

Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

Nueces County Behavioral Health System Assessment – Bios

Project Team Bios

Andy Keller, PhD, President and Chief Executive Officer

Project Executive Oversight

Dr. Keller, President and Chief Executive Officer at MMHPI, will provide executive oversight for the project. Dr. Andy Keller is a psychologist (licensed in CO and MI) with more than 20 years of experience in behavioral health policy and is a recognized leader in health and human services integration, behavioral health financing, managed care systems and purchasing, and implementation of empirically supported practices for adults and children. Dr. Keller's career has centered on large-scale system reforms, beginning with his work as a post-doctoral fellow, senior manager, and executive team member in the Denver mental health system in the 1990s implementing and managing large-scale ACT and housing developments for super-utilizers, continuing from 1999 through 2015 in his national consulting work, and focused now in Texas through his leadership in developing and now leading the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute. Dr. Keller was also a founding partner of TriWest Group, a national behavioral health systems consulting firm focused on human service evaluation, community collaboration and management. His work has centered on helping local systems implement evidence-based and innovative care, as well as helping local and state governments develop the regulatory and financial framework to support them. Prior to forming TriWest, Andy worked in Colorado at the health plan level with a leading Medicaid HMO and at the provider level with the Mental Health Center of Denver. He has directed and led a range of community-based programs, including assertive community treatment teams, adult and child outpatient clinics, school-based and early childhood programs, and specialty programs for older adults and Latino communities. Dr. Keller completed his doctoral work in clinical and community psychology at the University of Maryland College Park in 1994. His masters and doctoral work both involved consumer-driven research. He is a licensed psychologist in Michigan and Colorado.

John Petril, JD, LL.M, Vice President of Adult Policy

Project Lead

John Petril will act as project lead. Mr. Petril was a member of the founding board of the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute and is a committed member of the MMHPI team. He is an attorney with 40 years of experience in mental health law and policy. Before joining MMHPI, he chaired the Department of Health Policy & Management at the University of South Florida College of Public Health. Prior to that, he chaired the Department of Mental Health Law & Policy at the Florida Mental Health Institute, where he built a department that worked extensively with administrative data to inform policy at the county and state level. He also was the first Director of Forensic Services in the Missouri Department of Mental Health and was

Chief Counsel and Deputy Commissioner in the New York State Office of Mental Health. He received his law degree and an advanced degree in mental health law from the University of Virginia School of Law. He leads MMHPI's work on the redesign of the Austin and San Antonio State Hospitals as well as the Institute's other adult work in Bexar County, Dallas County, and other locations throughout Texas. He is past president of the International Association of Forensic Mental Health Services. In 2011, he was named a Fulbright Scholar to the Netherlands and taught and conducted research at the Forensic Psychology Program at Maastricht University.

B.J. Wagner, MS, Senior Director of Smart Justice and Adult Policy

Co-Project Lead and Project Director

Ms. Wagner will co-lead this project with Mr. Petril. In her role with MMHPI, Ms. Wagner helps communities across Texas transform systems to increase prevention and intervention services and reduce criminal justice system involvement for special populations. Ms. Wagner began her career in law enforcement as a county jailer and later as a law enforcement officer in North, East, and Western Texas. After graduate school and completing studies in clinical neuropsychology and counseling psychology at Texas A&M, she began working in community mental health clinics. She continued consulting with the field of law enforcement on best practices as she provided services to clientele through local mental health authorities. Ms. Wagner has developed curriculum for disciplines across the criminal justice system on mental health awareness, symptom recognition, and verbal de-escalation techniques. In her work with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), Ms. Wagner developed front-end diversion and continuity of care systems for offenders with special care needs and guided Medicaid implementation for limited populations within the state's prison systems.

