



Lowell Plan Public Matters 2021 Participant Bios

Soumita Acharya is the Director of Community Programming at Lowell Telemedia Center (LTC) where she films, edits, and produces content on festivals, events, and local news for the Lowell community. She also educates LTC members and community partners in film production and editing. Soumita is passionate about storytelling and capturing the voices of Lowell as well as creating education and awareness through media. Soumita has a Bachelors in Business Management from the Institute of Modern Management, Calcutta, India. Soumita is a co-founder of Project Starfish America, an organization that seeks to support the blind and visually impaired with employment opportunities. She also serves on the Board of Directors for Girls, Inc. of Greater Lowell and the Greeley Scholar for Peace Studies, and is responsible for media communication for the Lowell City of Learning initiative. Soumita lives in downtown Lowell and enjoys cooking, making Ayurvedic potions, and playing with her daughter and cat.

Francesca Cigliano is the Senior Planner for the City of Lowell. As the Senior Planner, she staffs the City's three land use boards - the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Conservation Commission - and leads long term planning initiatives. In her work, she is particularly interested in how zoning may be used as a tool to increase environmental sustainability and resiliency. Prior to working in Lowell, Francesca interned at the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission in Springfield and in the Town of Ipswich's planning office. Francesca graduated from the University of Massachusetts Amherst with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Sustainable Community Development in 2018. She completed her master's degree in Regional Planning with a concentration in Land Use and Environmental Planning from the University of Massachusetts Amherst in February 2020. Francesca was born and raised in the Highlands neighborhood of Lowell and is a proud graduate of Lowell Public Schools. She currently lives in Somerville. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, experimenting with new recipes, and spending time in nature.

Bridget Cooley is the Community Planning Librarian at the Pollard Memorial Library. Bridget's responsibilities include programming, reference, preserving our archives as well as outreach, marketing & communications. Before the Pollard, she worked at the Boys & Girls Club in Nashua and UML Libraries. She is currently the Archivist for the Lowell Historical Society. She is also part of the Lowell City of Learning group, as well as assists with Kerouac-inspired events and a number of history-focused projects around the city. She has lived in Dracut for the past 22 years, but formerly lived in Londonderry, VT and North Wildwood, NJ. Bridget has a Bachelors in History & Anthropology from St. Lawrence University (1998), a Masters in Human Resource Development from Clemson (2005), and a Masters in Library and Information Science from Simmons University (2017). Her infatuation with Lowell began as an undergrad when her soon-to-be husband moved here for work. Bridget started to study the history and archaeology of Lowell and wrote a paper on the excavation of the Boott Mills. She enjoys spending time with her husband, their 2 girls, and her Black Lab mix, Boo. When

she has downtime, Bridget enjoys reading, baking, and taking walks with the family and alone. Each year, she tries to read at least 1 book a week for fun.

Josh Felch is currently the Project Coordinator for the STEM Starter Academy at Middlesex Community College. The STEM Starter Academy is an initiative at every Massachusetts community college funded by the state legislature with the mission of graduating more individuals with training in the STEM fields to address workforce shortages in these areas. Prior to this role Josh worked in higher education for 10 years at various institutions around the country. He completed his Bachelors in Biology at Clarkson University and his Masters of Education degree at James Madison University. Josh currently lives in Goffstown, NH and weather permitting spends his free time hiking and staying active outdoors.

Alan Heredia is the Assistant Transportation Engineer at the City of Lowell's Department of Planning and Development. His responsibilities include evaluating and responding to traffic problems, concerns, requests, and petitions for the City and helping to evaluate the transportation impacts of projects. Alan is involved in various transportation projects, mainly Lowell's Riverwalk Phase II project. Alan received his Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from UMass Amherst in 2016. Alan was born in the Dominican Republic and moved to Lawrence, MA when he was 11 years old, where he has lived ever since.

