

## **LOCAL POLLUTION AND YOUR HEALTH: A PUBLIC FORUM**

*Bay Area Community Center, 5002 East NASA Parkway*

June 25, 2019, 6:30 p.m.

### **Forum Speakers**

**Dr. Latrice B. Babin** (Harris County Pollution Control Services Department [HCPCSD]) earned her Bachelor of Science in Biology/Chemistry and her Doctorate in Environmental Toxicology from Texas Southern University. Currently, Dr. Babin is the Interim Director for the HCPCSD; this department serves the third most populous county in the United States with a population of 4.653 million (2017, United States Census Bureau). An effective environmental advocate for the citizens of Harris County, Dr. Babin has shared her expertise with local, state, and federal agencies. She also works collaboratively with Harris County Legislative Relations to monitor, analyze and comment on environmental legislative and regulatory initiatives. Dr. Babin's technical knowledge has been instrumental in litigation cases for the County Attorney's Office, the District Attorney's Office, as well as at the state level for legislative bill review.

**Mr. Nicholas Ellis** (Galveston Bay Foundation [GBF]) earned a Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology from Texas A&M University at Galveston, and is presently pursuing a Master of Science in Environmental Science from the University of Houston Clear Lake. Mr. Ellis currently serves the GBF as Water Quality Programs Manager. This includes managing dozens of volunteers with GBF, overseeing all water quality data management, laboratory management, training and fieldwork. Previously, Mr. Ellis was an Aquatic Scientist and Environmental Investigator for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality [TCEQ]. Prior to TCEQ, he worked as Research Assistant and Field Technician for Cardno Entrix; notably, in these roles, Mr. Ellis conducted extensive on-site research following the Deepwater Horizon accident in the Gulf of Mexico.

**Dr. George Guillen** is Executive Director of the Environmental Institute of Houston at the University of Houston-Clear Lake. He is a professor of biology and environmental science, and he previously served in several state and federal agencies, including the Fish and Wildlife Service. His research interests include studying the effects of pollution on water habitat and on fish and wildlife populations.

**Ms. Katie Moore** (Environmental Defense Fund [EDF]) earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Geology from University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and an MPH (Master of Public Health) in Environmental Health Sciences from University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Ms. Moore applies her expertise to issues of air quality, U.S. air quality policy, health impacts, environmental justice, and mobile mapping. In this last role, she has led hyper-local air quality mapping with Google Street View cars in Houston and London, has overseen deployment of networks of stationary air quality monitors, and worked on bringing mobile air quality mapping to scale in a pilot program with the City of Houston. Her focus is on the implementation of monitoring projects, data analysis and visualization, and the communication of findings for community-driven advocacy. Prior to joining EDF, Katie worked on community-driven air quality monitoring at the Louisiana Bucket Brigade and with the U.S. EPA.

**Ms. Melanie Oldham** (Citizens for Clean Air & Clean Water in Brazoria County [CCA/CWBC]) is a physical therapist and dedicated volunteer public health/environmental advocate who founded CCA/CWBC in 2006. While Freeport takes pride in its beaches, rivers, National Wildlife refuges, and birding areas, the city is also surrounded by heavy industry: DOW Chemical's largest manufacturing complex in the world (which even now is expanding with four new plants), Shintech, BASF, Freeport LNG, and many other smaller chemical plants. CCA/CWBC assisted citizens who lobbied against Gulf Chemical & Metallurgical Company, a notoriously dirty spent catalyst recycling company, which was fined \$7.5M last year by the Texas Attorney General. The group also played a role in the eventual shut-down and bankruptcy of this same company. Ms. Oldham presently advises

citizens in Freeport and on Quintana island who oppose the planned expansion of Freeport LNG which would include natural gas export and an increase in Texas fracking. In addition, she has testified numerous times in Austin before the Environmental Regulation Committee about bills that will affect Brazoria County and other areas in Texas.

**Mr. Doug Peterson** (owner of Hawkeye Strategic Communication) hails from Davenport, Iowa, a city on the Mississippi River. He holds a Master of Arts in Public Policy from the University of Iowa, and—after 34 years with NASA—recently retired from the Office of Strategic Communications at the Johnson Space Center. As a volunteer, Mr. Peterson spent nearly six years as a tireless advocate and coordinator for the creation of Exploration Green, a former Clear Lake City golf course now permanently protected as a nature preserve. Mr. Peterson has been a dedicated participant in local and national politics for decades. In addition to the Local Pollution and Your Health Forum, he led a team that organized one of the first major events considering flood protection after Hurricane Harvey and a Storm Surge Forum in March 2019. As a candidate for Houston City Council and activist in many political campaigns, Doug most recently was on Iowa staff for the Hillary Clinton campaign for president and as served as communications director and lead for policy and political of Adrian Garcia’s campaign for Harris County Commissioner Precinct 2.

**Ms. Lucy Randel** (Board Vice President, Air Alliance Houston) holds a Bachelor of Arts (with distinction) in Environmental Studies, and a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering, both from The University of Pennsylvania, and Master of Science in Chemical Engineering from the University of California at Berkeley. Ms. Randel is a chemical and environmental engineering professional with experience in government, industrial, and non-profit sectors. For the past 15 years she has partnered with Air Alliance Houston and predecessors (Galveston Houston Association for Smog Prevention, Industry Professionals for Clean Air, and Mothers for Clean Air) to improve Houston air quality. Ms. Randel’s research into emissions from industrial flares and tanks was used to advocate for stricter standards that were incorporated into the U.S. EPA Refinery Rule. During the recent ITC tank fire in Deer Park, she provided technical support to Air Alliance Houston in interpreting air monitoring data provided by local officials. She is also committed to empowering our youth, working on Air Alliance Houston education activities, judging science fairs, and volunteering with Urban Harvest in school gardens.

**Sarah Gossett Robinson** (Galveston Bay Foundation) earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Geosciences, and minors in Oceanography and Economics, from Texas A&M University, and a professional certificate in Behavior Change for Sustainability from the University of California at San Diego. Ms. Robinson is currently pursuing a Master’s Degree in Natural Resource Development from Texas A&M. As the Water Programs Manager at Galveston Bay Foundation, Sarah leads efforts in executing diverse programs that help ensure Galveston Bay’s waters remain fishable and swimmable. She is passionate about engaging citizens and decision makers in hands-on experiences to improve water quality for both human and ecological health.

**Ms. Perla Treviso** (Environmental Reporter, Houston Chronicle) earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Texas at Austin, and a Master of Arts in journalism from Universidad Rey Juan Carlos in Spain. Previously, Ms. Perla was a member of the Arizona Daily Star’s investigative team, focusing on border and immigration. Ms. Perla has covered a range of topics, from county politics to higher education in Texas and Tennessee, and reported from nearly a dozen countries. Recognized for her reporting, Ms. Perla has won state and national awards, including the Dori J. Maynard Award for Diversity in Journalism, the French-American Foundation Immigration Journalism Award, and a national Edward R. Murrow award for a story created in collaboration with Arizona Public Media. Additional recognition of her reporting has led to Ms. Perla being a finalist for both Livingston and Peabody awards.