




# City of Seattle Boards & Commissions Notice of Appointment

<b>Appointee Name:</b> <i>Maria – Jose Soerens</i>		
<b>Board/Commission Name:</b> Equitable Development Initiative Advisory Board		<b>Position Title:</b> <i>Member</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Appointment</b> OR <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reappointment</b>	<b>City Council Confirmation required?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<b>Appointing Authority:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> City Council <input type="checkbox"/> Mayor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <i>Equitable Development Advisory Board</i>	<b>Term of Position: *</b> 3/1/2021 <b>to</b> 2/28/2023  <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Serving remaining term of a vacant position</i>	
<b>Residential Neighborhood:</b> <i>South Park</i>	<b>Zip Code:</b>	<b>Contact Phone No.:</b>
<b>Background:</b> Maria-Jose “Coté” Soerens is the founding executive director of Puentes, an immigrant-led organization mobilizing mental health resources to support undocumented immigrants and their families as they struggle with a broken immigration system. A new immigrant herself, Maria-Jose was born in Chile and has made Seattle her home, where she lives with her husband Tim and their sons. Taking "illegality" as a lens Maria-Jose is an avid student of legal status as a social determinant of the health of neighborhoods and communities, writing academically on cultural psychology and migration studies, and organizing for housing justice, economic opportunity, and access to justice and health in South Park, her neighborhood. She is a fellow at Justlead WA's Equal Justice Community Leadership Academy, and a board member of Communities First Association and a founding member of WA Immigrant Solidarity Network. She speaks and writes often on immigration and mental health, and the role of local communities in fostering social transformation.		
<b>Authorizing Signature (original signature):</b>  <b>Date Signed (appointed):</b> <b>02/16/2021</b>	<b>Appointing Signatory:</b> <i>Quynh Pham</i> <i>Board Chair</i>	

# Maria-Jose (Coté) Soerens

## Objective

To become a member of the Equitable Development Initiative Advisory Board.

## Experience

### **Cultivate South Park, Seattle, WA.**

**January 2020-Present**

*Co-Founder, Director of Community Initiatives*

- Develop neighborhood initiatives by identifying and connecting neighborhood gifts.
- Program creation, fundraising, contract and grant management.
- Facilitate creation and management of teams and organizational culture, as well as collaborations and partnerships.
- Help coordinate programs for the Arts & Culture Collective, the Urban Fresh Food Collective, and the Business District.

### **Resistencia Coffee, LLC, Seattle, WA**

**June 2017-Present**

*Founding CEO, Majority Owner*

- Developed and implemented vision for neighborhood coffeeshop as cultural anchor and community hub.
- Raised capital funding and achieved completion of buildout at half the cost and half the timeline by leveraging neighborhood resources. Resistencia has been debt free and profitable from the beginning and has grown as a beloved spot in the city. We nurture the local economy by training and employing South Park residents and have promoted the arts and food justice in South Park, as well as local entrepreneurs in the visual and culinary arts.

### **Puentes: Advocacy, Counseling & Education, Seattle, WA**

**June 2014-April 2017**

*Founding Executive Director & Director of Community Initiatives*

- Established the organizational structure for Puentes as a 501c3 not-for-profit corporation dedicated to increase access to justice through culturally relevant mental health services for immigrants in WA State.
- Raised financial resources growing the organization from 1 to 5 staff members in three years.
- Established board of directors.
- Managed overall operations of Puentes including accounting, staff, fundraising, and growth.
- Provided clinical services to immigrants in the community.
- Designed and implemented community initiatives led by immigrant community members.
- Supervised clinical interns and clinical staff.
- Designed trainings for mental health professionals wanting to learn about Forensic assessments for immigration proceedings.
- Conducted forensic assessments for immigration proceedings, working alongside immigration attorneys and testifying in court when necessary.
- Mobilized advocacy efforts on behalf of immigrant members of the community and mobilized campaigns on behalf of detainees at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma in collaboration with immigrant rights organizations in WA.
- Responsible to identify emerging leaders in the Latino immigrant community and provide technical assistance to design and implement programs that will foster access to mental health.
- Design and implementation of the Community Care Worker Network for youth core and adults.
- Coordinate efforts for housing justice in South Park from the perspective of monolingual Spanish speaking, low-income, immigrant neighbors.

