

CESAR ARMENDARIZ

Executive Leader | Narrative Change, Systems Strategy & Health Equity

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SUMMARY

Executive leader with more than 20 years of experience stewarding narrative, strategy, and community power at the intersection of healthcare, public policy, and systems change across California.

Proven record of advancing health and racial equity by aligning institutional strategy, community voice, and equity-centered storytelling to influence policy, build trust, and shift outcomes in complex environments.

Experienced senior advisor and public-facing leader across managed care, safety-net hospitals, government, higher education, and nonprofit organizations, with deep credibility in Southern California's urban, rural, and immigrant communities. Known for collaborative, servant leadership; building high-performing, multidisciplinary teams; and translating complex strategies into culturally resonant narratives that strengthen accountability, partnership, and long-term impact.

EXPERIENCE

Senior Director, Community Health

Inland Empire Health Plan

05/2020 - 11/2025 Rancho Cucamonga, California

Nation's largest public, non-profit Medicaid plan

- Led enterprise-wide community health, engagement, and narrative strategies across a 1.5M-member managed care system, aligning institutional priorities with community voice to advance health equity and systems change throughout the Inland Empire.
- Stewarded narrative frameworks that integrated data, lived experience, and equity-centered storytelling to influence policy, strengthen trust, and support long-term population health outcomes.
- Built durable community infrastructure by launching one of the region's largest Community Health Worker networks, embedding trusted messengers within 20+ community-based organizations to shift access, agency, and care navigation.
- Designed and scaled behavioral health navigation models embedded in school systems, advancing youth mental health support while reshaping cross-sector collaboration between healthcare, education, and community partners.
- Championed rural health and access strategies in California's most geographically isolated communities, ensuring narrative, funding, and program design reflected local realities and needs.
- Directed community investment strategies, including a statewide fresh food distribution network delivering 12M+ pounds of produce annually, reframing food access as a health, dignity, and equity issue.
- Served as a senior advisor and public-facing leader, translating complex organizational strategy into clear, culturally resonant narratives for policymakers, providers, and community stakeholders.
- Subject-Matter Expert tapped for nationwide keynote, panel, and workshop presentations.

SKILLS

Narrative & Systems Leadership

Narrative Change & Power-Building

Equity-Centered Strategy & Storytelling

Systems Change & Institutional Stewardship

Community Power & Movement Alignment

Executive & Organizational Leadership

Executive Advising & CEO Partnership

Board & Governance Engagement

Vision Setting & Strategic Alignment

Servant Leadership & Culture Building

Strategy, Policy & Cross-Sector Influence

Health & Racial Equity Strategy

Policy Influence & Public Affairs

Cross-Sector & Philanthropic Partnerships

Government & Civic Engagement

Organizational Effectiveness

Enterprise Strategy & Change Leadership

Team Development & Talent Stewardship

Complex Systems Navigation

Stakeholder Trust & Accountability

LANGUAGES

English Native ●●●●●

Spanish Native ●●●●●

EXPERIENCE

Vice President & Community Relations Executive

Adventist Health White Memorial

📅 04/2013 - 06/2020 📍 Los Angeles, California

2019 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Recipient

- Served as a senior executive leader overseeing strategic communications, marketing, and public information for a safety-net hospital serving East Los Angeles, stewarding institutional narrative during periods of transformation, growth, and public scrutiny.
- Acted as a bilingual Public Information Officer and trusted advisor to executive leadership, guiding narrative strategy that balanced transparency, accountability, and cultural fluency within a Latino/a-rich community.
- Advanced equity-driven narratives across earned, digital, and partner channels to strengthen community trust, elevate public understanding of access and care, and safeguard institutional credibility.
- Led cross-functional collaboration across clinical service lines, community partners, and residents to align hospital resources with community-defined priorities and needs.
- Championed community governance and voice through leadership councils, Community Health Needs Assessments, and Community Benefits reporting, reinforcing accountability between institution and community.
- Oversaw agency partnerships and large-scale communications campaigns, ensuring messaging reflected dignity, inclusion, and community ownership rather than transactional outreach.

Executive Director, Community Partnerships

University of Southern California

📅 10/2008 - 03/2013 📍 Los Angeles, California

Health Sciences Campus (HSC).

- Directed university-wide community engagement and narrative strategy for USC's Health Sciences Campus, serving as a bridge between academic leadership, policymakers, and surrounding communities.
- Led community-centered communications for major campus master planning efforts, translating institutional vision into shared understanding and securing public trust and City Council support.
- Established community leadership councils and advisory structures that elevated resident voice in institutional decision-making and long-term planning.
- Served as Spanish-language media spokesperson, stewarding narrative across culturally diverse audiences during complex public processes.

