**CalSWEC Aging Initiative Summit**

**Presenter Biographies**

**Gretchen E. Alkema,** *Ph.D.,* is Vice-President of Policy and Communications for The SCAN Foundation. Prior to this, Dr. Alkema was the 2008-2009 John Heinz/Health and Aging Policy Fellow and an American Political Science Association Congressional Fellow, serving in the office of Senator Blanche L. Lincoln (D-AR). She collaborated with legislative staff to advise Sen. Lincoln on aging, health, mental health, and long-term care policy.

Dr. Alkema holds a doctorate from the University of Southern California’s Davis School of Gerontology and was awarded the John A. Hartford Doctoral Fellow in Geriatric Social Work and AARP Scholars Program Award. She completed post-doctoral training at the VA Greater Los Angeles Health Services Research and Development Center of Excellence and was a research associate for the California Fall Prevention Center of Excellence. Her academic research focused on evaluating innovative models of chronic care management and translating effective models into practice.

Dr. Alkema also earned an M.S.W. with a Specialist in Aging Certificate from the University of Michigan and a Bachelor’s in psychology from the University of Colorado, Boulder. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and has practiced in government and non-profit settings including community mental health, care management, adult day health care, residential care, and post-acute rehabilitation.

**David Cherin,** *M.S.W., Ph.D.* Prior to returning to work on his M.S.W. and Ph.D., David Cherin was an administrator and corporate vice president for over two decades with a large, multi-national health care management company. Since entering the field of social work, Dr. Cherin has held faculty positions in the schools of social work at California State University, Long Beach; California State University, Bakersfield; the University of Southern California; and University of Washington. He has done extensive research, evaluation work, and publishing in the areas of health care service delivery and child welfare. His work in health services focuses on service delivery systems in end-of-life care. He has received the Soros Project Death in America’s Social Work Leadership Award.

In addition to continuing to work with CalSWEC on the Board of Directors, Dr. Cherin has been chair of California State University, Fullerton’s Social Work Department for the past five years and is now in a temporary  assignment as Director of the California Pre-Doctoral and Forum for Diversity programs at the CSU Chancellor's Office.

**Bruce A. Chernof,** *M.D., FACP,* is President & Chief Executive Officer of The SCAN Foundation, one of the nation’s largest foundations focused entirely on improving the quality of health and life for seniors. Its mission is to advance the development of a sustainable continuum of care for seniors.

Prior to heading The SCAN Foundation, Dr. Chernof served as the Director and Chief Medical Officer for the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, after serving as the Department’s Senior Medical Director for Clinical Affairs and Affiliations. He also served as Regional Medical Director for California Health Programs at Health Net and worked as an academic general internist in the VA system and at Olive View UCLA Medical Center, serving as a UCLA faculty member.

Dr. Chernof completed his residency and served as Chief Resident in Internal Medicine for the UCLA-San Fernando Valley Program. After residency, he completed a Fellowship in Medical Education at the UCLA School of Medicine. He earned his M.D. from UCLA. He completed his undergraduate work at Harvard University.

Currently, Dr. Chernof is an Adjunct Professor of Medicine at UCLA. He served as the founding Director of UCLA’s five-year combined MD/MBA Program. In 2002, UCLA’s Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA recognized Dr. Chernof with the Award for Excellence in Education. He has had work published in a variety of journals including *Medical Care* and the *Journal of General Internal Medicine*.

**Jean Friedman,** *LCSW,* Manager of Medical Social Work Services, Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Roseville,has worked for Kaiser Permanente since 1989, when she was hired as the first full-time pediatric medical social worker at its Sacramento facility. In 1998, Ms. Friedman was promoted to manage Kaiser’s Sacramento/South Sacramento facility’s Social Work Departments; in 1999, the Roseville facility was added to her responsibilities. Since 2012, the Spiritual Care Department and the Healing Music Programs have also been under her direction. The work that Ms. Friedman oversees at the Roseville facility is extensive in scope and variety, from neonates in the 48-bed Intensive Care Nursery to patients facing difficult decisions and often involving end-of-life concerns.

