puka shell necklace. The late 70's after all. Steve came to the door wearing jeans! As the

daughters of a tailor, we were not allowed to wear jeans. Despite his tasseled sweater and lace up jeans my father loved him. I graduated Cal State Northridge in May and we were married that July.

I became a very happy part of a retail family business. I cleaned cases, arranged displays, did cost analysis paperwork, did my fair share of sales when the store was busy. I created seasonal displays and traveled from Riverside to Santa Maria to install them. The business allowed us to travel to Hong Kong, Taiwan, Bangkok, Singapore and many more exotic locales. We gambled in Macau long before there was any hint of a Vegas influence. The family business was part of a business co-op across America, and we traveled to several states and made some very close friendships. As the business grew, I was behind the scenes hosting manager red carpet dinners and other company events.

We eventually had three daughters and I was a very busy stay at home mom, while continuing to host business events. I enjoyed being a mom and their teacher of life. Our daughters have all gone on to higher degrees with full time jobs. A couple are moms with kids of their own at this point. And I am a very hands-on grandmother when needed.

Nine years ago, I trained for and became a Court Appointed Special Advocate, CASA. A one-on-one mentorship program for kids and teens in foster care. I have mentored as young as 7 to my current youth at 16 years old. I find it's not hard to give care and love to kids that are not one's own. I make sure they have what they need from their foster family and convey that to the courts. Overtime I also try to have them discover their inner quiet strength and resilience. Lessons I was taught that I passed on to my kids and now to them.

Steve and I had always come to Laguna with our kids for vacations-never expecting we would eventually be lucky enough to live here. When our youngest daughter finally left for college, we moved to Laguna full time. We discovered Friendship shelter through a good friend. Steve became a board member on the executive committee. As the two of us have always been a team, my involvement with Friendship Shelter began then. I helped Steve find creative ways to host events at our home to raise, not just funds, but awareness of the Shelter in our community. And now that I am a board member our journey continues.

With all the beauty and nature that surrounds us, we are involved with many conservancy groups to help maintain our planet for the future.

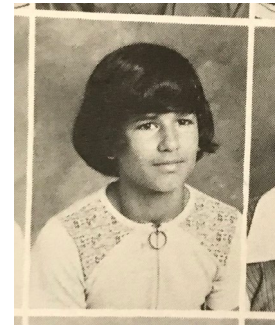




## Mark Davis, Pastor of St. Mark Presbyterian Church in Newport Beach

I grew up on the other coast, in Hampton, VA, “the oldest continuous living English settlement in the United States.” Growing up in Hampton gave me an interest in history, with Jamestown and Williamsburg close by, but it also shielded me from a lot of history. After Hampton was founded in 1609, it only took ten years before the first slaves arrived in the US at Comfort Point, also in Hampton. I think my upbringing shaped me to learn, then unlearn as a way of growing.

I am a middle child, a peacemaker, buffering two brothers who did not always get along. (We’re all buds now). My dad worked at NASA, making models of wings, aircraft, spacecrafts that were then tested in the wind tunnels. If you ever saw the movie “Hidden Figures,” it all takes place at the Langley Research Center where dad worked and that was his wind tunnel in some scenes. Mom was a homemaker, who taught me how to throw a football and to fish, much to the surprise of many folks who saw her as much more domestic than that. Summers were all about walking down to where the sand barges moored and crabbing or fishing in the morning, then biking over to the beach in the afternoons.



I left Virginia for four years and attended a small church-related college in Franklin Springs, GA. Then I returned to Richmond, VA to attend Union Theological Seminary, where my inner nerd and my heart found one another. From there I moved to Iowa, where I did four great things: I met my spouse, Chris, and we married one year after we met; I got a Ph.D. in Theology, Ethics, and Culture at the University of Iowa, while teaching in the Center for International and Comparative Studies; We had our four children (Mickey – the executive

director of the Des Moines Music Coalition; Luke – a chef and former employee at Friendship Shelter; Nic – a law student at Gonzaga; and Abigail – a dance teacher and college student); and I became an Iowan for a total of 25 years. Eighteen of those years were in the Des Moines area, where I never met Dawn Price, but we had many mutual friends. And in September 2021 we became grandparents to Tallulah Geraldine, daughter of our eldest Mickey and his spouse, Amanda.



