



## **Susie Rivera, Vice President of Youth Voice Initiatives and Executive Director of Santa Clara County**

Susie currently serves as the VP of Youth Voice Initiatives and Executive Director of Santa Clara County for Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY) and has been with FLY since 2001. Over the years, Susie has worn many different hats, from overseeing programs, bridging programs and fund development, and working with partners in our community and systems. Throughout her tenure at FLY she has remained grounded in the importance of youth voice and youth transformation, and oversees all youth voice initiatives internally and externally at FLY.

Additionally, Susie is a Lecturer at San Jose State University in the College of Health and Human Sciences, teaching in the departments of Justice Studies and Public Health for classes titled Drugs and Society, Juvenile Justice, Justice Management and Ethics, Media and Justice, Police and Society, Penal Policy, Race, Class, Gender, and the Law, and an upper division writing workshop.

She has been teaching since 2007 and through teaching she hopes to impact the next wave of individuals who will be working in the system, encouraging them to utilize a human rights approach while being positive change agents and advocating for and with our community members. Susie is passionate about youth development, system change work, justice and equity, community building, and working closely with stakeholders and the community to come up with viable, sustainable solutions, and effective policy changes to juvenile justice issues.

Susie earned her B.S. in Criminal Justice Administration and Sociology from San Jose State University. She also received her Master in Justice Studies there, and her thesis focused on the effects of incarceration on Latinx families and Women in the system. In addition, Susie obtained her Juris Doctorate, her Certification as a Professional Coactive Coach (CPCC), Certification in Fundraising Management from Indiana University, and Certification as a Victim Offender Mediator. She sits on many leadership circles throughout the Bay Area and currently holds a position on the Policy Council for Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits where she is able to advocate for the nonprofit sector as a whole.

Susie was born and raised in East San Jose where she witnessed and experienced first-hand many of the issues confronting our youth. She has dedicated her career helping young people reach their best selves while simultaneously doing system change work to ensure the system becomes more equitable and just. Rivera has received awards for her efforts in the community, including an award for Diversity Enhancement, the Hispanic Heritage Leadership Award from the NFL, and the Outstanding Lecturer Award at SJSU.

Susie has three adult children, a grandchild, and still resides in the beautiful East Foothills of San Jose with her husband John. In her free time she is a pitbull enthusiast and spends lots of time training her dogs, cruising on a Sunday afternoon in her classic car, traveling to new places, and enjoying the beauty of nature.

