

2024 Leadership Conference Speaker Biographies

Cindy Arends Elsberry (she/her) is WDA's Resentencing Resource Attorney. She has worked in public defense for 30 years and has a diverse background, having worked on all types of criminal cases, from low-level crimes to aggravated murder. She has experience with collaborative courts and mental competency hearings. Before joining WDA in 2009, she worked as a staff attorney providing representation to indigent defense clients at the Associated Counsel for the Accused in Seattle for over 14 years. In her role at WDA, Cindy provides technical assistance to attorneys and develops resources for public defenders across the state. She is a frequent speaker at CLE presentations. Areas of interest include representing youth and young adults in serious felonies, representing clients living with mental illness or intellectual disability, sentencing reform, and promoting defender well-being. She received her J.D. from the University of Washington School of Law.

Magda Baker (she/her) is WDA's Director of Legal Services. She graduated from the University of Washington School of Law and started her legal career at the Snohomish County Public Defender Association representing people accused of misdemeanors. Following a short stint writing appeals, Magda joined WDA in 2005. Some of Magda's accomplishments while at WDA include authoring a comprehensive motion to suppress evidence due to illegal searches and seizures, leading the effort to amend CrR/LJ 3.4 and limit how often people must attend court before trial, and answering countless requests for assistance from public defenders. In addition to practicing law, Magda is a printmaker and has shown her art both locally in Seattle and nationally.

Kimonti Carter (he/him) is an exemplary leader, serving as both President and Director of Education at the Black Prisoners Caucus Community Group. With an unwavering dedication to social justice and community empowerment, Kimonti leads initiatives aimed at empowering incarcerated individuals and advocating for much-needed criminal justice reform. Through his visionary leadership, Kimonti tirelessly amplifies the voices of those affected by the prison system, fostering hope, resilience, and positive change within both correctional facilities and the broader community.

In addition to his work with the TEACH program, Kimonti serves as the Director of Community Mobilization with Participatory Justice, collaborating with community and stakeholders to implement restorative justice practices in Snohomish County, and as a facilitator of the Participatory Defense HUB of Washington. Furthermore, as the Community Outreach Specialist for the Washington State Office of Public Defense (OPD), Kimonti leads strategic initiatives to engage impacted communities regarding the State v. Blake decision, ensuring individuals receive crucial information and support within the criminal justice system.

Kimonti's commitment to community upliftment is further demonstrated through his role as a mentor at the Young Bulls Fatherhood Academy (YBFA), providing invaluable support to young African American fathers aged 18 to 24. Through one-on-one

coaching, Kimonti empowers participants to navigate challenges and access essential services.

With his profound dedication, advocacy, and visionary leadership, Kimonti continues to make a profound impact on the lives of incarcerated individuals, empowering them with the tools and opportunities for personal growth, academic success, and meaningful societal change.

D'Adre Cunningham (she/her) is WDA's Resource Attorney for the Incarcerated Parents Project. She formerly served clients for 15 years as a public defender at The Defender Association and its division of the King County Department of Public Defense. She spent five of those years as an Attorney Supervisor in the Dependency (or Family Defense) Unit. Her other legal experience includes representing children, youth, and parents in King County dependency court proceedings; defending children and youth in King County Juvenile Court criminal proceedings; defending indigent adults in Seattle Municipal misdemeanor proceedings & in King County Superior Court felony proceedings; and advocating for systemic reforms at The Racial Disparity Project. D'Adre is an alumna of the University of Washington School of Law. She is WDA's Incarcerated Parents Project Resource Attorney.

Sarah Hudson (she/her) is WDA's Immigration Resentencing Resource Attorney. Sarah graduated from law school in San Diego and continued to explore her interest in immigration law by working with a non-profit focusing on defensive asylum cases. As a military spouse, she has lived in many places and explored different areas of law. Most recently, Sarah was a public defender and uses that experience to assist other defense attorneys with issues related to the immigration consequences of criminal convictions.

Kristina June Jorgensen (they/them) is an accomplished leader and organizer with a deep commitment to racial and social justice. As the founding Executive Director of Participatory Justice and the founder of the Participatory Defense HUB of Washington State, Kristina's leadership has been instrumental in advancing transformative initiatives with communities impacted by policing, violence and the carceral system.