Prior to joining Kaiser, Ms. Friedman was a reunification social worker at Sacramento County CPS and was the first social worker at University of California, Davis Medical Center’s Alzheimer’s Dementia Program.

**Martha Haas,** *LCSW,* has been employed by Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for more than 16 years. Most of her county career has been with Child Protective Services in various capacities, including positions as a social worker and supervisor. During the past eight years, Ms. Haas’s work as a program planner has focused on child welfare improvement activities and working collaboratively with public and community agency partners to strengthen child and family services.

Ms. Haas’s interest in health-related projects resulted in her leading the development and implementation of several multi-agency collaboratives, including the Medical Neglect Review Team, the Early Intervention Drug Court, and the Medical Clearance Program for foster children.

Ms. Haas began working for Adult Protective Services (APS) in 2012 and has developed a passion for advocacy with and for the elderly and dependent adult population. She is currently focusing on the hospital and homeless APS case management programs. Prior to her positions with Sacramento County DHHS, Ms. Haas worked as a clinical social worker in a hospital and as a home health social worker.

**W. June Simmons,** *M.S.W.,* CEO and President, Partners In Care Foundation**.** Nationally recognized for her leadership in the administration of health care organizations, W. June Simmons is a visionary in developing innovative approaches to health care delivery in the 21st century. Throughout her distinguished career, she has been instrumental in creating, funding and operating forward-looking health and social services research and programs. As founding President and CEO of Partners in Care Foundation, Ms. Simmons strongly believes that health care and social delivery of services need to change, especially in community and home settings. She takes an active role in developing initiatives and pro-active programs which meet the mutual needs of patient populations, providers, and health care delivery networks to encourage cost-effective, patient-friendly integration of care from hospital to home and community.

Ms. Simmons is a frequent speaker at conferences and seminars and has been recognized for her leadership in innovation and management by academic and national professional organizations.

**Fernando M. Torres-Gil,** *Ph.D.,* Professor, Social Welfare and Public Policy, Director, Center for Policy Research on Aging*.* Professor Torres-Gil’smultifaceted career spans the academic, professional, and policy arenas. He is a Professor of Social Welfare and Public Policy at UCLA, an Adjunct Professor of Gerontology at USC, and Director of the UCLA Center for Policy Research on Aging. He has served as Associate Dean and Acting Dean at the UCLA School of Public Affairs, and most recently Chair of the Social Welfare Department. He has written six books and over l00 publications, including *The New Aging: Politics and Change in America* (1992) and *Lessons from Three Nations, Volumes I and II (2007)*.  His academic contributions have earned him membership in the prestigious Academies of Public Administration, Gerontology and Social Insurance. His research spans important topics of health and long-term care, disability, entitlement reform, and the politics of aging.

Professor Torres-Gil is more than an academic. He has an impressive portfolio of public service and national and international recognition as a leading spokesperson on demographics, aging, and public policy. He earned his first presidential appointment in 1978 when President Jimmy Carter appointed him to the federal Council on Aging. He was selected as a White House Fellow and served under Joseph Califano, then Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), and continued as a Special Assistant to the subsequent Secretary of HEW, Patricia Harris. He was appointed (with Senate Confirmation) by President Bill Clinton as the first-ever U.S. Assistant Secretary on Aging in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). As the Clinton Administration’s chief advocate on aging, Torres-Gil played a key role in promoting the importance of the issues of aging, long-term care and disability, community services for the elderly, and baby boomer preparation for retirement. He served under HHS Secretary Donna Shalala, managing the Administration on Aging and organizing the 1995 White House Conference on Aging, in addition to serving as a member of the President’s Welfare Reform Working Group.

