



Project Advisors

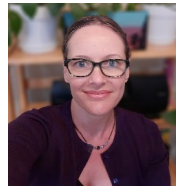
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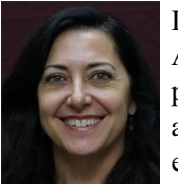
Suzanne Bennett Francisco is the President and CEO of Exceptional Rights Advocacy. ERA provides advocacy, education and training in California's Self Determination Program and Supported Decision-Making to people with disabilities, families, teachers, case managers, providers, doctors, attorneys and other agency professionals. Suzanne is co-chair of the Human Rights Community of Practice of TASH.



Rick Rader, MD is the Vice President of Public Policy and Advocacy at the American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry. He serves on the boards of the American Association on Health and Disability and the National Council on Disability. Dr. Rader is the Editor in Chief of *Helen*, the Journal of Human Exceptionality. He is the Director of the Habilitation Center at the Orange Grove Center in Chattanooga.



Barbara Imle has years of experience in the field of developmental disabilities. She managed cases of clients at two regional centers in California. For her master's degree, Barbara studied the conservatorship evaluation policies and practices of regional centers throughout the state. For her doctor's degree, she observed court hearings in dozens of conservatorship cases. Barbara excels at research, education, and advocacy in this field.



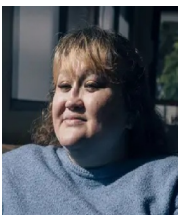
Debra Bookout is the lead attorney for the Guardianship Advocacy Program of the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada. All adults receive an attorney, without charge, who provides them with zealous advocacy. The nonprofit demands that less restrictive alternatives be used when feasible, resulting in many petitions being dismissed and many existing guardianships being terminated. The program is a model for other states.



David Giles is an attorney in New Jersey with decades of experience advocating for the rights of students with disabilities under federal laws. His resume includes a term with the Office of Civil Rights of the United States Department of Education. He is currently preparing for trial in a case where a jury will decide whether to reject a guardianship because less restrictive alternatives are available for a young man with autism.



Tina Baldwin is the director of the Mental Health Project of Spectrum Institute. The project advocates for the right of adults with developmental disabilities to prompt and effective mental health services. Tina was a member of WINGS in Washington State. Her personal experiences with deficient guardianship services for her daughter who has Down syndrome gives Tina special insight into aspects of guardianship needing major reform.



Marie Bergum has a developmental disability. Now in her late thirties, Marie was placed under an order of general conservatorship at the age of 21. She lost all of her decision-making rights. Eventually Marie learned that she could petition the court to terminate the conservatorship or restore many of her rights, so that is what she did with the help of Suzanne Bennett Francisco. Marie hopes to end the conservatorship in 2023. An [article](#) in BuzzFeed News tells Marie's story.



Jamie Henderson is a retired psychologist from the Missouri Department of Mental Health Division of Developmental Disabilities. He has 37 years of experience in the field. He also served as Executive Director of L'arche Heartland, part of an international federation of communities supporting adults with developmental disabilities. He conducted psychological evaluations that offered opinions on guardianship and testified in several probate court proceedings.