Their organizing is informed by their experiences as a person on both sides of harm, a youth and young adult navigating the criminal legal and family policing system, and as a loved one with multiple family members impacted by the carceral system.

In addition to their role as a HEAL facilitator with Collective Justice, Kristina holds a Master's in Policy Studies and Bachelors in Society, Ethics and Human Behavior with a Minor in Gender, Women and Sexuality Studies, from the University of Washington. They were instrumental in the development of programs such as Parents for Parents and Homeward House, supporting families in the dependency system. Additionally, they organized the first social biography video training in WA State during their fellowship with the WDA, bringing Participatory Defense to WA State.

Kristina's contributions have been recognized through various awards, including the prestigious Husky 100 and the Snohomish County Transformational Leadership Human

Rights Award. Their work spans across movements for Black Liberation, abolition, gender liberation, and international solidarity against colonialism and imperialism, ultimately seeking to dismantle oppression and build liberation for all.

Percy Levy (he/him) is WDA's Community Outreach Specialist. He served 20 years behind bars before being granted executive clemency by Governor Inslee in 2019. Since that time, he has been an advocate for changing the criminal legal system from the inside out—with an emphasis on sentencing reform and bringing home the victims of the so-called “war on crime.” He has an Associate of Arts degree from Walla Walla Community College and spent most of his time in prison working in the law library helping others with post-trial litigation efforts. Last, but not least, he is the author of several articles and three urban novels.

Arthur Longworth (he/him) is a writer who lives in Washington state, where he graduated from the foster care system to spend thirty-eight years incarcerated. Through his writing, Longworth often channels the experience of young people ensnared in state systems that essentially raise them to go to prison.

He is the author of *Zek: An American Prison Story* (Gabalfa Press, 2016), and contributing writer to *What We Know: Solutions from Our Experiences in the Justice System* (New Press, 2020), and *The Sentences that Create Us* (Haymarket Books, 2022). Arthur's writing has been published in the *New Republic*, *New York Review of Books*, Medium, The Marshall Project, and Vice News. He is a six-time PEN Prison Writing Award winner and PEN America Writing for Justice Fellow. He is also a 2024 Mellon Foundation/Haymarket Books Writing Freedom Fellow. Longworth is a Policy Specialist for Treehouse (<https://www.treehouseforkids.org/>), a foster youth advocacy organization in Seattle, where he works to decouple the foster care-to-prison pipeline.

Willie Nobles (he/him) is the President of Families Shoulder to Shoulder. He spent 25 years in prison and knows firsthand of all the disparities that exist. Willie is the co-founder of TEACH (Taking Education and Creating History), and Co-President of the Black Prisoners Caucus Community Group. He is certified as a life coach and peer counselor, and is a reentry navigator and caseworker.

Willie has a drive for criminal justice reform advocacy, helping at-risk youth, influencing penitentiary reform, and working to build community. As the President of Families Shoulder to Shoulder, Willie has made it his work to reunite loved ones with family members and continue to be the bridge between the criminal/civil legal system and community.

Ginny Parham (she/her) is best known for her activism and volunteer work in the prison system. She has devoted her life to this work since her son, Willie Nobles, was arrested at 18 years old and sentenced to 96 years in prison. After seeing him seduced by gang life when he was only 12 years old Ginny has dedicated herself to helping other families of incarcerated individuals so that they do not have to face the same heartbreak and struggles that she went through while supporting her incarcerated son. In the years since her son was incarcerated, Ginny has worked tirelessly towards prison reform and aid for those suffering under the current system. Her roles in the community include:

Vice President and Founder of Families Shoulder to Shoulder, an organization that practices participatory defense to help lower prison sentences in Washington State and helps to educate families to participate in their own loved ones cases. Ginny is a Volunteer and Instructor of Education and Restorative Justice Classes at Stafford Creek Correctional Center, Clallam Bay CC, and Shelton Correctional Center. Ginny was also a contributor to the Washington State Criminal Sentencing Task Force, helping to refine the Sentencing Reform Act and improve draconian sentencing grids that keep people incarcerated for unjust lengths of time.