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|  | <p>California Caucus of College and University Ombuds 52nd Annual Conference</p> <p><i>Finding Solid Ground in Shifting Sands</i> Asilomar Conference Center, Pacific Grove, CA November 9th-12th, 2025</p> |
| <p>All activities will occur in the Fred Farr Room unless specified.</p> | |
| <p>Sunday, November 9, 2025</p> | |
| <p>4:00 - 6:00 PM</p> | <p>Conference registration: Fred Farr room Room check-in: Asilomar Front Desk Co-Registrars: Amanda Dean & Nellie Haddad</p> |
| <p>6:00 - 7:00 PM</p> | <p>Dinner Location: Fred Farr Room</p> |
| <p>7:00 - 8:30 PM</p> | <p>Brief Welcome, Introductions & Dessert</p> |
| <p>Monday, November 10, 2025</p> | |
| <p>7:30 - 8:30 AM</p> | <p>Breakfast Location: Crocker Dining Hall</p> |
| <p>8:45 - 9:00 AM</p> | <p>Opening Remarks Co-Convenors: Natalie Gibson & Serena Young</p> |
| <p>9:00 - 9:15 AM</p> | <p>Opening Mini-Circles Facilitators: Natalie Fleury & Sigal Shoham</p> |
| <p>9:15- 10:15 AM</p> | <p>Session 1: Jackie Reese, <i>Cultivating Joy: Developing, Maintaining and Modeling a Practice of Joy</i></p> |
| <p>10:15 - 10:30 AM</p> | <p>BREAK</p> |
| <p>10:30 - 11:45 AM</p> | <p>Session 2: Angela Dash, <i>Practitioner Humility: Finding Ground in Letting Go</i></p> |
| <p>12:00 - 1:00 PM</p> | <p>Lunch Location: Crocker Dining Hall</p> |

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| 1:15 - 2:30 PM | Session 3: Kathie Greenwood, <i>Shifting Sands, Shifting Perspectives: Harnessing Archetypal Imagination to Transform Conflict</i> |
| 2:30 - 2:45 PM | Break |
| 2:45 - 3:00 PM | Session 4: Caroline Adams, <i>An Ombuds Program Advisory Committee: Your Beach Umbrella</i> |
| 3:00 - 3:45 PM | Session 5: Waged Jafer, <i>Victimhood to Agency: The Transformative Power of Good Ombudstry</i> |
| 3:45 - 4:00 PM | Daily Evaluation & Small Caucus Sign ups |
| 6:00 - 7:00 PM | Dinner Location: Crocker Dining Hall |
| 7:00 - 9:00 PM | Team Building Activities |
| Tuesday, November 11, 2025 | |
| 7:30 - 8:30 AM | Breakfast Location: Crocker Dining Hall |
| 8:45 - 9:00 AM | Announcements |
| 9:00 - 10:15 AM | Session 6: Jennifer Mahony, <i>A Sure Foundation in Shifting Sands: Adding the Foundation of Curiosity into Your Education Tool-Kit</i> |
| 10:15-10:30 AM | Break |
| 10:30-11:30 AM | Session 7: Tom Kosakowski, <i>From Sifting Sands to Sifting Ashes: Lessons from a Personal Disaster</i> |
| 11:30 - 11:45 AM | Awards |
| 11:45 AM - 12 PM | Evaluations & Group Photo |
| 12:00 PM -1:00 PM | Lunch Location: Crocker Dining Hall |
| 1:00 - 5:00 PM | Caucus and Small Group Discussions |

