

Meet the Team

Claudia Espino (she/her/ella)



"I love my job because some of the funniest, most meaningful conversations I have had are with youth. I also get to support them in making choices that support their health and well-being. It's an honor and privilege to work with youth and I learn so much from them every day."

Claudia Espino was born in San Jose and raised in Gilroy, California. She attended UC Santa Cruz where she earned a degree in Molecular, Cell, and Developmental Biology.

During her time at UC Santa Cruz Claudia was Coordinator of the HIV Testing Program at Student Health Outreach and Promotion (SHOP). There, she performed focused outreach to priority campus communities and assisted students in: talking with partners and accessing STI testing, treatment, and PrEP, an HIV prevention medication. Claudia is a seasoned and certified HIV/HCV test counselor.

Claudia is currently working on obtaining a Master's in Public Health from UC Berkeley where she hopes to learn more about the principles behind improving health outcomes. She is passionate about educating others and is proud to be a member of the Teen Health Outreach team where she has provided evidence-informed facilitation to support youth since 2019.

Sergio Jimenez (he/him/el)



"What I enjoy most about working in THO is working together with the team to support and empower the youth in their care of their health and well-being. "

Sergio Jimenez was born and raised in Salinas, California. He attended UC Santa Cruz, earning a degree in Human Biology.

As an undergraduate, Sergio was dedicated to promoting health in his community through the student-led clubs he joined in college. From helping to plan community health fairs, conducting outreach at local high schools, to helping the migrant community apply for healthcare coverage, he has participated in health promotion and education at various levels.

Sergio also has experience in social work case management, working as a liaison connecting individuals in need and the community resources that can help them.

Joining the Teen Health Outreach team in 2021, Sergio continues to be enthusiastic about providing health education and support to Santa Cruz County's youth.

Mariela Renteria (her/she/ella)



"I am really grateful to be able to serve my community. I look forward to continue doing my work, and to providing resources and preventative services to the youth in our community. Youth are our future, let's help them walk the path to a successful tomorrow."

Mariela Renteria was born in Salinas and raised in Watsonville, California. She is a proud graduate of Watsonville High School. Go, Wildcats!

Mariela attended Bryman College and earned a certification as a Medical Assistant. She completed her internship at Doctor's on Duty in Watsonville. For many years, she worked as a Medical Assistant at Salud Para La Gente. She served families and youth in Obstetrics, Family Practice, and Pediatrics, and in the Comprehensive Perinatal Services Program.

She has nearly 20 years of experience providing family planning education, including reproductive health and birth control options counseling to patients of all ages, including youth.

Mariela has been with the County since 2006. In 2018 she joined the Teen Health Outreach program and enjoys supporting youth in their wellbeing.

Nancy Willard (she/they)



"My favorite things about my work are supporting a stellar team of facilitators and engaging with community partners to support the rights, dignity, and vitality of teens and young adults."

Nancy was born in Salinas and raised in Hollister, California. She moved to Santa Cruz County to attend UCSC for a B.A. in Psychology with a minor in Education. Between undergrad and grad school, Nancy learned about the field of public health and facilitated sexual health education workshops at UCSC with students. She earned a Master of Public Health at the University of Michigan, focusing on communications, community engagement, and adolescent health.

Before returning to CA, Nancy managed a community health worker program, coordinated clinical research, was a content developer and behavioral scientist for a health communications team, taught at the University of Michigan School of Public Health, and provided consultation on motivational interviewing programs.

Nancy joined THO in 2018. Nancy now manages the Teen Health Outreach team and the Substance Use Prevention team.