

MASTER OF CEREMONIES



Doug Shupe

Corporate Communications Manager, Automobile Club of Southern California

Doug is a Corporate Communications Manager for the Auto Club of Southern California, serving as a primary media spokesperson throughout the 13 southern counties of the Golden State. He also serves as the public relations lead on the Auto Club's anti-texting while driving campaign called, "Don't Drive Intoxicated. Don't Drive Intexticated." The goal of the multi-year initiative is to make smartphone use behind the wheel as socially unacceptable as alcohol-impaired driving. Prior to joining AAA, Doug was a television news reporter and anchor for 16 years in Florida and Texas. His experience covering traffic-safety related stories as a journalist brings real-world approaches to educating drivers about the potential dangers on our roads.

WELCOME REMARKS



Stephanie N. Wiggins

Chief Executive Officer, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and Chair, Mobility 21

The Board of Directors of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) unanimously voted to hire Stephanie Wiggins as Metro's CEO on April 8, 2021. A lifelong trailblazer and champion of equity and inclusion, Wiggins is the first woman and African-American woman to lead the agency. As CEO of Metro, she oversees an agency that runs the third-busiest transit system in the United States, with an annual budget of \$9 Billion and 11,000 employees, and serves as the lead transportation planning, programming, financing, and construction agency for the 10.1 million residents of LA County. Before rejoining Metro as CEO in June 2021, Wiggins served as the CEO of Metrolink, the nation's third-largest passenger rail system covering 538 route-miles throughout Southern California.

Prior to serving as CEO of Metrolink, Wiggins was the Deputy CEO of Metro, where she assisted the CEO in providing leadership and achieving strategic public transportation objectives, including the passage in 2016 of Measure M, a half-cent sales tax approved by 71 percent of LA County voters. She also established the Women and Girls Governing Council. During her tenure at Metro, Wiggins also served as the Executive Director of Vendor/Contract Management, where she implemented procurement streamlining initiatives and greatly expanded Metro's contracting of small and historically underutilized businesses. Prior to that role, Wiggins was the Executive Officer and Project Director of the Congestion Reduction/ExpressLanes Program where she launched the first high occupancy toll lanes in LA County on the I-10 and I-110 which improved travel times, reduced pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions, on two of the County's most congested freeway corridors.

With a deep and genuine commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, Wiggins strives to provide all people living in Southern California equal access to mobility to get to work, school, healthcare and leisure activities. Achieving that goal depends on leading an organization that is as diverse and inclusive as the region it serves.



Hon. Karen Bass – *Video Remarks*
Chair, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and
Mayor, City of Los Angeles

Karen Bass is the 43rd Mayor of Los Angeles and the first woman and second African American to be elected as the city's chief executive. With an agenda focused on bringing urgency, accountability, and a new direction to Los Angeles, she has started her term with a focus on housing people immediately and increasing safety and opportunity in every part of Los Angeles.

A daughter of our city, Mayor Bass was raised with her three brothers in the Venice/Fairfax neighborhood and is a proud graduate of Hamilton High School. After serving as a front-line healthcare provider as a nurse and as a Physician Assistant, Mayor Bass founded the Community Coalition to organize the predominantly Black and Latino residents of South L.A. against substance abuse, poverty and crime, and to pioneer strategies to address the root causes behind the challenges faced by underserved neighborhoods.

She then went on to represent Los Angeles in the State Assembly and was elected by her peers to serve as Speaker, making her the first African American woman to ever lead a state legislative body in the history of the United States. Her time in leadership intersected with the Great Recession, and she was honored with the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award for reaching across party lines and making tough decisions to keep the state from bankruptcy while protecting vital services.

While representing Los Angeles and Culver City in Congress, Mayor Bass helped protect small businesses during the pandemic, created policy to drive local jobs from federal infrastructure funding, and led the passage of what the Los Angeles Times called *"the most significant child welfare policy reform in decades."*

Mayor Bass earned her bachelor's degree in health sciences from CSU Dominguez Hills before graduating from the USC Keck School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program and earning her masters degree in social work from USC.

Mayor Bass's oldest daughter Emilia planned to follow in her mother's footsteps working for social change. The Mayor continues to be inspired by Emilia and her son-in-law Michael's passion for life. She has three other children, Scythia, Omar and Yvette, and two grandchildren, Michael and Henry, who live in the Los Angeles area.

PRESENTATION OF 2023 MOBILITY 21 AWARDS

Leadership in Equity Award



Hon. Carmen Ramirez – In Memoriam
Supervisor, County of Ventura and Regional Council President, Southern California Association of Governments

Carmen Ramirez began her career in 1978 as a legal aid attorney in Oxnard, working to protect the health and economic well-being of individuals and families.

Carmen Ramirez had an exemplary record of leadership, integrity and service to Ventura County and its residents as the first Latina Councilmember for the City of Oxnard, and again as the first Latina to be elected to the Ventura County Board of Supervisors in 2020.