Director, UPC Master Plan Communications

University of Southern California

📅 11/2006 - 10/2008 📍 Los Angeles, California

Led the design and implementation of the external communications process for the University Park Campus master plan process

- Directed university master plan community outreach and communications strategies, including focus groups, online surveys, telephone surveys, and Town Hall-style community meetings.
- Served as the university spokesperson for the USC UPC Master Plan and proposed University Village, successfully receiving community/public support and LA City Council approval.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



Healthcare Access Improvement

Increased healthcare access for members by 15% through strategic partnerships.



Built Environment Enhancement

Envisioned and proposed innovative Community Wellness Center (CWC) model, investing directly into communities via property acquisitions.



Food Network Expansion

Created and expanded fresh produce distribution to 60 locations statewide, aiding 275,000 families.



Quality Improvement

Designed CBO ecosystem that leveraged relationships with CHWs and CWCs to support HEDIS measures and achieve quality goals.



New Member Engagement Impact

Created opportunities for hundreds of qualifying members to enroll for coverage at community venue sites.

BOARD ACTIVITY

Founding Board Member, End Homelessness California

📅 2016 - Present 📍 Southern California

Advancing social enterprise and systems-based solutions to housing insecurity.

Founding Advisory Board Chair, Bienestar is Wellbeing

📅 2023 - Present 📍 California

Supporting statewide fresh food distribution and community wellbeing through equity-centered infrastructure.

Board Member, Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County

📅 2020 - Present 📍 San Bernardino County

Contributing governance and strategic insight to regional anti-poverty and equity initiatives.

EXPERIENCE

Executive Director / Chief of Staff

[The East Los Angeles Community Union \(TELACU\)](#)

📅 05/2003 - 12/2005 📍 Los Angeles, California

In a Chief of Staff function, recruited and managed a high-functioning team to carry out the initiatives of the Chairman, President, and CEO.

- Managed public, corporate, community, and governmental relations on behalf of the President and CEO.
- Assessed new business development proposals and initiatives.
- Represented the organization at state legislative hearings and federal agency steering committees.
- Promoted the organization at national conventions and expositions.
- Directed the distribution of charitable grants and political donations.
- Served as a corporate liaison with local, state, and national chambers of commerce and business organizations.

Executive Director

[International Business Center](#)

📅 11/2001 - 05/2003 📍 Santa Ana, California

Administered IBC program management and development.

- Coordinated trade seminars and workshops for the region's small and medium-sized companies.
- Hosted foreign commercial delegations.
- Consulted small and medium-sized businesses on trade-related concerns with Mexico and Asia.
- Produced quarterly communications highlighting success stories.
- Attracted county, state, national and international trade partners to the IBC.

Southern California Director/Advisor

[Office of Lieutenant Governor Cruz M. Bustamante](#)

📅 03/1999 - 10/2001 📍 Los Angeles, California

Director for Southern California / Business Development Advisor.

- Supervised the design, build-out, staffing, and development of the Lieutenant Governor's Southern California office and team.
- International Trade Advisor and Mexico Liaison.
- Coordinated delegation to Mexico to attend the inauguration of former President Vicente Fox.

Policy Advisor

[Office of State Senate Majority Leader Richard G. Polanco](#)

📅 03/1998 - 03/1999 📍 Los Angeles, California

Directed California's legislative efforts to generate greater trade with Latin America.

- Consulted the senator and other legislators on trade issues between California and Latin America.
- Received Latin American dignitaries wishing to meet with California State Legislators.

Trade Specialist

[California Office of Trade and Investment](#)

📅 11/1995 - 03/1998 📍 Mexico City, Mexico

Secured California's bilateral commercial interests in Mexico and Latin America in the areas of Consumer Goods, Real Estate, Tourism and Entertainment.

TEACHING & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Clinical Adjunct Professor

[University of Southern California - Marshall School of Business](#)

📅 01/2012 - Present

📍 Los Angeles, California

Department of Business Communications

- Communication Strategy in Business
- 5-Star Professor Rating

Guest Lecturer

[University of Southern California](#)

📅 2002 - 2011 📍 Los Angeles, California

Various Schools and Topics

- [Keck School of Medicine of USC, Division of Physician Assistant Studies](#) - Community Asset Building and Community Engagement Strategies
- [USC School of Social Work](#) - Community Asset Building and Community Leadership Strategies
- [USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences](#) - Community Asset Building
- [Marshall School of Business, MBA PRIME Program](#) - Latin American Business Practices and Protocol

EDUCATION

Executive Master of Leadership

[University of Southern California - Sol Price School of Public Policy](#)

📅 2010 - 2012 📍 Los Angeles, California

- The Order of Areté
- Dean's Certificate of Merit

B.S. Business Administration

[University of Southern California - Marshall School of Business](#)

📅 1990 - 1994 📍 Los Angeles, California

- Emphasis: International Finance
- Minor: Psychology

PERSONAL INTERESTS



Traveling, Hiking, Literature, Writing, Ballroom Dancing, and Sharing Home Cooked Meals over Soothing Jazz Music