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CIVIC SERIES

FALL 2024



Karthick Ramakrishnan has served in leadership roles that span academia, government, public policy, and philanthropy. He is currently a researcher at the University of California, Berkeley and director of AAPI Data, a nationally recognized publisher of demographic data and policy research on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. He is also Strategy Lead for the Americas at School of International Futures, and Senior Advisor at States for the Future.

Ramakrishnan previously served as Executive Director of California 100, a transformative statewide initiative focused on California's next century, and as president of the Association of Princeton Graduate Alumni. He also served for 4 years as associate dean of UC Riverside's School of Public Policy and for 19 years as a professor. He has published many articles and 7 books, including most recently, Citizenship Reimagined (Cambridge, 2020) and Framing Immigrants (Russell Sage, 2016), has written dozens of opeds and has appeared in nearly 3,000 news stories.

Ramakrishnan was named to the Frederick Douglass 200 and is currently working on projects related to racial equity in philanthropy and regional development. He holds a BA in international relations from Brown University and a PhD in politics from Princeton.

https://karthick.com



Derek Steele serves as executive director and brings his system-building experience, engineering perspective and unique skill sets garnered over his 11-year career to lead the Social Justice Learning Institute as they solve the inequities and inequalities that plague communities of color, particularly the Black community. He is an experienced problem solver who started his professional career as an electrical engineer at Northrop Grumman. As a previous SJLI volunteer, he was tasked with figuring out how to recreate local food access systems to solve health disparities and food insecurity in Inglewood, CA, and beyond. Finding success in this work that he believed to be more fulfilling, he took on the opportunity to become SJLI's first health equity programs director. Under his leadership, his team taught over 15,000 families in nutrition, physical activity, and urban agriculture, built 126 urban gardens in the community, began the Inglewood Farmers' Market and Inglewood Community Supported Agriculture program (CSA), and significantly influenced the passing of 2 major state bills impacting food insecurity in the great state of California and during COVID, provided over 1,000,000 lbs of produce to families all throughout Los Angeles County. Derek is a proud graduate of Morgan State University.

https://sjli.org/