Five of us moved to California just over nine years ago, when I received a call to serve at St. Mark Presbyterian Church in Newport Beach. Since that time, I’ve been serving with United to End

Homelessness and the chair of the Faith Leaders Council, member of the Leadership Council, and the Executive Council. I’m also a minor musician, playing the saxophone in a jazz group on occasion while striving to be better, and hopelessly devoted to succulents these days.

## Megan Tambio, Development & Marketing Associate



I was born and raised in Orange County. I'm so thankful to have grown up here. I love living close to the beach, so much good food, and so many fun things to do!

I studied film at Cal State Fullerton. I had many amazing experiences (including interning for my hero Conan O'Brien), but I realized by the end of undergrad I did not enjoy the intensity of the film industry's work culture.

Luckily, I'd written some articles spotlighting local nonprofits for the Santa Monica Daily Press my senior year, and soon found out one of the organizations I'd written about had a paid internship available. I graduated in 2016 and was feeling very uneasy about the future; it felt right to pivot toward work that would better my community.

*Me and my close, personal friend, Conan O'Brien*

Several years and several jobs later, I found a home at Friendship Shelter in August 2020. This is easily the best job that I've had. I've grown so much personally and professionally since working here. I consider myself to be in an especially fortunate position as I'm able to talk with people from every sphere of Friendship Shelter- from my Development compatriots Lisa and Kristin, to our generous supporters, and our incredible program staff who inspire me every day.

Before working at here, I thought that homelessness was an unsolvable problem. I've learned so much and am filled with more hope than ever witnessing the collaborative effort of our team to end homelessness for so many.

There's been a LOT of change in the world and in my life these past 2 and a half years, but Friendship Shelter has remained a positive constant in all the shifting tides.



*Me, Kristin, and Lisa- aka my team <3*



## Mia Ferreira, Director of Services

Originally from Orange County, I moved to Hawaii as a young adult to go to college and spent almost 10 years there. I loved the culture and the emphasis on community and embracing the natural world, which was such a stark contrast to my experiences in south Orange County. Directly after completing my degree in chemistry, I found myself serving as an AmeriCorps with a non-profit serving individuals living in poverty and homelessness. *It was in this role that I found my people!* I quickly became employed by this social justice



agency, working with individuals who experienced severe mental illness and were experiencing homelessness. It was in this non-profit that I held my first leadership role, providing oversight for the outreach program which served the entire Big Island.

After my time in Hawaii, I moved to Georgia to attend Emory University for graduate school. This experience of learning and obtaining my Masters in Public Health widened my world view and solidified my commitment to working in local communities serving marginalized folks.



In the following years, my life was filled with both homelessness/poverty reduction work and ongoing antiwar/antiracism activism. I lived in Chicago for several years and then landed in Northern California. While there, I served as Director of Programs for a non-profit serving individuals experiencing homelessness. It was exciting to be developing new programs to meet the gaps and identified needs of the community, such as a women's shelter and micro-enterprise for people experiencing homelessness. We developed a partnership with California State University Monterey Bay and further developed programs for jobs and increased service learning opportunities with our non-profit. This was the beginning of my connection and love for mentoring students through internships and fed my growing interest in education.

Fast forward to 2010, when I moved back to south OC, after being gone for 20 years, to be available to assist my aging parents. During this time, I switched gears a bit and I worked as an Operations Director for a nutritional research project. I secretly love data and the empirical method! After a few years, I realized I missed direct social services and found the work of the Friendship Shelter in 2013. I knew it was the right fit for me when I toured the ASL and saw my people! I was so honored to be invited to work with this amazing organization.

Shortly after starting with the Friendship shelter, I returned to school to pursue my Master of Social Work. I view myself as a lifelong learner and embraced the opportunity to grow and expand my skill set. After

graduation, I completed all of the required clinical hours and became an official Licensed Clinical Social Worker.



Returning to OC also had the wonderful added benefit of meeting my life partner and best friend Courtney. Courtney is one of the most kind hearted and down to earth people I have ever met. She is the type of person that does not view people as strangers, rather she sees them as friends she hasn't met. We have since purchased a lovely home in Dana Point where we are raising our son, Ransom, who is turning 18 this summer. We have two dogs, Sophie and Keoki and a very old cat named Tattoo. Ransom is about to graduate high school and will be heading to New York to attend college in the fall.

