

U.S. EPA: BOSC Sustainable and Healthy Communities Panelist Bios

Jonathan D. Essoka, Ph.D.

Region 3

Dr. Jonathan D. Essoka is an avid urban environmental engineer/scientist with an interest in promoting equity and sustainability in disadvantaged communities. He serves as ORD's Superfund & Technology Liaison to Region 3. In this position, he provides innovative technological solutions for contaminated site project managers and promotes research science to the regional office as a tool to address program issues. In addition to his technical support duties, Dr. Essoka regularly contributes to several, varied research projects, which include community environmental health assessments, contaminated site tool development, social determinants of health, local perceptions of water quality and the intersection of contaminated sites with ecosystem goods and services. He consistently approaches his regulatory and research responsibilities with an Environmental Justice lens.

Lisa Chang, Ph.D.

Region 10

Lisa is the tribal and transboundary lead for the Puget Sound National Estuary Program in Region 10. She works closely with Puget Sound tribes, who are co-managers of treaty-protected resources in Washington State. She also co-chairs an EPA-Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) transboundary working group to coordinate on Puget Sound-Georgia Basin-Strait of Juan de Fuca ecosystem protection. She also coordinates a monthly Puget Sound science coordination meeting with ORD's Pacific Ecosystem Services Division (PESD) on scientific issues of mutual interest. Lisa holds a doctorate in environmental science with a focus on watershed nutrient cycling from University of Virginia.

Alexis Rourk, M.S.

Office of Community Revitalization (OCR)

Alexis Rourk serves as a Senior Planner in the Office of Community Revitalization (OCR) in the Office of Policy, part of the Administrator's Office. In this position, she provides technical assistance on equitable development, green infrastructure, and other topics to communities around the country and manages OCR's geospatial research on location efficiency and other data-related efforts. In this capacity, she works closely with ORD to ensure that the communities served by OCR benefit from the latest science and research tools available, and to connect ORD with opportunities to translate research to communities that are pursuing community-driven solutions to resilience, green space, sustainability, and equitable development challenges. Prior to this work, Alexis worked in public health and community-based planning in New York and Washington, DC, and abroad as a Peace Corps Volunteer. She

obtained a graduate degree in City and Regional Planning with an emphasis on participatory geospatial methods from the Pratt Institute.

Ann Carroll, Ph.D.

Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization (OBLR)

Ann Carroll has worked for over 30 years on environmental and public health protection including lead poisoning prevention, risk communication and contaminated site identification and site cleanup. Prior to joining EPA, Ann worked with the National Governor's Association, the former US Congressional Office of Technology Assessment, and private sector employers. Ann's EPA career began in EPA New England's Office of Underground Storage Tanks in 1989, then serving as the Regional Lead (Pb) Coordinator from 1992 to 1996. Ann left the agency to work in Sydney, Australia from 1996 to 2000, managing the Lead (Pb) Reference Centre of the New South Wales Environmental Protection Authority. On returning to the US, she provided lead poisoning prevention technical support to the National Safety Council and lead poisoning prevention efforts and led gasoline phaseout in India, Indonesia and other countries. She has been with the EPA's Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization since 2002, apart from a one-year detail to EPA's Office of International and Tribal Affairs to work on children's health. Ann leads national public health policy and communication efforts, including the development to the [Brownfields to healthfields StoryMap](#). Ann's also coordinates national training and efforts on climate resilience, brownfield urban agriculture, community garden and food security activities nationally and serves as the office liaison for research and international activities within EPA and coordinates with external researchers on revitalization research. Ann has a BS in biology, an MPH in environmental health and a doctorate in Public Health in Environmental Health Sciences and Policy from the Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health. She also serves as a guest lecturer on Sustainable Planning at George Washington University.

Jeanine Finley, M.A.

Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds

Jeanine Finley is an Environmental Social Scientist with a focus on water governance and equity. Jeanine serves as a Program Analyst in the Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds at the US Environmental Protection Agency. Jeanine is the lead for capacity building in environmental justice integration, resilience planning and hazard mitigation planning with the Urban Waters Federal Partnership and the National Estuary Program. She works with these place-based partnership programs to identify equitable approaches that increase collaboration while improve estuary conservation and watershed planning. She holds an M.A. from American University in Global Environmental Policy and a B.S from Howard University in Biology. Jeanine has also studied and worked in environmental policy and community development in Madagascar, Uganda, Ethiopia and Norway.

Amy Pelka, Ph.D.

Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO)

Amy Pelka is a section chief in the Great Lakes National Program Office in Chicago, where her primary responsibility is managing the Great Lakes Area of Concern program, a non-regulatory multi-agency restoration program. In addition, she manages the funding process of this program with a roughly \$100M budget per fiscal year. Working in the Great Lakes AOCs is a fascinating and rewarding opportunity – we work closely with states and communities every day and we are able to build sustainable partnerships and truly restore multiple areas in relatively short order. Each AOC is its own culture with its own set of needs, challenges, strengths and vision for the future. Amy has a BS in cellular and molecular biology, an MS in Immunology and a PhD in environmental toxicology. She began working at the U.S. EPA Region 5 in 1991 doing mostly human health risk assessments and developing cleanup goals for contaminated sediment sites, left in 2001 (kids/PhD/postdoc), and returned to working in GLNPO in 2009.