Carmen Ramirez spent her life in dedicated service to her community, championing sustainability, mobility and equity, and tirelessly supporting numerous local civic organizations including the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District, Ventura County Community Foundation, Ventura County Transportation Commission, Camarillo and Oxnard Airport Authorities, and Center for Civic Education. She represented Ventura County on the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Council and Energy and Environment Committee, where she made significant contributions to the coordination of regional planning issues and social and environmental justice matters to improve the quality of life for the region's most vulnerable communities.

Carmen Ramirez was a trailblazing leader, tireless advocate and beloved friend whose kindness, intelligence, and tenacity enriched all those fortunate enough to know and work with her.

Lifetime Achievement Award



Hon. Alan Wapner
Councilmember, City of Ontario; President, Ontario International Airport Authority; Board Member, San Bernardino County Transportation Authority; Regional Councilmember, Southern California Association of Governments; and Board Member, Metrolink

Councilmember Alan D. Wapner has been a member of the Ontario City Council for 30 years. Councilmember Wapner is probably most proud of his leadership in regaining local control of the Ontario International Airport, and as President of the Airport Authority, overseeing an unprecedented successful turn-around of business at the airport, and huge economic impact in the city and region.

Councilmember Wapner is recognized as an expert on transportation policy and represents Ontario on many regional boards:

- President of the Ontario International Airport Authority
- Past President of the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority

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- Past President of the San Bernardino County Council of Governments
- Past President of the Southern California Association of Governments
- Past Chair of the Board of Directors of Omnitrans
- Board Member of Metrolink
- Board Member of the Metro Foothill Gold Line Extension Construction Authority
- Chair of the of the Airport Council International Commissioners Committee
- Member of the Airport Council International U.S. Policy Council
- Past Board Member of the League of California Cities
- Past Board Member of the National League of Cities
- Board Member of the California Association of Councils of Government
- Board Member of the National Association of Regional Councils
- Past Chair of the NLC Public Safety Policy Committee
- Past Chair of the League of California Cities Public Safety Committee
- Member of the USO Western Regional Advisory Board
- Past President of the Ontario Rotary Club

Prior to the City Council, Councilmember Wapner was Vice President of the Ontario-Montclair School Board. He is a retired police sergeant of the City of Ontario. Alan received his BA from the University of Southern California and his JD from the Whittier College School of Law.

Councilmember Wapner is married to Judi and has five children and six grandchildren.



Mark Watts

President, Smith, Watts, & Hartmann

Mark Watts is the Principal at Mark Watts Advocacy, LLC (formerly Smith, Watts & Hartmann, LLC) a firm specializing in legislative and administrative advocacy in transportation policy, project funding and project implementation. Mark has served in a variety of capacities in state government and the private sector as a lobbyist as well.

Previously, Mark and long-time partners, D.J. Smith, and Will Kempton, collaborated to operate Smith, Watts & Company. Mark's responsibilities included providing lobbying services and strategic political advice, as well as managing and directing the day-to-day activities of the firm with more than 35 clients.

Immediately prior to that Mark completed a tenure of service that had begun in 1996 spearheading the management of the California State Assembly as the Chief of Staff for Assembly Speaker Curt Pringle.

Mark has long been involved in transportation policy and advocacy with some highlights including the development and successful voter passage of Propositions 209 (Earthquake retrofit bonds), and Proposition 42 (constitutional dedication of the sales tax on motor fuels to transportation improvements) in November 2004 as well as serving as Co-Chair of the \$20 billion Proposition 1B transportation bond measure on the November 2006 ballot. Most recently, in 2017 and the sessions leading up to the adoption of Senate Bill 1 (Beall), Mark provided prominent leadership in developing the framework for the 2017 transportation package and its subsequent enactment.

Luncheon General Session

Grand Ballroom

Mark was appointed by Governor Pete Wilson to serve as Undersecretary for Transportation for the Business, Transportation & Housing (BT&H) Agency in May 1994. His role oversaw the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and the California Transportation Commission (CTC), working directly with those agencies as their liaison to the Cabinet Secretary and the Governor's Office, and to provide ongoing advice to the Governor and his staff on transportation matters.

Prior to his appointment as Undersecretary for Transportation, Mark served at Caltrans from 1975 through 1985 as Executive Assistant to the Los Angeles District Director, a member of the legislative affairs staff, and Executive Assistant to the Director. From 1985 to 1987 he served as Principal staff consultant to the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means and as lead staff for the budget Subcommittee on Transportation, with responsibility for oversight of the state's transportation budget and fiscal analysis of transportation-related legislation. During this period, Mark assisted in efforts to enact several major transportation measures, including a statewide authorization for local option sales taxes for transportation, historic Bay Bridge financing legislation, significant new contracting authority for Caltrans, 1989's Transportation Blueprint gas tax increase and California's groundbreaking highway privatization bill.

Other experience includes staff director of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee staff, a position held from 1988 until 1990; an associate at a leading legislative advocacy firm from 1990 through 1994.

For a brief six-month period in 1995, Mark was recruited to serve as Co-Chief Administrative Officer of the Assembly Rules Committee during the historic power-sharing arrangement between Republican Leader Brulte and Speaker Brown.