My love of all things education, led me to accepting a part-time teaching role with Saddleback Community College in their Human Services Department. These past four years of teaching have been very rewarding, especially since this is where I started my own educational journey so many years ago.

Personally, I have a variety of interests and ways I spend my free time; I am a lover of gardening, hiking, biking, reading, time with family, traveling and making mosaic art. Most recently, I have learned about working with stained glass to make mosaics and this is giving me so much joy. If you come and visit the Friendship Shelter administrative office, you may catch a glimpse of a few of my pieces.

I love my role as the Director of Services with the Friendship Shelter! I am able to help mentor the various program managers and further develop their leadership. I am able to bring in best practices and advocate for needed resources and efficiencies to provide quality services. Most importantly, I get to work with some of the most dedicated, competent and amazing humans I have ever met and together, we are ending homelessness one person at a time. As I head into this tenth year with FSI, I look forward to the road ahead and the future of FSI with this amazing team.



# Michael Gamerl

My first flight was to the US and although only 3-years old, I was bitten by the travel bug. With my trusty companion, Ann, we find ourselves nudging our adventures ever further and farther. Our favorite destination is the next one!

Our travels encourage me to truly experience the culture and I say there is no better way to see a country than through my stomach. After all, what can be more tied to a culture than what one eats and drinks? It's always wonderful and often the locals are in total disbelief that I want to try things. Yes, I have paid dearly at times and let's just say that you don't ever want to play "what's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten?" with me.

I have no delusions of being a polyglot, but do love language and my travel only pushes me to attempt (read: butcher) words and phrases wherever we are. My COVID project was Italian and I started

German just as things started to get back to normal. Nun ja!

Closer to home, I studied at UCI and can't say I even knew what economics was when I started, but just loved it from the outset. I contend that there are only two types of people in the world. Those who love econ and those who run away screaming from it. I'm the former and teach an econ class here and there to try to convert the econ-averse into disciples. I had an opportunity to complete my masters at the London School of Economic, so couldn't pass that up. Now I have something in common with Mick Jagger.

Speaking of Mick Jagger, my band plays a few Rolling Stones tunes – not well, mind you – and what we lack in talent we more than make up in energy. Yes, we've played the Dirty Bird many times and, yes, I made sure my tetanus was current before each gig. Playing Angel Stadium was also fun and yet another thing I have in common with my mate, Mick.

Professionally I've been in education for the past three decades and work with schools, companies, technology, governments, you name it. It's never dull and like Friendship Shelter, fulfilling work. Nothing changes lives like education!

Ann and I have lived in Laguna Beach for (gulp) more than 30 years. I wasn't about to go back to Northern California after experiencing this weather and the skimboarding isn't nearly as good there as it is here. We have been involved with the Friendship Shelter for more than 10 years now and what we love most is that instead of talk, we can be involved in actually doing something. The wonderful success of FSI only makes it all the more satisfying and it is our privilege to be associated with an organization that is moving the needle for our local community and beyond.



*After a nice little jog from Marathon to Athens.*





*In prep for our Okinawan wedding ceremony.*



*Hand delivering letter to Santa above the arctic circle in Lapland.*

## Rick Scott

I have been fortunate enough to live by the ocean my entire life. My upbringing spans both coasts, with formative years spent in locales such as Stone Harbor, NJ and Long Island, NY, and most of my life lived in southern California. The water has been an integral part of my life, influencing many decisions and often dictating my path forward. Some of my fondest memories are from my high school years on Balboa Island, where I played water polo at Corona del Mar High School and lifeguarded on the beaches of Laguna. This passion led me to Pepperdine University, where I furthered my love of the ocean and psychology, while playing water polo and spending endless hours in the campus jacuzzi.

My faith and family have always been the most important part of my life. I met my wife Toby during our senior year of high school, and she is currently a pastor at Little Church by the Sea in Laguna Beach. Our 28-year-old twins, who graduated from high school and college within days of each other, have now embarked on their own unique paths. My daughter Rickie, the eldest by 20 minutes, is a dedicated English teacher at Laguna Beach High School, while my son Caleb is pursuing his doctorate in Psychology and relocating to Long Island, NY to begin his practicum at Nassau University Medical Center.



