

Community Advisory Board (CAB) Applicant

Full Name	Nicole Gomes
City of Residence	Martinez
Zip Code	94553
City of Employment/School	Pittsburg/Los Medanos College
Zip Code	94553
Gender (Optional)	Woman
Ethnicity (Optional)	Caucasian / Native American
Please explain your interest in serving on the Community Advisory Board. Why does this work seem interesting, exciting, or important to you?	<p>I enjoy this work because it allows me to walk alongside students who are often overlooked, underestimated, or excluded, and help open doors that society has too often closed. Supporting formerly incarcerated students, incarcerated students, and former foster youth isn't just a job for me, it's part of who I am. I am continually inspired by their resilience, their desire to create new futures, and their courage to step into spaces that weren't built with them in mind.</p> <p>What motivates me every day is the opportunity to build programs that don't just offer classes, but offer hope, community, and belonging. Whether I'm creating pathways from adult education and detention facilities into college, partnering with community organizations, or building campus spaces like Scholars for Justice and RISE, I take pride in creating environments where students feel seen, supported, and valued.</p> <p>I love this work because it brings together everything I care about, educational equity, social justice, second chances, healing, and community connection. I get to be a part of a system that support transformation, not just academic transformation, but personal and generational. Seeing a student who once doubted whether college was even possible walk across a stage with confidence and pride. Every partnership, every program, every connection is another step toward dismantling barriers and building bridges.</p>

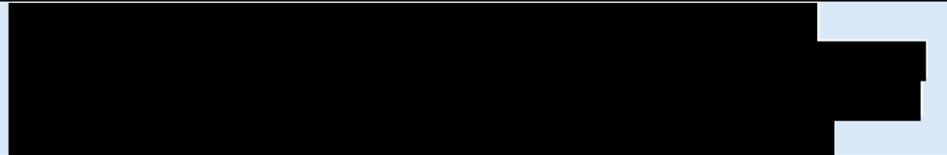
Tell us about any skills, experiences, or resources you believe you would bring to the Community Advisory Board.

I've been part of the Contra Costa Community College District since 1992, and during that time I've dedicated my career to supporting students who are often left out of traditional educational pathways. In 2015, I stepped into the role of Program Coordinator for Adult Education at Diablo Valley College. In that position, I built a transition program that helped students from adult education and detention facilities, such as West County, Marsh Creek, Byron, Martinez, and Mt. McKinley, move into higher education. I worked closely with community partners and created the Scholars for Justice club at DVC, giving system impacted students a place to find support, voice, and belonging.

In 2024, I transitioned to Los Medanos College as the Program Coordinator for NextUp, which supports former foster youth, and for RISE, which supports both incarcerated and formerly incarcerated students. Since joining LMC, we've received the Rising Scholars Network grant, which has allowed us to expand and strengthen the services we provide. Right now, we support over 50 formerly incarcerated students and 5 incarcerated students, and I continue to grow partnerships with West County, Marsh Creek, and Mt. McKinley detention facilities. I also collaborate closely with a wide range of community based organizations to ensure our students receive the wraparound services they need.

This work is deeply meaningful to me. Every program I build, every partnership I form, and every student I connect with is part of my commitment to creating opportunities, lifting barriers, and helping people reclaim their futures.

Please include details below about anything you feel is relevant that is related to, your own or a family member's, experience with incarceration or as a victim of crime, and how



you believe this experience will inform your participation as a CAB Member.

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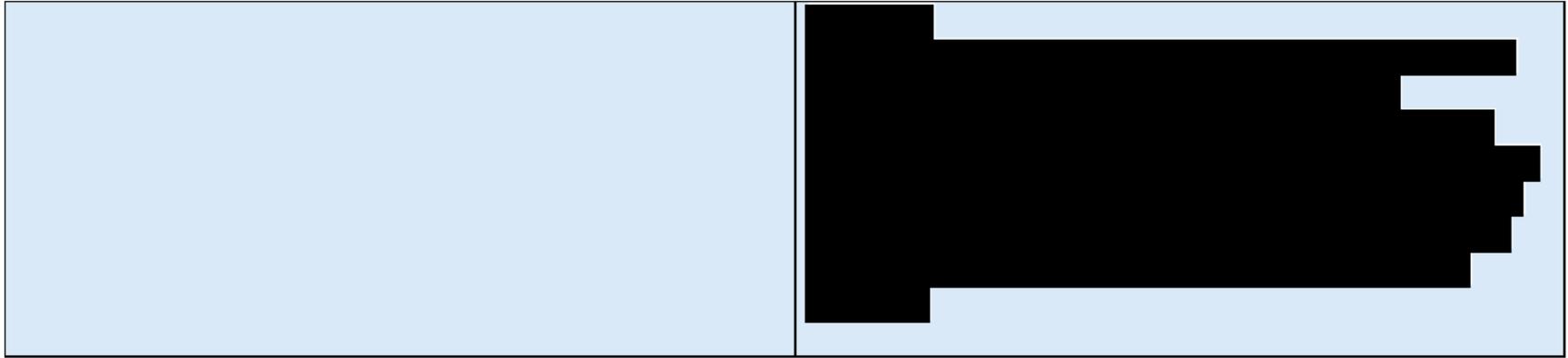
Community Advisory Board (CAB) Applicant

