

# Strategies for Protecting Communities of Color in the DMV Region: Defunding the Police and Exploring Other Alternatives to Policing

## Speaker Biographies

**Wanika Fisher**, a prominent private attorney and community advocate, has served in the Maryland General Assembly since January 2019. Fisher is the highest-ranking freshman in the House of Delegates and was elected by other members of the freshman class to serve as the House's assistant majority leader. She serves on the House Judiciary Committee and is assigned to the criminal and civil law subcommittees, working every day to ensure her communities are safe and criminal justice reform is prioritized. Fisher has also been appointed to several legislative working groups, including the Study Group on Economic Stability, the Marijuana Legalization Work Group, and the Work Group to Address Police Reform Accountability in Maryland. She serves as the chair of the Prince George's County House Delegation Democratic Caucus and is a member of the Legislative Black Caucus, the Legislative Latino Caucus, and the Asian American and Pacific Islander Caucus. Fisher is extremely involved in her local community and is passionate about families, women's rights, and equality and equity for all. She is proud to have introduced and passed legislation that allowed Maryland to become the first state in the nation to grant tenants a right to counsel in specific eviction cases. She continues to push forward other prominent legislation related to environmental rights, reparations, and more.

**Jesse Jannetta** is a senior policy fellow in the Justice Policy Center at the Urban Institute, where he leads projects on prison and jail reentry, community anti-gang and antiviolenace initiatives, police-community relations, parole and probation supervision, and risk prediction. He is the project director for the Safety and Justice Challenge Innovation Fund, the principal investigator for the Evaluation of Procedural Justice in Probation project, and a member of the leadership team for the Prison Research and Innovation Initiative. He was previously project director for the Transition from Jail to Community initiative, the process and fidelity assessment lead for the evaluation of the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice, and coprincipal investigator for evaluations of Los Angeles's gang reduction and youth development strategy and Chicago's violence reduction strategy. He applies mixed-methods approaches to process and impact evaluations and provides direct technical assistance to jurisdictions improving justice system functioning. Before joining Urban, Jannetta was a research specialist at the Center for Evidence-Based Corrections at the University of California, Irvine. He conducted several projects, including an evaluation of GPS monitoring for sex offender parolees, an analysis of parole discharge and violation response policies, and an analysis of the role of the Division of Juvenile Justice in the California juvenile justice system. Jannetta holds a BA in political science from the University of Michigan and an MPP from the Harvard Kennedy School.

**Monique King-Viehland** is associate vice president for metropolitan housing and communities policy at the Urban Institute, where she is leading new work on racial equity and housing justice. She is also working with researchers on policy, communications, and business development to grow compelling bodies of work and embedding racial equity across the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center's practice areas. King-Viehland previously served as executive director of the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA), where she oversaw 580 employees and a budget of \$600 million. She was the first woman and African American to take the helm of the 40-year-old agency. She led the agency through significant transformation, including the merger of the Community Development Commission and housing authority into one unified agency to augment cross-agency thinking and client service, increase organizational effectiveness, and reposition the agency as a forward-thinking, industry leader in the provision of housing, community, and economic development.

She enhanced the LACDA's efforts to fight the homelessness and affordability crises, including a 10-fold increase in affordable and supportive units funded and a more than 100 percent increase in project-based rental voucher commitments while providing housing and housing assistance to hundreds of thousands annually. In 2019, she was recognized as an LA Power Woman by Bisnow.

King-Viehland has 20 years of experience in housing, community, and economic development. She is a member of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness and a member of the policy advisory committee for the California Roadmap HOME 2030 initiative. In late 2020, King-Viehland served as a member of the US Housing and Urban Development Agency Review Team for the Biden-Harris Transition Team. She graduated with honors from Smith College and has a master's in public policy from Carnegie Mellon University.

**Ashanti Martinez** is an organizer with PG Change Makers. He formerly served as staffer to Prince George's County Councilmember Thomas E. Dernoga, staffer to the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus, and deputy political director to Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk. Martinez was named in WKYS's top 30 under 30 list, named in Prince George's County Social Innovation Fund's 40 under 40 list, delegated a young futurist by The Root, and listed as The Daily Record's top 40 under 40 very important professionals for Maryland.

**Bethany Young**, deputy director at DC Justice Lab, is an attorney, researcher, and policy expert. Dr. Young has experience directing complex, multistate criminal justice research and reform projects. She has advised the DC Police Reform Commission on police practices and community safety and conducted legal and policy research for the US Department of Education and the Educational Opportunities Project of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. Before DC Justice Lab, Dr. Young worked in the Justice Policy Center at Urban Institute, where she was a member of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council, served as an attorney at the Center for Death Penalty Litigation, and worked at the Equal Justice Initiative. Dr. Young has also assisted policymakers on initiatives to reconsider the death penalty and reduce physical and sexual assaults at the Alabama Department of Corrections. She earned her BA from Spelman College, her MA and PhD in sociology from Duke University, and her JD from the George Washington University Law School.