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| | This session provides time for self- and small group reflection, and for networking with colleagues. Groups form around shared interests in a topic and/or activity. |
| 6:00 - 7:00 PM | Dinner Location: Crocker Dining Hall |
| 7:30 - 9:00 PM | Gift Exchange Location: Fred Farr This Cal Caucus tradition provides an entertaining way to learn more about your colleagues. Bring a wrapped gift (to keep it a surprise) that represents a passion or interest in your life. <i>Maximum \$25.</i> |

| Wednesday, November 12, 2025 | |
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| 7:30 - 8:30 AM | Breakfast Location: Crocker Dining Hall |
| 8:45 - 9:00 AM | Announcements |
| 9:00 – 9:45 AM | Session 8: Paul Caffera, <i>Fortifying the Safe Harbor: Practical Safeguards for Ombuds Confidentiality in a Digital Age</i> |
| 9:45 - 10:00 AM | Session 9: Martha Patrick, <i>The Appreciation Station: A Novel Approach to Outreach for Ombuds Programs</i> |
| 10:00 – 11:00 AM | Closing Circles Facilitators: Natalie Fleury & Sigal Shoham |
| 11:00 - 11:15 AM | Break, Evaluations & Caucus Conclusion Bag lunch will be provided |
| 11:15 - 11:45 AM | Cal Caucus Debrief and Planning Meeting Caucus content debrief - continuing the conversations ... Please take advantage of this opportunity to share your ideas and shape the direction of the next conference. |
| 11:45 AM - 12:15 PM | Cal Caucus Annual Business Meeting Everyone is welcome! |

QR Code at tables:

Resource Share [Cal Caucus Resource Share Document 2025](#) Review last year's resource share and add any new favorites!

Brief Session Abstracts:

Session 1: *Cultivating Joy: Developing, Maintaining and Modeling a Practice of Joy.*

This interactive session is designed to support fellow Ombuds in developing a consistent, readily accessible practice of self-care; centered around Joy. As care practitioners, (particularly during a season that often feels as fraught as rest) the potential for our own overwhelm, exhaustion, and burnout is higher than ever. How do we show up consistently as ports in the storm when we're neck deep in the waters ourselves?

Session 2: *Practitioner Humility: Finding Ground in Letting Go.* In uncertain systems, ombuds may feel pressure to solve, steer, or prove. This session introduces Practitioner Humility—the discipline of grounding ourselves in presence and curiosity, not control. Participants will explore how bracketing assumptions and deep attunement create space for visitor clarity, trust, and shared meaning to emerge.

Session 3: *Shifting Sands, Shifting Perspectives: Harnessing Archetypal Imagination to Transform Conflict.* Discover the transformative power of archetypal imagination. Sand-Tray-Play is a symbolic and tactile tool that can be used to foster conflict management insights. By bridging Jung's theories of Active Imagination with Sand-Tray-Play, this interactive session advances a fresh, safe, and nonjudgmental methodology in working with visitors or groups.

Session 4: *An Ombuds Program Advisory Committee: Your Beach Umbrella.* Explore the critical role that an advisory committee can play in ombuds programs. This session examines their value in feedback, outreach, confidentiality, and continuity. Learn how diverse, well-connected advisors can enhance program visibility, protect neutrality, and advocate during leadership transitions. Discover why this underutilized best practice deserves more attention.

Session 5: *The Transformative Power of Good Ombudsmen.* *Challenging the idea that victimhood is synonymous with powerlessness and weakness, its insistence on fixity of position, that leaves no space for the creative transformation for agency. Instead, victimhood, when properly positioned and worked up on can be transformative and an Ombuds can be that trusted guardian who can promote and teach that understanding.*

Session 6: *A Sure Foundation in Shifting Sands: Adding the Foundation of Curiosity into Your Education Tool-Kit.* *Effective communication, team cohesion, high performance, resilience--they all share a common element: the discipline and practice of curiosity. This session accomplishes two things. First, learn about recent research on the dimensions of curiosity at work and how you can develop your curiosity muscle. Second, through discussion, individual work, and interactive experience, build a workshop plan for educating your organizations on building their curiosity muscle. Templates, slides, and resources will be provided.*

Session 7: *From Sifting Sands to Sifting Ashes: Lessons from a Personal Disaster.* *This session will describe how a personal and community tragedy affected a long-time Ombuds. The destructive event offered fresh insights relevant to the Ombuds' work with visitors, their relationship with the organization, and connections to professional colleagues in California and throughout the world. The session will also encourage discussion about how personal setbacks have influenced the work of other Ombuds at the caucus.*