Full Name	Kevin Lawson
City of Residence	Pittsburg
Zip Code	94565
City of Employment/School	San Ramon
Zip Code 2	94583
Gender (Optional)	Man
Ethnicity (Optional)	African American
Please explain your interest in serving on the Community Advisory Board. Why does this work seem interesting, exciting, or important to you?	<p>I'm interested in serving on the Community Advisory Board because my work as a business owner is centered on creating real, practical impact in the communities I serve. I focus on mentorship, workforce development, and building ethical, reliable operations that support both employees and local businesses, and I am proud to operate as a second-chance employer, providing structured opportunities for individuals working to rebuild their careers.</p> <p>This role is important to me because it allows me to contribute beyond my own company — collaborating with other leaders to improve access to opportunity, strengthen small businesses, and support long-term community growth. I see it as a natural extension of the responsibility I already carry to give back and help build systems that allow people and organizations to thrive.</p>
Tell us about any skills, experiences, or resources you believe you would bring to the Community Advisory Board.	<p>I would bring a combination of operational leadership, data-driven decision making, and community-focused workforce experience to the Community Advisory Board. As the CEO of a growing multi-state fleet service company, I manage budgeting, contracts, vendor relationships, and process systems daily, which has strengthened my ability to evaluate real-world feasibility, financial impact, and long-</p>

term sustainability of initiatives.
Beyond business operations, I actively mentor team members and youth in financial literacy and career development, and I operate as a second-chance employer, creating structured pathways for individuals re-entering the workforce. I also bring strong relationship-building skills, practical problem-solving, and a collaborative mindset. My goal is always to balance accountability with opportunity, ensuring decisions support both economic growth and meaningful community impact.

Please include details below about anything you feel is relevant that is related to, your own or a family member's, experience with incarceration or as a victim of crime, and how you believe this experience will inform your participation as a CAB Member.





Community Advisory Board (CAB) Applicant

Full Name	Roland Fernandez
City of Residence	Pittsburg
Zip Code	94565
City of Employment/School	Pittsburg
Zip Code2	94565
Gender (Optional)	Man
Ethnicity (Optional)	Asian American
Please explain your interest in serving on the Community Advisory Board. Why does this work seem interesting, exciting, or important to you?	I already serve as Pittsburg Community Advisory, Contra Costa Behavior Health Board, CAB is perfectly fitted for myself, I want to help others, I want to help everyone, it makes the community better
Tell us about any skills, experiences, or resources you believe you would bring to the Community Advisory Board.	I bring community involvement, sobriety, mental health, all and everything is needed for those to recover their lives back into our communities
Please include details below about anything you feel is relevant that is related to, your own or a family member's, experience with incarceration or as a victim of crime, and how you believe this...	

Community Advisory Board (CAB) Applicant

Full Name	Pedro Bernal
City of Residence	San Pablo
Zip Code	94806
City of Employment/School	Richmond CA
Zip Code2	94801
Gender (Optional)	Man
Ethnicity (Optional)	Latino/a
Please explain your interest in serving on the Community Advisory Board. Why does this work seem interesting, exciting, or important to you?	To be a voice for the community
Tell us about any skills, experiences, or resources you believe you would bring to the Community Advisory Board.	I am a credible messenger youth organizer here in Richmond CA
Please include details below about anything you feel is relevant that is related to, your own or a family member's, experience with incarceration or as a victim of crime, and how you believe this...	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 15px;"></div>

Community Advisory Board (CAB) Applicant

Full Name	Joey Lariz
City of Residence	Oakland
Zip Code	94607
City of Employment/School	Martinez
Zip Code2	94553
Gender (Optional)	Man
Ethnicity (Optional)	Latino/a
<p>Please explain your interest in serving on the Community Advisory Board. Why does this work seem interesting, exciting, or important to you?</p>	<p>My interest in serving on the Community Advisory Board is deeply rooted in the desire to see sustainable, systems-level change. I am deeply motivated by the belief that reentry efforts are most effective when they address not only immediate needs, but also consider the intergenerational impacts of incarceration – impacts which benefit no one; families, communities, nor the county.</p> <p>I am particularly excited for the opportunity to advocate for Black and Brown women and families, who are too often disproportionately impacted by the justice system. This work is important to me because I believe county resources should not simply be spent, but strategically invested – used transparently, equitably, and in ways that create lasting pathways to stability, healing, and opportunity. Serving on the CAB would allow me to contribute to shaping reentry strategies that are both community-informed and structurally sound.</p>
<p>Tell us about any skills, experiences, or resources you believe you would bring to the Community Advisory Board.</p>	<p>I bring a unique combination of technical expertise, institutional knowledge, and personal experience to the Community Advisory Board. In my current role as Data & Operations Coordinator for The Gemma Project, I design and manage complex data systems, oversee reporting and compliance, and translate program-level data into actionable insights. This experience allows me to assess whether initiatives are meeting intended outcomes and to support data-informed decision-making that strengthens accountability and impact.</p> <p>My professional background is complemented by my education at Stanford University, where I developed strong skills in strategic thinking, policy analysis, and systems-level problem solving. Together, these experiences allow me to engage thoughtfully with both quantitative data and qualitative feedback.</p> <p>My approach to reentry work is grounded in equity, cultural humility, trauma-, and gender-responsive care. I recognize that effective reentry support must be tailored to the specific needs and lived realities of individuals, particularly women and families navigating compounded barriers. Additionally, my lived experience with incarcerated family members gives me a deeply human-centered perspective on the challenges faced by justice-impacted families, which informs how I listen, advocate, and contribute.</p> <p>I would leverage my technical skills, community connections, and systems awareness to help ensure the CAB remains a strong and credible bridge between Contra Costa County residents and its justice and reentry systems.</p>

Please include details below about anything you feel is relevant that is related to, your own or a family member's, experience with incarceration or as a victim of crime, and how you believe this...

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[REDACTED]

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