- Grant application and management.
- Provided supervision to clinical and peer-support staff at Puentes.
- Writing curriculum for training of community mental health workers.
- Training of clinical staff on forensic assessments for immigration proceedings.

### **The River Beneath Counseling, PS**

**May 2009-May 2014**

*Owner, Licensed Mental Health Counselor*

- Provided professional mental health services in Spanish and English in the context of private practice in Seattle, WA.
- Conducted forensic assessments for immigration proceedings, working alongside immigration attorneys and testifying in court when necessary.

### **Pilgrim Africa, Seattle, WA**

**February 2009-May 2009**

*Director of Marketing and Communications*

- Produced and developed stock photography and video to communicate Pilgrim Africa's mission. This project included travel to Northeastern Uganda to interview members of the community about the impact of Pilgrim's work in the areas of Economic Opportunity, Health, and Education.

### **Agros International, Seattle, WA**

**August 2007-January 2009**

*Creative Services Associate*

- Supported Agros International's efforts to communicate its mission through graphic design, web management, social media, video and photography edition. Through this work I had the opportunity to do significant field work in the rural areas of Central America and learn about the impact of marginalization for the rural poor, as well as the importance of access to markets.

### **The Nature Consortium, Seattle, WA**

**August 2006-July 2007**

*Site Coordinator, Rainier Vista*

- Coordinated the after school arts program hosted at the Neighborhood House in Rainier Vista.

### **ING Chile, Santiago, Chile**

**December 2003-July 2005**

*HR Analyst*

- Design and implementation of performance evaluation system for 5,000 employees.
- Designed and managed the incentive programs for the Sales Force.

## **Education**

**Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, Middlesex University, School of Law, Social Policy Group**

**2011-**

MPhil/PhD

**Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology, Northwest University**

**2005-2007**

MA in Counseling Psychology

**BA in Clinical Psychology & Organizational Development, Universidad Central de Chile**

**1999-2005**

Summa Cum Laude

## **Volunteer Leadership Experience**

**Creative Space Agency, Seattle, WA**

**August 2020-Present**

*Public Development Agency Council Member*

The Creative Space Agency work to increase arts spaces controlled by communities of color in Seattle .

**Equitable Development Initiative Interim Advisory Board, Seattle, WA**

**March 2017-Present**

*Board Member*

The EDI Board helps to determine criteria for projects and programs that will receive Equitable Development funding.

**Business Impact Northwest, Seattle, WA** 2018-2020

*Board Member*

**Communities First Association, Chicago, IL** July 2016-June 2018

*Board Vice-President*

Communities First Association equips and networks community development leaders to build community strength and seek just sustainable transformation.

**South Park Neighborhood Association, Seattle, WA** February 2017-2019

*Board Member*

SPNA is a community membership organization that gives voice to residents of South Park. We bring neighbors together, foster a sense of community, and provide a forum for residents to make South Park better.

**Duwamish Valley Equitable Housing Coalition, Seattle, WA.** August 2017-May 2018

*Co-founding Member*

The Duwamish Valley Equitable Housing Coalition works to implement strategies that decrease displacement and increase opportunity for neighbors in South Park.

## Fellowships & Cohorts

**Seattle Office of Arts & Culture's Build Art Space Equitably (BASE) Program Cohort 3** November 2020-Present

**JustLead, Washington Bar Association, Access to Justice Board** July 2015-Present

*Cohort 3 of the Equal Justice Leadership Academy*

## Academic Experience

**Faculty, University of Washington, School of Law, Pro-Bono clinic.** October 11, 2016

*"Working with Clients Experiencing Crisis."*

**Panel Speaker, The Justice Summit, Washington DC** June 24, 2016

**Keynote Speaker, Latino Women's Conference, Seattle, WA** May 21, 2016

**Keynote Speaker, Chi Sigma Iota Honor Society, Seattle University, School of Education** May 7, 2016

**Presenter, Society for Applied Anthropology, Vancouver, BC** April 1, 2016

*Becoming a Victim: Governance and the Lived Experience of Asylum Seekers in the U.S.*

**Lecturer, University of Washington School of Social Work.** November 10, 2015

*"From Case to Cause: Clinical praxis with the oppressed."*

**Faculty, University of Washington, School of Law, Pro-Bono clinic.** October 17, 2015

*"Working with Clients Experiencing Crisis."*

**Panel Speaker, University of Washington, School Medicine.** February 9, 2015

*"Activism, Solidarity, and Structural Competency in the Health Professions."*

Faculty, University of Washington, School of Law, Pro-Bono clinic.