In 2010 he received his third presidential appointment (with Senate Confirmation) when President Barack Obama appointed him as Vice Chair of the National Council on Disability, an independent federal agency that reports to the Congress and White House on federal matters related to disability policy. During his public service in Washington, D.C., he also served as Staff Director of the U.S. House Select Committee on Aging under his mentor, Congressman Edward R. Roybal.

At the local level, Professor Torres-Gil has served as the Vice President of the Los Angeles City Planning Commission and a member of the Harbor and Taxi Commissions for the city of Los Angeles. He currently serves Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa as an appointed member of the Board of Airport Commissioners. At the state level, he was appointed by former Governor Gray Davis to the Governor’s Blue Ribbon Task Force on Veterans’ Homes and by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger as a delegate to the 2005 White House Conference on Aging.

He continues to provide important leadership in philanthropy and non-profit organizations as a board member of the AARP Foundation, and he is a former board member of The California Endowment, National Steinbeck Center in Salinas, California, and the Los Angeles Chinatown Service Center.

Dr. Torres-Gil was born and raised in Salinas, the son of migrant farm workers. He earned his A.A. in Political Science at Hartnell Community College (1968), a B.A. with honors in Political Science from San Jose State University (1970), and an M.S.W. (1972) and Ph.D. (1976) in Social Policy, Planning and Research from the Heller Graduate School in Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University.

**William Vega,** *Ph.D.,* is Provost Professor and Executive Director of the USC Edward R. Roybal Institute on Aging. He holds USC appointments in social work, preventive medicine, psychiatry, and family medicine. He is also emeritus professor at the University of California, Berkeley and co-directs the Network for Multicultural Research on Health and Healthcare at UCLA.

An elected member of the Institute of Medicine, Dr. Vega has conducted community and clinical research projects on health, mental health, and substance abuse throughout the United States and Latin America. His specialty is multi-cultural epidemiologic and services research with adolescents and adults—work that has been funded by multiple public and private sources. He has published more than 170 articles and chapters in addition to several books. The 2006 ISI Web of Science listed Dr. Vega in the top half of 1% of the most highly cited researchers worldwide in social science literature over the past 20 years.

Prior to joining the Roybal Institute, Dr. Vega was director of the Luskin Center on Innovation at UCLA. In 2002, he received the Society for Prevention Research's Community, Culture and Prevention Science Award and the National Hispanic Science Network on Drug Abuse's National Award of Excellence in Research by a Senior Scientist.

Dr. Vega has served on numerous boards and task forces, including health disparities work groups of the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Attorney General’s Task Force on Methamphetamine, the Institute of Medicine Board on Population Health, the Committee on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Treatment Effectiveness, and the Institute of Medicine Health Disparities Roundtable. He is also a member of the National Institutes of Health Fogarty International Center and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Scholars in Health Policy Research advisory committees.

**Jackie Wong*,*** *LCSW,* Director of Social Services, On Lok Lifeways, has over 20 years of experience working with the frail elderly. For 11 years, she was a front-line social worker at San Francisco’s On Lok Lifeways, the original PACE (Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly) Program, which uses an interdisciplinary team approach to provide comprehensive care to the frail elderly. This innovative long-term care model has been replicated throughout the nation and has attracted international interest.

As an immigrant from Hong Kong, Ms. Wong’s bilingual and bicultural background in Chinese allows her to work directly with many seniors and their families. She now directs the operation of the social work department at On Lok Lifeways, supervising 22 social workers, providing clinical supervision, and promoting staff development. She also supervises M.S.W., B.S.W., and Gerontology interns and represents On Lok Lifeways in local communities and at county, state, national, and international levels focusing on issues such as end-of -life care, cultural diversity, and caregiver education.

Ms. Wong has served on the Board of the Chinese American Coalition for Compassionate Care (CACCC), the only organization in the nation focusing on end-of-life care in the Chinese American community. Ms. Wong received her M.S.W. from UCLA and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.