Kyle Mitchell, JD, Senior Director of Veteran and Military Policy

Veteran's Lead

Prior to joining the Institute, Mr. Mitchell served as the Deputy Executive Director of the Texas Veterans Commission – the state agency that supports Texas veterans and their families through its programs of claims assistance, employment services, education, and the Fund for Veterans Assistance. Mr. Mitchell joined the Texas Veterans Commission from the Office of Governor Rick Perry, where he served as a Governor's Advisor in the Office of Budget, Planning and Policy. In that role, he was responsible for military, veterans, criminal justice, and public safety issues. Mr. Mitchell is a native Texan who returned to Texas after serving the state of Florida in both the executive and legislative branches. He served as Special Counsel to the Secretary at the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation. He also worked as a committee attorney for the Florida House of Representatives. Prior to his government service, Mr. Mitchell worked at a law firm with a focus on representing clients before the Florida Legislature. Mr. Mitchell is a Major and Judge Advocate in the Texas Army National Guard. He is

currently serving as the Brigade Judge Advocate for the 71st Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade in San Antonio. He previously served the Chief, Operational Law, for the 36th Infantry Division and in the United States Army Reserve.

Melissa Rowan, MSW, MBA, Senior Fellow for Program Implementation

Amanda Mathias, PhD, Senior Director of Innovation

Clinical Lead

Dr. Mathias holds a Doctorate of Philosophy in Marriage and Family Therapy, and is a licensed marriage and family therapist and licensed professional counselor. With nearly 20 years of experience in both community social services and community mental health, she has served in various clinical and administrative capacities throughout her career. Dr. Mathias' service throughout Texas has centered on underserved populations, particularly people who are homeless and live in poverty. In her clinical and program development work, Dr. Mathias has applied her focus to people living with serious mental illness, co-occurring substance use disorders, and physical/medical conditions through evidence-based and innovative care. She has served, directed, and led a range of community-based programs, including an innovative project for people with complex health needs and high utilization of restrictive and expensive services, homeless services programs, and juvenile and adult forensic treatment and assessment. She also provided operational and clinical oversight for an inpatient rehabilitation center for offenders with mental illness. Dr. Mathias has concentrated her program development work on integrated, trauma-informed, person-centered treatment models while developing supervision/leadership models that support the clinicians of these highly intense assertive treatment projects. Dr. Mathias is recognized for her expertise in transforming the assertive community treatment model in Texas as well as providing assessment and clinical implementation strategies to improve the local mental health systems. She is also the Project Lead for MMHPI's work on the redesign of the San Antonio State Hospital.

Tim Dittmer, PhD, Chief Economist

Quantitative Data Lead

Dr. Dittmer is responsible for all econometric analysis for the Institute. He has consulted as an economist regarding behavioral health and human services for nearly two decades, having served as a professor and tenured chair of the Department of Economics at Central Washington University from 1999 to 2014. Dr. Dittmer is expert in applied economic analysis across a wide array of public policy domains, including health care, and has worked with a wide range of econometric methods for estimating the cost-benefits for behavioral health and human services interventions. His interests include veterans issues given his service in the United States Army and National Guard (1984-1992, 2001-2009) that included two tours in Iraq (2004-2005, 2008-2009) and award of the Combat Infantry Badge and Bronze Star.

Michele Guzmán, PhD, Vice President of Administration and Senior Director of Evaluation
Evaluation Oversight

Dr. Guzmán leads policy evaluation for the Institute. As Vice President for Administration, Dr. Guzmán oversees all grants and contracts, human resources, and organizational development for the Institute. In her role as Senior Director of Evaluation, she also provides oversight for all evaluation work conducted by MMHPI. She was the project lead for a four-county public mental health system assessment in the Rio Grande Valley, as well as a database and data collection technical assistance project for the Health and Human Services Community Resource Coordination Groups (CRCG). Dr. Guzmán co-led the development of a report on best practices in integrated behavioral health for the St. David's Foundation, and co-authored an evaluation of the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health Texas Psychology Internship Initiative. Previously, she was Assistant Director of Research and Evaluation at the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, which is part of The University of Texas at Austin's Division of Diversity and Community Engagement. In addition to leading and coordinating the Hogg Foundation's evaluation efforts, Dr. Guzmán developed and managed grant programs related to mental health provider workforce issues and mental health research. She has over 10 years of experience in research and the evaluation of behavioral health programs and taught multicultural counseling and conducted diversity research at the University of Texas at Austin for over 10 years, with a focus on ethnic and racial identity, and mental health issues affecting Latino communities. Dr. Guzmán received her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from the University at Albany, State University of New York and her Bachelor of Arts with honors in Psychology from Vassar College. She has also completed graduate coursework in Public Health, including Public Health Management and Policy, at the University of Texas Health Science Center-Houston.

