

Presenter Bios

Tarassa Froberg: Tarassa Froberg, MSW, is the current Dependency Training Specialist for the Administrative Office of the Court's (AOC's) Family & Youth Justice Programs (FYJP). She has extensive experience working in child welfare. She worked at the Department of Children Youth and Families for 27 years prior to working at AOC. This included 19 years at a local office working directly with families and as a supervisor. She has worked as the statewide program manager for Child and Family Welfare Services, Family Voluntary Services, CPS-Investigation and CPS-FAR. In addition, she has managed the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act and the Children's Justice Act Grant, facilitated Citizen Review Panels, written federal reports, analyzed legislation, managed program improvement plans, trained system partners and much more. Tarassa holds a bachelor's degree in psychology for Washington State University and a master's degree in social work from the University of Washington. She is passionate about maintaining the safety and wellbeing of children and the preservation of families through system improvement.

Commissioner Michelle Ressa: was appointed to the Spokane County Superior Court bench in May 2007. Before that, she spent a year as the Superior Court Commissioner in Grant County. Commissioner Ressa was born and raised in Spokane and graduated from the University of Washington in 1992 with a degree in Political Science. She graduated, *cum laude*, in 1996 from Gonzaga University School of Law.

Commissioner Ressa has spent her entire legal career working in the field of child welfare, or as she describes, in public health. Appointed in 1996 by then Attorney General Christine Gregoire, Ms. Ressa represented the Department of Social and Health Services in dependency, termination and licensing actions in Thurston, Lewis, and Mason Counties. She also represented DSHS in King County for several years before taking a position representing Children's Administration Headquarters in 2002. Commissioner Ressa also represented DSHS in civil tort cases for two years before her appointment to the bench.

Currently Commissioner Ressa is the judicial officer assigned to the Indian Child Welfare Team in Spokane County Juvenile Court. Her dependency caseload consists only of Native American children and their families. Her other dockets include family law motions, civil protection orders, child support modifications, mental health hearings, at-risk-youth, truancy, guardianship and trusts, first-appearance hearings in adult criminal cases, and miscellaneous cases appearing in ex courts.

Commissioner Ressa is a member and former co-chair of the statewide Superior Court Judges' Association Family and Juvenile Law Committee. She is also a member of an advisory committee for DCYF, and several statewide workgroups and committees focused on improving family and juvenile courts. She has conducted numerous hours of training for the courts, the Department, the Attorney General's office and the child welfare community. She teaches Juvenile Law as an adjunct professor at Gonzaga University School of Law. She has consistently shown her dedication and passion for children and families navigating their way through a complicated, emotional, and financially challenging legal system.

Gabrial Cisneros-Lassey: Gabrial is a proud dad to two kiddos, who has used their experiences with the Child Welfare System to not only become a healthier stronger man, but to also help support and empower other parents who are trying to get there as well. He holds Positions of Service with both the Spokane Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN) and Washington State Parent Ally Committee (WSPAC), for the last 2 years. He has recently accepted roles at the national level to help even more families. He believes that much was given to his family and intends to return the favor.

Jonas Rios: Jona is a former Foster Youth and is a Youth Advocate (he/him). Jonas' first shelter care hearing was at 17 years old in California and he has experienced recurrent ACEs and housing instability his entire life. His first introduction to youth advocacy work was in a leadership academy program at 18 years old designed for foster youth to learn more about legislative/policy work. From that point, Jonas has been engaged in a variety of different youth-led advocacy spaces and non-profit organizations that are centered around helping system-impacted youth. Jonas brings a very trauma informed approach with lived experience and is focused on centering youth voices that are often ignored or misunderstood.

Judge Andrea Jarmon: Judge Andrea S. Jarmon was elected to the King County District Court bench in the November 2022 General Election. Her prior judicial experience includes serving as a full-time administrative law judge with the Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals and as a pro-tempore commissioner for the King County Superior Court Dependency and Becca Programs calendar.

Prior to joining the bench, Judge Jarmon's 15-years of legal experience include serving as a city prosecutor for the City of Seattle and City of Auburn; and as a prosecutor for the Washington State Attorney General's Office Criminal, Sexually Violent Predator, and L&I Divisions. She also was an attorney in private practice representing indigent parents in termination, family law, and other criminal matters.

Judge Jarmon's journey to the bench began on King County Metro Bus #174 when she was a homeless youth using public transit and shelters for safety. Later, as a young mother in a domestic violence relationship, she experienced navigating the court system as a pro se litigant. She entered the legal profession to give voice and representation to people with stories like hers. Judge Jarmon deeply believes that each person who comes before the court has a right to fair and impartial decisions that are guided by a deep understanding of the law balanced with compassion.

Judge Jarmon earned a Juris Doctor (JD) Degree from the University of Washington (UW), along with BA Degrees in English and Women Studies.

Tarena Coleman: Tarena Coleman holds a Master's degree in Social Work and had been contracted with the Washington State Office of Public Defense Parent Representation Program (PRP) in Spokane County since 2008. She served as the Clinical Supervisor for the Spokane County Parent for Parents program for over 10 years, pioneered the first Shelter Care Early Engagement Project in Washington which she continues to manage in Spokane County, and holds the position of PRP social services contractor lead for Region 1. Tarena is dedicated to fostering authentic, collaborative working relationships with parents

and multidisciplinary teams in pursuit of excellence, justice, service, and equity for families.