Session 8: *Fortifying the Safe Harbor: Practical Safeguards for Ombuds Confidentiality in a Digital Age.* *Moving beyond basic confidentiality practices, this session examines sophisticated threats to ombuds security including next-generation hardware exploits, advanced social engineering tactics, and institutional surveillance architectures. Participants will gain advanced countermeasures against emerging vulnerabilities that traditional security frameworks fail to address in high-stake ombuds environments.*

Session 9: *The Appreciation Station: A Novel Approach to Outreach for Ombuds Programs.* Ombuds have a serious marketing problem. In addition to our mystifying moniker, our services can come to be associated with high-stakes and negative experiences and interactions. Learn about this novel outreach activity using “thank you” cards to increase program awareness, build community, and deliver health-promoting and pro-social messages.

Presenter Brief Bios:

Caroline Adams

Caroline Adams has been Director of the Office of the Ombuds at the University of California-Santa Barbara for over a decade where she focuses on faculty and leadership. She is a Certified Organizational Ombudsman Practitioner (CO-OP), certified Mediator, and holds a graduate certificate in Organization Development and Leadership. She has served as Co-chair of the Ombuds Committee of the American Bar Association's Section of Dispute Resolution. Previously, she has worked as an in-house employee and labor relations representative at UCSB, litigator at the Crowley Fleck firm, and faculty at Montana State University. Adams earned her J.D. from University of Montana, M.F.A. from Montana State, and B.A. in Psychology from Pomona College. She is author of the chapter Legal Issues for Organizational Ombuds Practice featured in *The Organizational Ombuds: Foundations, Fundamentals & its Future*. Her articles have been featured in the American Bar Association's Dispute Resolution Magazine, the Journal of the International Ombuds Association, the Journal of the California Caucus of College and University Ombuds, and Santa Barbara Lawyer Magazine.

She started her UCSB career in the Employee and Labor Relations unit where she was responsible for providing leadership training to management. Prior to coming to UCSB, she was a litigation associate at the CrowleyFleck firm in Bozeman, Montana. She has also held positions as a professor, and as a teacher. She earned her J.D. from University of Montana, M.F.A. from Montana State University, and B.A. in Psychology from Pomona College. In her free time, she is usually on the water or in the mountains.

Paul Caffera

Paul J. Caffera is University Ombuds at the University of Mississippi, a Carnegie R1 institution with six campuses. He was named Outstanding Executive Staff Member for enhancing institutional effectiveness. With over 30 years in alternative dispute resolution, Caffera has managed complex disputes across North America, including seven-figure, class-action, and CEO/executive termination claims. He's served corporate, public-sector, and nonprofit organizations in high-stakes mediations. An executive coach with The Konza Group, an International Mediation Institute qualified mediator, and Georgetown Certified Facilitator, he employs diverse tools and brings to bear an insightful and strategic approach to his ombuds practice.

He designed and implemented sophisticated, layered network-security architectures to protect visitor confidentiality for both his ADR practice and the ombuds program. Prior to becoming an Ombuds, Caffera practiced nationwide as a labor arbitrator/mediator and also worked as an investigative journalist on aviation terrorism and national security. He is currently pursuing a doctorate in higher education administration at the University of Kansas.

Angela Dash

Angela Dash, PhD, is a certified Organizational Ombuds, conflict resolution specialist, and coach with over a decade of experience guiding individuals and organizations through conflict, change, and growth. She currently serves as the inaugural part-time Ombuds at the Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine while providing contract ombuds services to other institutions. Since 2018, she has also supported FEMA as an on-call Alternative Dispute Resolution Advisor, facilitating employee conflict resolution in disaster response settings.

Dr. Dash holds a PhD in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from Nova Southeastern University, specializing in organizational, educational, and healthcare systems. Her ombuds practice is informed by advanced training in trauma-informed resilience, restorative principles, and coaching methodologies. A former adjunct professor at New York University, she taught in both the Coaching Certification Program and the Graduate Program in Executive Coaching and Organizational Consulting.