Crystal Kasey is an Associate Vice-President for Commercial Lending at Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union. In this capacity she is responsible for managing the credit union's commercial loan portfolio and relationships (including Paycheck Protection Program loans) from origination through to pay off. Prior to joining JDCU, Crystal worked for Toyota and Lexus Financial Services as a credit analyst and community ambassador. She's a member of the Groton Pepperell Rotary Club, serves as a Corporator and Youth of the Year mentor at the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lowell, and volunteers with Catie's Closet. Crystal has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from UMASS Lowell, earned a Social Responsibility Leadership Certificate from the Mill Cities Leadership Institute, and participated in the Cryptologic Technical Interpretive program at the Defense Foreign Language Institute of the US Navy. Crystal sleeps in Pepperell but lives in Lowell. Her free time is spent with her kids and family, garden, various pets, kayaking and spending time outdoors as much as possible.

Sidney Liang is a Mass in Motion Program Coordinator at Lowell Community Health Center that works with policy, system, and environmental strategies to lower the risk of chronic diseases and increase physical activity. In addition, Sidney produces the award winning weekly "Jivit Thmei TV" via Lowell TeleMedia Center to provide information on academic opportunities, health information, and community events to the Greater Lowell Cambodian residents on Channel 95. Sidney currently sits on the Board of Community Teamwork Inc., UML Internal Review Board, and recently appointed to the City of Lowell's Community Preservation Committee. Before CoViD-19, Sidney produced the Voices of Cambodian Children radio program aired from the University of Massachusetts Lowell's 91.5FM, Sundays, 1pm-5pm. AND from May 1995 to November 1996, through the Cambodian American National Development Organization (CANDO) he volunteered to help rebuild Cambodia. Sidney received his Master in Public Administration from Suffolk University in 2008. Sidney is one of many Cambodian refugees who fled the horrific Khmer Rouge regime in 1979 and resettled in the United

States in December 1983. He is one of the Cambodian community leaders who strive to find peace, accessibility, and adaptability for the Cambodian community in Lowell.

David Lieb joined the NPS in March 2020. His core responsibilities are overseeing resource elements of the Park including a canal and lock system, canal walks, and historical structures. As Park Accessibility Coordinator he is conducting a comprehensive Section 504 Self-Evaluation for the Park. Prior to joining the NPS he was a practicing architect having founded LIEBSTUDIOS architecture art + education assuming full-time practice in 2003. David's areas of specialty are diverse and include accessibility, environmental psychology, Universal Design and Person-Centered Design, building codes and standards, and historical structures. David is also an exhibiting fine artist working in large and small format mixed-media collage. He has a Bachelor of Architecture from the Pratt Institute-School of Architecture and a Maser of Design Studies from Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. In his off time he can often be found in the painting studio working on new pieces. David lives in a late period 18th century house in historic Salem and has developed a love for repairing historical features in the house, especially 19th Century clapboards.

Jessica Lord is an Assistant Vice President, Branch Relationship Manager for Enterprise Bank. Jessica manages the Drum Hill location in Chelmsford, Massachusetts where she oversees the branch sales goals while helping coach and develop employees. Jessica connects well with the community as she has been born and raised in the neighboring city of Lowell, MA. She has been with Enterprise Bank since 2009 and has rotated through very different positions in the company giving her a unique perspective that she brings to her branch. Jessica has won the "Spirit of Enterprise" twice, "Excellence in Customer Service" and has also been nominated for other awards at the bank. Jessica was selected into the BAI Emerging Leaders Network in 2018. Jessica now lives in Merrimack, NH with her partner and their young daughter.

Vanmey Ma is a Civic Engagement and Organizing Coordinator at the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association. In this position she worked on Get Out the Vote campaigns, the 2020 Census, Lowell district mapping, and more. She participated in a residential student leadership program at Wellesley College where she earned her Bachelor of Arts in Education Studies. In her free time Van enjoys painting, learning about astrology and watching television. Van is a graduate of Lowell High School and lives in Lowell.

