

California Chapter 2

INCORPORATED IN CALIFORNIA

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



2024 - 2026 Chapter Elections

Voting starts May 16th. Please visit the election website for the complete list of candidates for executive positions: <http://aapca2.org/elections>

Candidates for Member At Large

There are 12 candidates, listed in alphabetical order. Please vote for 7

Cindy Baker, MD, FAAP



My name is Cindy Baker. I am a general ambulatory pediatrician with Kaiser Permanente LA where I have spent my whole career. I have a large practice, many grand patients, and teach residents/medical students. I have served as APD, am our departmental CME chair and on our Symposium committee, and our multidisciplinary Vascular Birthmark Clinic team which just celebrated 30 years.

Born in Philadelphia, I attended the University of Pennsylvania for college/medical school, came to CHLA for my residency/Chief residency, then joined Kaiser Permanente.

I joined AAP as a resident but not involved until I ran for MIL, now in my 6th term. I served 6 years on the national COPAM Committee, an amazing experience. I learned about National AAP, worked hard, and was involved in multiple publications. AAP has been another home for me.

I have much institutional memory for our Chapter, serving on the membership, CME and climate change committees. I would like to continue as member-at-large. I see our Chapter continuing to accomplish great things in many areas of pediatric care and support of our colleagues. Our diverse chapter represents our diverse population; the more dedicated pediatricians in our chapter, the more we can succeed. Thank you for your support.

Lingie Chiu, MD, MBA, FAAP, DipABLM



It's been an absolute joy serving as your member at large over the past two years! As a pediatric hospitalist deeply invested in critical care access facilities, I've cherished every moment advocating for the well-being of our young patients.

My passion for lifestyle medicine and commitment to mental health, highlighted through my role as California Chapter 2 Suicide Prevention Ambassador, has only grown stronger. Being part of this vibrant community of pediatric professionals has been incredibly rewarding, and I'm eager to continue contributing to our shared goals. Your unwavering support means the world to me, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to represent our chapter. Let's keep our momentum going, spreading positivity and making a real difference in the lives of children and families. Thank you for believing in me and our collective mission!

Balaji Govindaswami, MD, MPH, FAAP



The AAP is a champion for children and health advocacy, serving principles of Equity, Justice, Inclusion and Diversity in an era of great excitement for revolutionary new therapies. Cellular and gene therapies with advances in immunotherapy and minimally invasive surgical approaches all promise greater quality of life with much diminished mortality and morbidity for many early childhood diseases. Chapter 2 serves Los Angeles and surrounding communities, known to have a most deserving population with unique challenges and opportunities.

The sociocultural determinants of disease, inclusive of disparate access to equitable care, food and shelter insecurity, epidemic substance use and mental health crises, all offer preventable opportunities for intervention with much to be gained from public private partnership solutions.

It would be a great honor and privilege to serve our constituents in our communities, in this age of much excitement and cause for optimism, in a like-minded community dedicated to the wellbeing of our most vulnerable children, families and communities.

Ilona Kleiner, MD, FAAP



My name is Ilona Kleiner. I am the managing partner at Pediatric Associates Medical Group, Inc. in Sherman Oaks, CA. I have been in private practice for over 20 years. I grew up in the greater Los Angeles area. I earned my undergraduate degree at UCLA, where I graduated *magna cum laude* and simultaneously received a Bachelor's degree in Biology and a Master's degree in Immunology. I then attended The David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. I went on to do my internship and residency in Pediatrics at Cedars Sinai Medical Center.

After completing my residency in 2002, I joined Pediatric Associates Medical Group. I enjoy providing guidance and support to parents as they navigate their children's many different stages of development. I enjoy working with children of all ages and cultivating interpersonal relations with patients and families. I practice an evidence-based approach to medical care and emphasize the importance of preventative care and parental education.

My goal is to improve the lives of children, teens, and their families. I am dedicated to protecting the health and well-being of children while keeping the child's and family's best interests at the center. I hope to nurture their physical, intellectual, and social-emotional development and hope to achieve this through patient care, teaching, and advocacy.

When my daughter was in primary and secondary school, I was on several school committees to establish health and safety protocols. I am currently the physician liaison in San Fernando Valley for the Care Network at CHLA. I support independent practices and hope to help them thrive. I am currently working with Chapter 2 as we establish a Pediatric Council in California.

When I am not working, I enjoy spending time outdoors and trying new recipes, as well as spending time with my husband and our daughter, Iliana.

Mia M. Lagunda, MD, FAAP



I am Mia M. Lagunda, MD. I currently am serving as member -at -large representing Kern County. I also serve as Director of Pediatrics at Clinica Sierra Vista , an organization with federally qualified health centers serving the population of Kern and Fresno counties. During my term of office, I came to understand the function of the chapter and learned about the different committees, all advocating for the children we serve.

I am seeking reelection for another term as member -at -large of this chapter because I want to continue to contribute in any way to the goal of the organization. I believe that if elected, I can continue to promote the mission of our chapter by continuing to serve a diverse population but mostly the underserved and the most vulnerable. I am aware that we sometimes can be divided in our beliefs. However, I know we must not

forget that our mission as pediatricians is to continue to advocate for the best physical health, mental health, social health, and well-being of the population we all serve. I will always align my goals with the core values in promoting inclusion, anti-racism, and elimination of bias in education.

My objective during this term of office, if re-elected, is to engage the pediatricians in Kern County to become active members in promoting our core values to provide the highest quality of care for the population we serve. I will also strive to continue to support the members of AAP in Kern County to achieve our mission.