Katherine Greenwood

Kathie Greenwood has over a decade of experience serving as an organizational ombuds. Currently, she is the University Ombuds at the University of Southern California (USC), located in sunny Los Angeles, where she serves faculty, staff, and students. Prior to becoming an ombuds, Kathie worked as an attorney, mediator, professor, and as an executive coach. Kathie earned her J.D. from Tulane University and her Ph.D. from Pacifica Graduate Institute. She currently serves as the Chair of the Ombuds Board of SOS Children's Villages, the largest non-governmental organization focused on supporting children without parental care.

Waged Jafer

Waged Jafer joined the Ombuds office in December 2022 as the Deputy Ombuds. Prior to her arrival at Penn, Waged established the inaugural Ombuds office for Williams College in 2021. Prior to that she served as the Regional Ombudsperson for Near and Middle East with the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva. Her extensive experience in conflict resolution has been mainly in higher education in Canada. She has served as the

Ombudsperson for Quest University Canada as well as the Ombudsperson for UBC-Alma Matar Society. For two years she served as the Alternative Dispute Resolution Specialist at the Independent Investigations Office at UBC where she was tasked to develop the ADR framework as well as Restorative Justice program for cases of sexual misconduct as well as harassment and discrimination in that office. She has worked as a conflict management consultant and a sessional faculty member while completing her doctoral work at UBC. Waged has a bachelor's degree from Carleton University and a Master's degree in Conflict Studies from the University of Ottawa-Saint Paul and a PhD from the University of British Columbia.

Martha Patrick

Martha has worked in higher education for the past 28 years and has served as an ombuds since 2010, first at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and currently as the inaugural Director of Ombuds Services for the University of Massachusetts Boston serving students, faculty, and staff. She has earned CO-OP® certification through the International Ombuds Association and has specialized training in mediation, facilitation, and conflict coaching. She is the creator of the Visitor Experience and Standards Alignment (VXSA) Audit, a self-assessment tool for ombuds programs.

Prior to becoming an ombuds, Martha spent a decade as the Amherst campus' Community Relations Director, building bridges between the campus and local communities, negotiating community partnership agreements, and working to resolve town/gown issues. Previously, she served as the founding Director of the Rainbow Center at the University of Connecticut, worked as a supervisor for a community mental health agency, and launched a successful retail business. Martha holds a B.A. from Smith College and an M.Ed. in Higher Education from UMass Amherst.

Tom A. Kosakowski

Tom has been the inaugural University Ombuds for the Health Sciences Campus at USC since 2019. Tom had a similar job at UCLA for 12 years before that. He also created the Ombuds Office at Claremont Graduate University and served as the Campus Ombuds at UC Riverside. This is Tom's third career; he worked as an economist and attorney before becoming an Ombuds in 2007. He publishes The Ombuds Blog.

Jennifer Mahony

Jenn Mahony is the Boston Children's Hospital Ombuds Office Director. She has over 20 years of conflict resolution and conflict resiliency work as an ombuds, mediator, facilitator, conflict coach, and educator. She focuses on restorative practices so that people can feel successful at work and in their working relationships. She obtained her J.D. from Emory University School of Law in 2001, worked as a dispute resolution professional and ombuds in New Zealand for almost 10 years, and was previously an Associate Ombudsman at the National Institutes of Health. She is a member of the International Ombuds Association and serves as President-Elect on the Board of Directors. She is accredited through the Arbitrators and Mediators Institute of New Zealand, where she is a fellow in arbitration. She is a frequent presenter and educator on conflict resolution and building conflict resiliency at work.

Jackie Reese

Jackie Reese is a trained facilitator, mediator, team builder, and leadership coach, working in the role of ombuds at Bowdoin College. Jackie joined the College after nineteen years at Emory University, serving most recently as an associate director of accessibility services. She earned an associate of arts degree in communication at Georgia State University, a bachelor of interdisciplinary studies degree with focuses on writing, sociology, and information technology at Georgia Southern University, and a master's degree in peace studies and conflict resolution at Kennesaw State University.