Nature has always restored and nourished my soul. I believe that spending time outdoors makes me a better person by helping me slow down, find true rest, and connect to a larger story. I love to hike and backpack as often as possible, especially around water elements. My favorite adventure was hiking the John Muir trail, a 221-mile trek through the Sierras, in August of 2019. Although the scenery was a highlight, I found the kindness of the people on the trail to be the best surprise of all. I've traveled to many places around the world, connecting with new people and cultures over an IPA. Yet, the Central Coast of California (Cambria to Carmel) and the Northern Coast of Maine have a special place in my heart, being the two beautiful places we vacationed most as a family.

Music has been a constant companion since my early years, with acoustic singer-songwriters being my favorite genre. Some might say that kind of music is depressing, but I'm drawn to the depth of lyrics and authenticity. Not much brings me greater joy than sharing music with my children, who share a similar passion. Spring is my favorite season, with its beauty and sense of renewal. The green hills, scattered with poppies, and the start of spring baseball evoke a sense of new beginnings and hope.

This idea of renewal is what brought me to Friendship Shelter, where I am proud to have served for over 14 years. I strongly believe that life is complicated, and many of us need love, support, and encouragement along the journey. The lessons I have learned during my time here have been invaluable, none more so than the idea that everyone deserves love and support with no agenda, and we should always do whatever it takes to provide them with what they need. I first came to Friendship out of love for the clients we serve, but now I stay out of love for our incredible staff that continues to serve our clients and motivates me each and every day.



## Sharon L. Sobel



I am a second-generation Reform rabbi who grew up with the synagogue as my second home. My father began his rabbinic studies when I was one, and apparently, one of my favorite games to play when I was young was: “Don’t bother me, I’m writing a sermon!”

(Me and my brother, Isaac, who is 2 years younger than me. I was 2 years old)

I am a native of New England, the oldest of six children. While my father was in school, we lived in the tri-state area: New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. Once he was ordained, we settled in New Jersey and I remained there until I graduated from high school.

My parents and grandparents were the biggest influences on my life: they instilled within me and my siblings the value of speaking out and speaking up for those who are unable to speak

for themselves, to work to make our world a place of justice and peace, equality and safety for all. From the time I was very young, we marched in rallies in NYC against the war in Viet Nam, we marched in solidarity for Soviet Jews, we spearheaded social justice programs in our community to welcome new immigrants, to work to free Soviet Jews, to end poverty and so much more. My parents were also ardent Zionists who instilled within me a strong sense of *ahavat Yisrael* – love of Israel. Their passion and commitment for Judaism, Israel and the larger Jewish community inspired me to skip a year of high school, graduate in three years and spend a year studying Hebrew and volunteering on a Kibbutz in Israel before starting college.



(Me and my brother, Isaac, who is 2 years younger than me. I was 2 years old)



At a “Stop the Hate” Rally



Following that year in Israel, I returned to Boston University where I studied Communications, with concentrations in Advertising/Marketing and Photography. While in school, I needed to work, and got a part-time job in BU's Development Office working on their Telefund campaign, phoning alumni and parents raising funds. From the beginning, I seemed to have the "golden touch" – I consistently raised the highest number of dollars and had the highest percentage of donors. When I graduated, BU created a position for me on their development team. My supervisor mentored me to have a long-standing career in the field of development. After two years, however, I felt unfulfilled. I didn't feel as if I was doing anything to make a difference in our world, to make our world a better place. The values instilled within me by my parents resonated so deeply, so passionately, that I needed to find a way to live them out professionally. It was then that I decided to study for the rabbinate and pursue a career as a Jewish communal professional.



*Me at the Western Wall in Jerusalem*

From that moment on, I have dedicated my life to making our world a better place. Some examples: while in rabbinical school, I spent almost five months in South Africa at the heart of apartheid, working with the Jewish community there. I visited the Former Soviet Union five times, bringing in medication, supplies and materials to lead Passover seders. Together with my congregations, I spearheaded initiatives for AIDS, breast cancer centers, human trafficking awareness programs, the elderly, and so much more. I have been an active volunteer in my communities' "Out of the Cold" faith-based "feeding the homeless" programs, and Interfaith Dialogue programs and varied social justice initiatives.

I was so thrilled to have the opportunity to be part of Friendship Shelter. It speaks to my heart and my values and gives me an outlet to do so beyond my own community (so important for me since I am so new to California, I am looking to meet new people beyond my congregation, while doing work that is of value and meaning).