Nirupama Madduri, MD, FAAP



My name is Niru Madduri, and I am a pediatrician practicing in Arcadia, CA. I am currently a member at large, and I would like to continue with my position. I have enjoyed participating in the quarterly board meetings and I have also enjoyed participating in various committees. I am currently the Chair of the Newsletter Committee.

If selected, in the next two years, I am in process of establishing regular educational/social meetings with pediatricians who are in the San Gabriel Valley area. The purpose would be to establish collaboration between pediatricians who are in practice in the area. In addition, I have enjoyed attending the yearly symposiums our chapter has organized.

I hope to continue working on the newsletter, which I have enjoyed, and also working on committees for membership as well.

Gifty-Maria Jane Ntim, MD, MPH



Gifty-Maria Jane Ntim, MD, MPH is a primary care physician who is double board certified in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics (Med-Peds). She currently serves as the program director for the Med-Peds residency program at UCLA. She joined the Department of Medicine at UCLA in 2016.

Prior to UCLA, she was the inaugural medical director of APLA Health (the medical branch of the AIDS Project Los Angeles). Originally from Ghana, Dr. Ntim is a graduate of St. George's University School of Medicine. She completed residency training at Tulane University School of Medicine in New Orleans where she also served as the Med-Peds Chief Resident.

Her professional interests include delivering culturally sensitive primary care to LGBTQ+ populations, HIV prevention and finding innovative ways to improve management of patients with chronic diseases. She currently serves as the inaugural LGBTQ+ co-course director for the David Geffen School of Medicine.

In her spare time, she enjoys gardening, sourdough bread making and spending time with family. She served on AAP chapter 2 board from 2022-2024 and was on the newsletter and CME committees. The mission and core values of AAP chapter 2 deeply resonate with her and she would like to continue to serve.

Sindu Pillai, MD, FAAP



I am a board certified Pediatrician in solo private practice in Murrieta, CA for the past 26 years. Being an advocate for providing the best services to children in my community, my mission is to treat them as my own and work towards their safety, education, and best physical and mental health at large. It will be my great honor and privilege to help in our local chapter being a part of the team to work towards this goal. Thank you so much for this opportunity.

I am an attending physician for the Family Medicine Residency, Loma Linda Medical Center, and Southern California Medical Education Consortium in Temecula. I am board certified by American Board of Pediatrics and a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics (FAAP)

Originally from Chertala, Alappuzha district in Kerala, I have a passion for music and dance and am a patron of Indian dance and music, taking lessons in carnatic music and Indian Classical and Bollywood dances on a regular basis. In my free time, I enjoy being with friends and family and also like to organize and participate in various cultural activities in my community. I have two children, both in engineering careers.

Gabrielle Pina, DO, FAAP



In today's America, where gender-affirming care, women's rights, and systemic racism demand urgent attention, Pediatricians must stand as unwavering advocates for our patients and their families. In California, escalating financial pressures widen existing disparities, placing immense strain on families striving to provide for their children. As a member-at-large, I aim to collaborate with fellow leaders to leverage the influence of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), spotlighting the needs of our community and forging enduring alliances. Drawing from my experience chairing the child, adolescent, and maternal health committee for the Riverside California Medical Association, I've seen the transformative power of teamwork and innovation. I believe in the collective strength of Pediatricians united in purpose and committed to the well-being of our children. I am eager to contribute to sustainable change, championing the cause of children and families across California and beyond. Together, let's build a future where every child thrives, regardless of circumstance.

Andy Saxon, MD, FAAP



First off, thank you all for this opportunity to represent the AAP's California Chapter 2. I am a Pediatric Hospitalist at CHLA. Working at a safety net children's hospital like CHLA makes clear the inequality and systems level change that must be taken on here in California. I am committed to working to continue to make our health system more equitable, to advocating for increased public funding for children's health and to strengthening the bonds between pediatricians to grow our collective power.

I took a winding path to medicine, working in law, education and politics. I worked as a community organizer on the Obama Campaign in 2008, where I saw the power that can come from bringing people together towards a common goal. At CHLA, I lead a community organizing workshop with our residents to teach them how to powerfully tell their story. My experience in politics has enabled me to be an effective advocate in working with local politicians and I will be able to utilize my organizing skills as a representative of California Chapter 2 members. I would be honored to represent CA2 to work for systems change in California.

Joshua Sherman MD, FAAP



My name is Josh Sherman, I am a Pediatric Emergency Medicine physician by training but have worked in all types of settings. From general practice to the ER in some of the busiest and academic centers to private urgent care.

I have seen hospitals and private equity controlled corporate healthcare companies work out fellow pediatricians like factory plant workers. Enough is enough. I have seen brand new app graduates be hired with no training to save a few bucks. Enough is enough.

It's time to take back pediatric medicine.

Let's do it together!

Edward Tagge, MD, FAAP



Hi, my name is Edward Tagge. I'm a pediatric surgeon and I've been practicing for over 30 years. I would love to be involved with the AAP again, as I was previously the treasurer for AAP-CA2 and enjoyed my experience tremendously.

I think bringing a surgical subspecialty voice to the group helps diversify its information base and decision-making.

In addition I have recently completed both an MS in Healthcare Quality and Patient Safety as well as an executive MBA. These have helped broaden my horizon beyond the operating room, into fields such as advocacy, legislative testimony, and DEI. This additional training can be put to good use in advancing the needs of our children, their caregivers and primary healthcare providers.

[Go back to the Elections Website](#)

You must be a voting fellow to vote. The electronic ballot may only be accessed via your email. Look for the email on May 16th from chapter2@aapca2.org with the subject "2024 Election - Please Vote". Do not forward the ballot email to anyone.