Public Sector Leader of the Year



Hon. Jacqui Irwin
Assemblymember, California State Assembly

Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin is starting her fifth term in office and she will now be the State Assemblymember for the newly formed District 42. She was first elected to the Assembly in 2014, and serves as the Chair of the Committee on Revenue and Taxation, and the Select Committee on Cybersecurity. She was the chair of the Assembly Military and Veterans Affairs Committee for 7 years and also sits on committees that oversee Agriculture, Business and Professions, Higher Education, and Privacy & Consumer Protection. While in the legislature, Assemblymember Irwin has had more than sixty bills signed by the Governor, including: requiring the highest level of recycled content in plastic bottles in the world, requiring security on internet of things devices, banning powdered alcohol in CA, securing funds to establish an engineering school at Cal State Channel Islands, and investing in business incubators at UC campuses to ensure that research is being transformed into real-world products.

Assemblymember Irwin served for ten years on the Thousand Oaks City Council, including two terms as Mayor. Before her election to public office she was a systems engineer at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics lab and at Teledyne Systems.



Hon. Steve Jones

Mayor, City of Garden Grove and Board Member, Orange County Transportation Authority

Mayor Steve Jones currently serves on the Garden Grove City Council after serving eight years on the Planning Commission, with several terms as Chair, and ten years on City Council prior to becoming Mayor in 2016. Mayor Jones was appointed to the OCTA Board of Directors in January 2013 where he served as Chairman in 2020. Orange County's City

Selection Committee reappointed Mayor Jones as a city council representative to the OCTA Board of Directors in January 2022.

In 1986, Mayor Jones graduated from Rancho Alamitos High School in Garden Grove. He continued his studies abroad by attending Kings College, Cambridge University, England in 1988. Returning to the states, he received both his Bachelor and MBA degrees from the University of Southern California, graduating with Honors with a dual emphasis in Finance and Real Estate.

Mayor Jones is the Past President and a current Board Member of the Garden Grove Community Foundation, where he has served since 2007. In addition to serving as the Immediate Past Chairman of the Orange County Transportation Authority, Mayor Jones is a founding Board Member of the Association of California Cities and serves as a Board Member for the Orange County Sanitation District. Since 1999, he has been an active member of the Garden Grove Chamber of Commerce.

In his professional life, Mayor Jones is the Founder and President of Olympia Capital Corporation, specializing in real estate investment, development, asset management, and equity capital syndication, formed in 2001.

Born and raised in Garden Grove, Mayor Jones and his wife, Manivone, are the proud parents of sons Jaden and Ashton.

Private Sector Leader of the Year



Ernie Camacho

Founder, Pacifica Services, Inc. and Board Member, California High-Speed Rail Authority

Ernest M. Camacho is the founder and President of Pacifica Services, Inc., a privately owned Hispanic firm headquartered in Pasadena, California. Since 1979, Pacifica has been a trusted leader in engineering services with a reputation for providing quality services and loyalty to its clients.

Throughout his career, Ernest has been active in the community, serving as a Director on a wide variety of Boards including the:

- California High Speed Rail Authority Board of Directors
- Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Center Board of Directors
- Adventist Health White Memorial

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- Loyola Marymount University Board of Regents
- Latin American Management Association Board of Directors
- Pasadena AAF Rose Bowl Board of Directors
- Center for Community and Family Services, Chairman of the Board
- Claremont Graduate University Board of Regents
- Goodwill Industries
- Rail Construction Corporation Board of Directors
- Los Angeles Latino Chamber
- U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Member
- Minority Business Roundtable, Member
- Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, former Member
- Society of Military Engineers, former Member
- Associated member of the United States Naval Institute, former Chairman
- Presidential Appointee, Jimmy Carter Administration

Ernest is a highly successful product of East Los Angeles who shares his expertise, leadership, experience and insights with business, educational and community organizations advocating for all underserved communities.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



David Ambroz
Author, "A Place Called Home"

David Ambroz is an award-winning national poverty and child welfare expert and advocate and an Emmy-nominated and bestselling author. Growing up homeless with a mentally ill mother on the streets of New York, David and his siblings suffered the difficulties and indignities encountered by millions of homeless children in America. Instead of being in school, his family was looking for a dry place to sleep and stealing food to eat. When

David enters the foster care system, he's hopeful he's found salvation, but instead he falls prey to abuse in every placement home except one. Seeking solace and hope, he finds support in his local libraries and at school, and through grit, determination, and the kindness of others, David earns a scholarship to Vassar College, his first significant step in escaping the cycle of poverty that threatens to trap him for life. He goes on to graduate from UCLA Law with the vision of using his degree to change the laws that affect children in poverty that have been systematically overlooked and unprotected. In his deeply personal and moving memoir, *A Place Called Home* (Fall 2022), David describes his journey as a vulnerable child being crushed under the weight of poverty and mental illness to his experiences with America's broken welfare system to finding the perseverance to rise above his circumstance to create a better future. Recognized by President Obama as an American Champion of Change, David currently serves as the Head of Community Engagement (West) for Amazon. He previously led Corporate Social Responsibility for Walt Disney Television, and served as the President of the Los Angeles City Planning Commission, and as a California Child Welfare Councilmember. He is a foster dad and lives in Los Angeles, Calif.