



English Language Learner Workforce Navigator Pilot Program

ALLIES – NOVA Team Bios

Ursula Bischoff

Ursula Bischoff leads projects at national, state, regional and community levels that translate policy and research into actionable initiatives and programs, with a focus on improving outcomes and opportunities for low-income and underserved families. She has directed a diverse portfolio of complex education, workforce and human services projects, conducting research and technical assistance that helps policy makers reach evidence-informed decisions. She recently participated on a project funded by the federal Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education supporting states to implement integrated literacy, workforce and civics education programs. Ursula is eligible to be grandfathered in (literally) as a citizen of Italy.

Lionel de Maine

Lionel de Maine serves on the ALLIES Board and the NOVA Workforce Development Board. He is the Director of Sequoia Adult School in Redwood City and a member of the ACCEL (San Mateo) AEBG consortium's management team. He helped found the Sequoia Adult School Scholars foundation, which supports English learners as they transition to college. As a past client of the workforce development system, he benefited from the services offered through ProMatch, NOVA's interactive career resource center program. Prior to joining adult education 15 years ago, he held various management positions in Silicon Valley's high-tech industry. He finds working in education more fulfilling than working in industry.

Paul Downs

Paul Downs serves on the ALLIES Board and is the lead consultant for the Delta Sierra Adult Education Consortium. Paul is a collaborative strategic planning and organizational development consultant. He helps organizations create partnerships to connect people to community resources and family-sustaining careers. Paul has led strategic planning for the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, the California Department of Education Adult Education Office, local community college districts, and other local and state initiatives. Paul grew up on O'ahu and surfs whenever he can.

Bob Harper

Bob Harper serves on the ALLIES Board and is the Co-Chair of the South Bay Consortium for Adult Education. Bob has worked as an ESL teacher, counselor, and adult school administrator in seven districts in Northern and Southern California. He has been the adult education representative on the Workforce Development Boards in three counties. He has developed and supervised Title II courses and supports for English learners that have been co-located with Title I programs. He has served on several statewide groups developing guidance for the Adult Education Block Grant reform. His doctoral research focused on adult immigrant responses to American educational systems.



Ilse Pollet

Ilse Pollet is the Program Coordinator for ALLIES and brings over 15 years of experience working at the intersection of adult education and immigrant integration. Before joining ALLIES, she oversaw the ESL program at Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County, serving refugees and immigrants in the San Francisco Bay Area. In her current role, she works on expanding and strengthening the multi-sector collaborative network between ESL providers, workforce development boards, public agencies and community based organizations championed by ALLIES in recent years; as well as supporting the development and implementation of an Immigrant Integration Framework across ALLIES partners. Ilse was born in Belgium and recently became a U.S. citizen.

Kris Stadelman

Kris Stadelman is the Director of the NOVA Workforce Board which covers the geography between the Cities of San Jose and San Francisco. She has administered federally funded workforce programs in four states and at the local CBO, City, County and State levels. NOVA began partnering with ALLIES under a DOL Workforce Innovation Grant and has experience in managing multi-workforce board grants and projects.