For me, life (and Judaism) is about community and building relationships, relationships between people and each other and relationships between people and God. I view these relationships as sacred relationships, and thus, we each have great responsibility for one another. I believe that a critical aspect of my role is to nurture community-building and enable strong, healthy relationships to thrive and grow. It's my goal to make sure that people feel their voices are heard, their presence matters so that the community is richer, healthier and stronger for their participation. The work we do with Friendship Shelter is no different: we want to make sure people feel their voices are heard, their presence matters and that the community is richer, healthier and stronger for their participation.

I come to this work with many years in the rabbinate, working with congregations both large and small. From the congregational perspective, I have congregational experience on both the micro and macro levels: serving in congregations and then for the broader Reform movement as the head of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) in Canada. I have the knowledge, skills and specialty training in Board and leadership development, organizational behavior, strategic and long-range planning, system theory and crisis management. I've worked with numerous congregations, their leadership and staff to strengthen synagogue communities by providing technical expertise, direct counselling and resources. As a congregational rabbi who has served in congregations of all sizes, I have encountered almost every possible situation a rabbi can encounter in a rabbinic setting. Since July, I am now very excited to be serving as the Senior Rabbi of Temple Beth Shalom of Orange County in Santa Ana.



*From my Installation as Senior Rabbi at Temple Beth Shalom, Santa Ana*

I am a life-long learner and passionate social justice advocate. I have specific expertise in the areas of Bio-Medical Ethics and Jewish Law, Israel, the Hebrew Bible, Antisemitism and Interfaith Dialogue. In addition to travelling extensively on behalf of the Reform movement in both South Africa, the former Soviet Union, and Central Europe, I lived in Israel for two years and have led over 30 trips to Israel as well.

In 2016, I was awarded the American Jewish World Service (AJWS) Global Justice Fellowship for Rabbinic Leaders. I travelled with AJWS to the Dominican Republic to learn about human rights and social justice issues affecting that part of the world.



*From my Social Justice trip with AJWS to the Dominican Republic*

When not working, I am a cycling and fitness enthusiast. I also enjoy running half marathons with my siblings, hiking with friends and riding my Peloton when the weather is bad. I also love to write, read, travel, cycle, run, entertain, garden, cook and do photography.



*At the Gasparilla Half- Marathon with one of my brothers and my cousin*



*Blowing the Shofar for Rosh Hashana*

# Tom Salinger

I'm only here thanks to Albert Einstein. When Hitler came to power, the Einsteins were close family friends who helped my parents and grandparents flee from the Nazis and immigrate to California. Over the next few years, he also helped five other family members escape internment camps and a

workcamp in Vichy France and come safely to America.

My mother used her ingenuity and talent to become a costume designer, with credits for 51 movies, which is why I grew up in Hollywood. Following her example, I got my first press mention at age three.

My first ambition in high school was to become a basketball star, but when reality hit, I headed off to Cornell, lured by a video of the campus in summer. Among the many things I learned in upstate New York was that I did not want to spend my winters scraping ice off my windshield.



Thus I headed back to Berkeley (then known as Boalt Hall) for law school, following in my father's footsteps. It was an exciting time to be there, including the afternoon when my fellow law school classmate exhorted the crowd to take People's Park—which sadly precipitated a riot in which one student was killed.

After a year clerking for Judge Chambers on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco, I arrived back in Southern California, bypassing smoggy L.A. for a job offer at Rutan & Tucker, the largest firm in Orange County.

At Rutan, I became a business and real estate litigator—one of my first big jury trials involved representing homeowners whose homes slid down into Laguna’s Bluebird Canyon after a rainstorm. I worked ridiculously long hours, but on Cinco de Mayo in 1978, I left work early to sample happy hour at El Torito. There, to my great good fortune, I met Lynda, who would become my wife.

We dated for about two years, then lived together for three. When we married in 1984, our wedding cake simply said "Finally." Since Lynda came with Sandy and Dylan, we were an instant family of four, so after we



remodeled to accommodate two teens, we decided to have Jordan and start all over again.

He became my tennis, basketball, baseball, and skiing buddy, and I was a referee and fan at his soccer and baseball games, plus his hockey and swim meets.

Now he's an urban planner in New York City, but on the morning after he was born, we learned that a friend's son was next door at CHOC, being treated for acute leukemia. That moved me to join the Padrinos, a support group for CHOC, where I was involved for many years and helped launch CHOC Walk, plus a sports night where I enlisted the help of Byron Scott (at last, proximity to basketball stardom).