Ryan Rothwell is currently a business banking relationship manager at Eastern Bank and has been in banking for a little over four years. His main office is at 50 Central St in Lowell. In his role, he assists new and existing customers with lending needs. This includes investment commercial real estate lending, owner occupied commercial real estate lending, SBA lending, terms loans, and lines of credits. Being newer to the Lowell territory, he is eager to get more involved with the community. He serves as a board member for the fundraising committee at the Lowell Transitional Living Center. Among his personal interests, Ryan enjoys golfing, family time, and the Boston Bruins. Ryan recently moved to Merrimac MA and is really enjoying the quietness of the town. Ryan received his degree from the University of New Hampshire and is currently pursuing an MBA from Fitchburg State University. He is looking forward to meeting everyone and discovering new ways to give back.

Elizabeth Smith recently started her job as a Park Guide at Lowell National Historical Park in September 2020. Her responsibilities at the park include helping visitors learn about and connect to the complex and many-sided history of Lowell and the mills, and provide information about what activities they can enjoy while at the park and in the city. Prior to her position in Lowell she worked as a Park Guide at the Springfield Armory National Historic Site and Coltsville National Historic Park and have done two internships with the Student Conservation Association as part of an environmental stewardship crew in New York State and as a social media interpretive intern in South Carolina. Elizabeth holds a Bachelor of Arts in history from St. Bonaventure University. She currently lives in Manchester, NH. When not spending time entertaining her cat, Maisie, she can often be found knitting or reading. And weather permitting, she loves getting outside and is looking forward to branching out into more outdoor hobbies this year.

Barbara Warren is the Deputy Division Director of Residential Programs at Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI). In this role, Barbara oversees the operation and administration of the Emergency Assistance Family Shelter Programs that provide shelter to 125 families in Lowell and Chelmsford. Barbara also oversees the Rehousing & Stabilization Programs, and the Shelter Diversion Program serving approximately 90-120 families in the Greater Lowell area. Barbara and her team in partnership with the Life Connections Center (LCC) have recently begun providing emergency shelter services to individuals experiencing homelessness in Lowell. This includes sheltering, meals, and case management services. Barbara serves as Treasurer on the Board of Directors for Homes For Families, a state-wide organization that works with providers and families to improve services statewide and to work towards ending family homelessness in Massachusetts. Barbara holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and a Master's Degree in Community Social Psychology from UMass Lowell. In 2008 Barbara was Valedictorian of UMASS Lowell's class of 2008, and was recently honored by the Psychology Department at UMASS Lowell by receiving the 2020 Distinguished Alumni Award. Barbara lives in Littleton Massachusetts with her husband in the home where they raised 7 children and many pets over the years. She is an avid gardener and hiker and loves to spend time with her family near the ocean.

Kim Yeasir (she/her/hers) is Chief Empowerment Officer of THRIVE Communities. In this position Kim, the Co-Founder of THRIVE, functions as the executive director -- supporting a staff of five and a volunteer base of over 30 community members to welcome and support our neighbors transitioning from incarceration. Kim is a macro-practice social worker with a Bachelors in Social Work from Michigan State University and a Masters in Social Work from Boston College. She brings over ten years' experience in nonprofit development— advancing programs through creative innovation, community organizing, and fundraising. Kim is a trained facilitator with Communities for Restorative Justice and Alternatives to Violence Project. She currently serves on the community advisory board of Lowell House's Recovery Cafe and as a Lowell Connector within Lowell's Homelessness Initiatives. In addition, Kim has been a Big Sister with Big Sister Association of Greater Boston for over 13 years. Kim lives in Cambridge, but she works in and loves Lowell! In her free time, she is learning how to be a mom to her 8-month-old son while also being a supportive partner to her husband. Kim enjoys dancing, playing games, and skiing when COVID is not a thing!