

Prevention Team Bios

Ryan Townsend

Executive Director of the Justice Coalition

See <https://justiceco.org/about/who-we-are/> for bio

Jessica Pittman

Founder/Associate Director of the Justice Coalition

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Christa Wiens

Education Coordinator for the Justice Coalition

As an educator and a mother, Christa Wiens has a heart for young people. She sees prevention as the key, and is so proud to have been working with Central Valley Justice Coalition on these efforts for the past two years right here in her hometown. Teaching My Life, My Choice and HT101 classes are her favorite ways to be involved. As a member of North Fresno Church, she is passionate about spreading awareness to the faith community.

Julie Brager

Julie has been serving with CVJC for about 3 years now. She began by serving on the prayer team, attending regular prayer meetings to pray for CVJC and for the work around Fresno to fight human trafficking. This evolved into serving in other practical ways around the office and throughout the community. Julie's background is in Social Work.

"Before I had my kids I was a Social Worker for Fresno County - and I absolutely enjoy having a tangible way to get involved in serving others in my community and the Justice Coalition has been the perfect place to volunteer. My other passions are orphan care and teaching healthy relationship skills, both of which are related to the population and needs we serve at CVJC. My heart longs to reach youth before they experience the pain of unhealthy relationships with prevention and education, which is why I am excited to be a part of the Prevention Team. I am a wife and a mama of two boys and in my free time I love to camp, hike, drink good coffee and read!"

Alex Acree

Alex has been serving with CVJC for 4 years now. He started with doing the books and is now acting as Treasurer. He works with nonprofits and churches every day at Aplos, and has an in-depth understanding of fund accounting and nonprofit operations.

Alex believes that this subject of human trafficking is one that the general population isn't aware of, but it impacts them indirectly every day. "From the food on your plate, to the products you buy, to the people you see walking down the street, human trafficking is a serious problem (especially in Fresno County), and I feel that the biggest issue is that no one knows." Alex and his wife welcomed their first child in July 2016, a daughter, Camden Twila Acree.

Brenda Erese

Brenda Erese, as an Emergency Registered Nurse has observed the devastating consequences of abuse and decided to join CVJC to help prevent further expansion of human trafficking. Brenda ministers to women and children that have lived difficult circumstances. She believes that Jesus continues to transform lives and leads Bible studies in English and Spanish. She enjoys coordinating evangelism events and outreach in California and Mexico and continues to share the love of Christ by meeting immediate needs of the community.

Craig Brueckner

Craig grew up in Fresno – never moving more than 20 miles away. He has 2 grown children – 1 in college at Biola University, and one working for Mariners Church in Mission Viejo. Craig has been the President of the Board of Directors since December 2015.

"I think it is important to let everyone know that there is a real issue revolving around how we value human life. We need to recognize that behind the pictures we see of people on the street are real people who have dreams and goals. Never did they imagine or plan that they would become victims. However, it is our responsibility to help those in need, to provide for the helpless, and to be fathers to the fatherless.

Jamelia Hinds-Vicks

Jamelia Hinds-Vicks survived 12 years of human trafficking as a domestic servant for an American woman. She was trafficked from Belize while she was 12 years old. She's been freed for 6 years and, in that short time, secured a T-Visa, graduated with my GED, delivered many public speaking events on her experience and human trafficking; initiated the first Survivor Support Group in the greater Fresno-area of California; worked with numerous organizations to help stop human trafficking; and received my U.S. Permanent Residency status. Currently, she's the Survivor Leader at Breaking the Chains in Fresno, and Survivor Consultant for PACT.

“I am a mom of two and they were also a part of my trafficking, but I wouldn't change anything because my babies are my everything. They motivate me every day to move forward and stay strong. Today I have my green card, something I thought would never happen, but I never gave up hope and now I'm on the next chapter in my life.”

Arien Pauls

3 years ago, Arien start out receiving services from CVJC as a survivor. As of a year ago she now serves on CVJC's Board of Directors, on the prevention team, and as an advocate.

Arien has been certified in Human Trafficking 101 and My Life My Choice, a curriculum that prevents the commercial sexual exploitation of adolescent girls.

“Being a survivor of human trafficking and a mother to a sweet baby girl, I use what I have went through to to stand up and speak out against this injustice, and provide knowledge that will help educate and prevent exploitation of any other young girls or women.”

Fun Fact: Arien love classic cars and dressing vintage.

Christina Vasquez-Coy

Christina was trafficked when she was 15 years old. Driven with the purpose of preventing others from being trafficked and to be a demonstration of hope for those who have experienced trauma, Christina speaks openly about her story. Her greatest desire is that her story will serve as a testimony to help people see God and be drawn to His redeeming love. As a teacher and mother of two, Christina is especially passionate about educating youth. She is exuberant about serving on the prevention team with Central Valley Justice Coalition and looks forward to all that God has in store through this ministry! Some of Christina's favorite pleasures are hiking, barbequing, and coffee!