October 11, 2014

*"Working with Clients Experiencing Crisis."*

Faculty, Washington State Bar Association

July 15, 2014

*"Achieving Inclusion: Providing culturally competent legal services to undocumented trauma survivors."*

## Peer-Reviewed Publications

Soerens, M. J. (2015). Violence in the Borderlands: A Dialogical Approach to Intimate Partner Violence among Migrant Women. *Psychology & Society*, 7(1), 64–81.

Soerens, M. J. (2016). (Sub)Mission: Kēnosis as prophetic and political action in migrant detention. In S. J. Tira & T. Yamamori (Eds.), *Scattered and Gathered: A Global Compendium of Diaspora Missiology* (pp.460-460), Oxford, UK: Regnum.

## Community Awards

2015 Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, Outstanding Community Partner Award to Puentes

2017 WA Bar Association's Access to Justice Board, Justice Partner Award to Puentes in recognition of groundbreaking community-based effort to ensure equal justice for marginalized communities in WA State.

2017 Business Impact Northwest, Best StartUp, Resistencia Coffee

## Languages

Spanish, Native written and spoken

English, Advanced written and spoken

## Computer Skills

Advanced Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Google Apps.

Web hosting and Content Management Tools.

Design Software: Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign.

Marketing & Communication tools like social media and email management platforms.

Quickbooks.

## Other Skills

Group facilitation

Public speaking

Writing

Networking and connecting people

Leadership Development & Coaching

Power Analysis

Grassroots & Grasstips Organizing

Social Entrepreneurship

Starting Businesses and Organizations

# Equitable Development Initiative Advisory Board

**13** Members: Pursuant to *Ordinance 119887*, *all* members subject to City Council confirmation.

- a) Initial members in positions 3, 6, 9, 12, and 13 shall be members of the Equitable Development Initiative’s Interim Advisory Board as of the effective date of this ordinance
  - b) The initial terms for positions 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 13 shall be one year
  - c) The initial terms for positions 2, 5, 7, 9, 11, and 12 shall be two years
  - d) All subsequent terms shall be for three years. With the exception of initial positions 3, 6, 9, 12, and 13 no member shall serve more than two consecutive three-year terms
- **3** City Council-appointed
  - **3** Mayor-appointed
  - **7** Other Appointing Authority-appointed (specify): Initial appointments by Interim Advisory Board, subsequent appointments by Advisory Board

**Roster:**

*D	**G	RD	Position No.	Position Title	Name	Term Begin Date	Term End Date	Term #	Appointed By
			1.	Member		3/1/2021	2/28/2022	1	Mayor
			2.	Member		3/1/2021	2/28/2023	1	Mayor
			3.	Member		3/1/2021	2/28/2022	1	Mayor
			4.	Member	Lindsay Goes Behind	3/1/2021	2/28/2022	1	City Council
			5.	Member	Abdirahman Yusuf	3/1/2021	2/28/2023	1	City Council
			6.	Member	Gregory Davis	3/1/2021	2/28/2022	1	City Council
			7.	Member		3/1/2021	2/28/2023	1	Board
			8.	Member		3/1/2021	2/28/2022	1	Board
			9.	Member	Willard A. Brown	3/1/2021	2/28/2023	1	Board
			10.	Member	Quynh Pham	3/1/2021	2/28/2022	1	Board
			11.	Member	Regina Mae Dove	3/1/2021	2/28/2023	1	Board
			12.	Member	Maria – Jose Soerens	3/1/2021	2/28/2023	1	Board
			13.	Member	Yordanos Teferi	3/1/2021	2/28/2022	1	Board

**SELF-IDENTIFIED DIVERSITY CHART**

					(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
	Male	Female	Transgender	NB/ O/ U	Asian	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Other	Caucasian/ Non-Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Middle Eastern	Multiracial
<b>Mayor</b>													
<b>Council</b>													
<b>Other</b>													
<b>Total</b>													

**Key:**

**\*D** List the corresponding *Diversity Chart* number (1 through 9)

**\*\*G** List *gender*, **M**= Male, **F**= Female, **T**= Transgender, **NB**= Non-Binary **O**= Other **U**= Unknown

**RD** Residential Council District number 1 through 7 or N/A

*Diversity information is self-identified and is voluntary.*