Lynda had been active with numerous non-profits, and was on the board of Second Harvest Food Bank for more than 20 years. She helped me connect with Goodwill Industries, where I served for more than a decade and was Chairman of the Board. While I still serve on committees there, when I was termed out, I sought another worthwhile organization—and that was Friendship Shelter.



I joined just before COVID-19, so my first physical encounter with the ALS was a drive-by support event, and I met my fellow board members via Zoom before it was safe to join them in person. Friendship Shelter gives me a chance to help people who really need it, and makes me truly appreciate all I've been given.

When I resigned as a partner from Rutan in 2020, our goal was to spend more time with our kids and grandkids, traveling, and less on the computer. At that point, we'd been to 60 countries and 152 islands, including highlights in Machu Picchu, Easter Island, Petra, Egypt, Cambodia, Rio, Scandinavia, Bali, and Bora-Bora.

The pandemic slowed that goal a bit, so I still give back by serving as a Judge Pro-Tem for the Orange County Superior Court every week, and by helping a few long-time clients. As Lynda will tell you, being a lawyer is a hard habit to kick.

## Vince Jenkins

My two favorite pastimes are fishing and giving back to my community. They are two constants in my life that I hope I never have to give up.

I caught the fishing bug in high school during visits to Oregon, where my relatives taught me how to fish for trout. I've been 'hooked' ever since! Since the early '90s, I've logged countless hours catching and best of all – *eating* bermuda, albacore, yellowtail, bluefin, and many others. Nothing tastes better than fresh sashimi caught and prepared with my own two hands. Working as a crew member on various boats over the years has taught me so much, but as with all the best things in life, the learning never ends. I try to get on the water whenever I can between my primary job as a trade show installer and my volunteer service.

I'm driven to give back to the organizations that have given me so much and Friendship Shelter is one of those organizations. In 2011, I was experiencing homelessness and Friendship Shelter helped me get back on my feet. After spending some months in the shelter program, I took the necessary steps to secure permanent housing, which led to a brief stay at Henderson House, then several months at a transitional facility operated by Mercy House before securing my current apartment in Santa Ana through Section 8.

I joined the Friendship Shelter Board in 2022. It has been an honor and privilege to serve the organization that helped me to persevere and succeed during a very challenging period of my life. In addition to my Board service at Friendship Shelter, I also regularly volunteer at Laguna Food Pantry and the winter shelter program operated by a collaborative of local churches in Laguna Beach.

I am grateful to serve on the Board and I look forward to continuing to provide practical insights from my first-hand experiences.





## Wendy Aird

I was born in New York and raised in Connecticut as one of 5 kids. We were a wild bunch but we all lived to see adulthood without too much body damage. My father was New York City commuter and my mother was a working mom who built a rather large residential and commercial real estate business. She was unique and a huge role model for me, teaching love for everyone's unique abilities and character as well as a strong work ethic, particularly as a woman in business. My childhood would be considered normal but rest assured, I had moments to test my parents with participation in high school pranks and what was then considered to be high school parties on the wilder side.

In my junior year of high school, my parents divorced and my mother found her way out to California. I graduated from Corona Del Mar HS and earned a degree in political science from UCLA. After college, travel became my obsession and I went to work for a California regional airline that had great travel benefits. The airline was PSA and was known for a huge smile on their airplanes. While I left PSA after a handful of years and a lot of adventures under my belt, my penchant for travel continued both personally and professionally. I traveled throughout the globe and even found myself living in over 10 US cities and in South America, specifically Sao Paulo, Brazil, for a number of years. My primary career focused on sales and marketing with Fortune 500 companies and a couple of start-ups sprinkled in between.

In 2016, I retired and returned to Laguna Beach. Through a friend and huge supporter of this organization, I found Friendship Shelter and quickly joined the board. Since that time, I have met the most amazing people both working with the shelter but also individuals associated with the shelter throughout the community. The world of Friendship Shelter is indeed a family and the hyper charged, dedicated family members never cease to amaze me. And without exception, when I mention Friendship Shelter, those in the know quickly smile and always begin the conversation with "Oh, how I love Friendship Shelter and all they work they do". It is with great pride and gratitude that I too, know and love Friendship Shelter and am so proud to be associated with this wonderful organization.