Kate Volti, MPA, Director of Program Innovation for Children and Youth
Children's Support

Ms. Volti has an extensive background working on health and human services issues for children and youth. Previously, Ms. Volti held several positions with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), including Director of Community Access in the Office of Social Services, Senior Policy Advisor charged with designing the STAR Kids Medicaid managed care model for children with disabilities, External Relations Specialist, and lead for the Task Force for Children with Special Needs. Ms. Volti came to HHSC after serving in the Texas Senate as a Senior Policy Advisor, where she focused on initiatives to improve early childhood nutrition, increase coordination of services for children with special needs, require insurers to cover Applied Behavioral Analysis for children when medically necessary, and improve support for kin care providers of children involved with Child Protective Services. Ms. Volti received her Master of Public Affairs from the LBJ School at the University of Texas and her Bachelor of Arts in Cross Cultural Anthropology and Political Studies from Pitzer College.

Linda Rodriguez, EdD, Senior Director for School Behavioral Health

Children's Support

Prior to joining the Institute, Linda worked as a District Coordinator of PBIS Multi-Tiered System of Behavioral Support/School Behavioral Health for Pasadena ISD. She has built her career in education working with at risk children and youth for over 30 years. Linda is a former bilingual elementary teacher, counselor, assistant principal, principal, Director of Education for a career and vocational training school, and district coordinator for PISD's McKinney-Vento Homeless program. She has worked at all school levels - elementary, middle and high school as well as in traditional, charter and alternative school settings. Linda has also written and coordinated several awarded grants that total over 4 million dollars. Linda received her bachelor's degree in Psychology from Texas A&M University, her first master's in counseling from the University of Houston, a second master's in educational leadership from University of St. Thomas, and finally her doctorate in administrative leadership and supervision from the University of Houston. Linda is also an adjunct professor for the University of St. Thomas where she teaches graduate coursework in counseling and is a certified youth mental health first aid instructor.

Marcellina Melvin, MA, Director of Program Implementation for Child and Family Policy

Children's Support

Director of Program Implementation for Child and Family Policy

Marcellina is licensed in the states of Texas and Tennessee as a Professional Counselor. She is an experienced and passionate clinician who for the past 20 years has successfully navigated and worked within a variety of clinical systems: residential, in-home, outpatient and school-based. She has worked as a clinician, clinical supervisor, administrator, and trainer. For 16 years she worked for a Community Mental Health Center in their School-Based Program. During this time she was able to expand mental health services received by children at school within Davidson County as well as the Middle Tennessee region. Marcellina has extensive clinical training and specializes in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy and Trauma Focus- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Marcellina is a Certified SAMA (Satori Alternative to Managing Aggression) Facilitator as well as a CANS (Children Adolescent Needs Strength) Assessment Trainer. She has provided trainings to several school systems across Middle Tennessee.

Gary Bramlett, LMSW, Director of Community Engagement

Local Systems Coordination

Mr. Bramlett has more than thirty years' experience in the mental health field. Beginning in direct care, he has held an array of positions, including Director of Special Programs at Rusk State Hospital; Mental Health Director for a local mental health authority; Deputy Executive Director of a community mental health/developmental disability center; and, most recently, the Executive Director of East Texas Behavioral Healthcare Network (ETBHN). ETBHN is an organization made up of eleven community centers covering over seventy counties in Texas,

with services that stretch to over two hundred counties in total. While at ETBHN, Mr. Bramlett oversaw growth in the network from five to eleven centers and increased the service coverage area to over 200 Texas counties. In addition to overseeing a large closed-door pharmacy that served local mental health and developmental disability authorities (centers) across Texas, Mr. Bramlett built a large telemedicine service that employed over one hundred doctors and nurse practitioners, an authorization program for the provision of services at centers, and a behavioral health tele-health program. He also consolidated other services, such as medical director and human resource director, for centers interested in those services. This enabled ETBHN to not only save centers a large amount of money, which enhanced direct services, but also provide resources for educational conferences, seminars, trainings, and retreats for staff at ETBHN member centers. In addition, ETBHN was successful in securing several grants during Mr. Bramlett's tenure, including a federal health and human services grant for navigation services through the Affordable Care Act. The navigation services grant was the second largest grant in the United States. Mr. Bramlett has an undergraduate degree in social work from Southern University in New Orleans and a Masters in Social Work from The University of Texas at Arlington.