

## Ready to Grow Workshop Speaker Biographies

### The Othering & Belonging Institute at the University of California, Berkeley

The Othering & Belonging Institute at the University of California, Berkeley is a vibrant hub of scholars, researchers, organizers, strategic communicators, policymakers, and community partners working to find new ways to identify and eliminate the barriers to an inclusive, just, and sustainable world.

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#### Speaker Bios:

**Gerald Lenoir** is the Identity and Politics Strategy Analyst working with the Othering & Belonging Institute's Network for Transformative Change. His work at the Othering & Belonging Institute focuses on working with staff and community, advocacy, labor and faith partners to organize the research, development and promotion of a strategic narrative that fosters structural inclusion and addresses marginalization and structural racialization as one of its central pillars. Gerald is the founding Executive Director of the Black Alliance for Just Immigration (2006—2014) and a founding steering committee member of the Black Immigration Network. He was the Executive Director of the San Francisco Black Coalition on AIDS (1989 – 1995) and cofounded the HIV Education and Prevention Project of Alameda County. He also cofounded Priority Africa Network in 2003 and has served on the board of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights since 2006. He is a former board member of the Interfaith Peace Builders and led its first African Heritage Delegation to Palestine/Israel in 2012.

Gerald graduated from the University of Wisconsin, Madison with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree. He studied law at UCLA and marketing at the Graduate School of Business, University of Washington, Seattle. His opinion pieces and reporting on immigration, racial justice, apartheid, electoral politics, HIV/AIDS and other issues have appeared in Time Magazine, Black Scholar Magazine, the Oakland Tribune, The Los Angeles Sentinel, the Seattle Times, New America Media, commondreams.org, colorlines.org and other publications.

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**Ayketa Iverson** is the project coordinator for OBI's national Civic Engagement Narrative Change project. Ayketa has a track record of managing programs, operations, and campaigns in government and labor. She worked for the AFL-CIO for 14 years, advancing progressively in roles that included (most recently) National Recruitment Coordinator for the Organizing Institute. From October 2017 until June 2018, she worked for the Minority Caucus Whip of the Georgia state House of Representatives. Ayketa's home base is in Atlanta, and she travels to liaise with OBI's civic engagement partners in a number of states.

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**Miriam Magaña Lopez** is a Research and Policy Analyst for the Othering & Belonging Institute's Network for Transformative Change. At the Othering & Belonging Institute, she led a written and podcast Case Series that captures and dissects real-world examples of bridging to belonging. Miriam is also developing advanced curricula applying the othering, belonging, and bridging frameworks. She has also assisted in the design and implementation of qualitative research in diverse California communities. Prior to joining the Institute, her work primarily focused on understanding how economic, political, and social structures impact the health of immigrants. Her research has been published in academic journals such as the *American Journal of Public Health* and her opinion pieces have been published in newspapers such as *The Guardian* and *The Press Democrat*. Miriam has a BA in Anthropology from Macalester College and an MPH from the University of California, Berkeley School of Public Health.