



Board Members

May 7, 2024

KAREN CAMACHO

Re: Support for Keri Akemi-Hernandez

SHEILA CHUNG HAGEN
Secretary

To Whom It May Concern:

MARIA DOMINGUEZ

I write on behalf of Urban Habitat to lend our strong support of Keri Akemi-Hernandez. Keri is a graduate of Urban Habitat's Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute (BCLI), a program designed to train and support people of color to serve on commissions with a racial equity lens. The program begins with a six-month intensive training that covers equitable land use, housing rights, and transportation justice policies. We also offer and apply commissioner skills that we believe are necessary for successful commission service. Keri completed her training in June 2022.

MARIA NOEL
FERNANDEZ

CHRIS LEPE

SAABIR LOCKETT

DANIELLE MAHONES

In the fall of 2022, Keri started working with an alumna of the BCLI to develop a training module that introduces the Indigenous community's relationship to land. The Indigenous module complements a session on environmental justice. As we developed the training, it became clear that we should also have Keri open the first training session with a land acknowledgment that recognizes the hurt caused to Indigenous communities and encourages others to join Urban Habitat in working to reverse systemic injustices. This was an organic extension of work accomplished earlier with Keri. She assisted Urban Habitat's leadership with drafting our land acknowledgement for the [website](#) and opened our regional State of the Region biannual gathering with a land acknowledgement in November 2022.

VU-BANG NGUYEN

RAVI PATEL

ROBERT PHILLIPS
Chair

NONI SESSION

SUSAN SHAW
Treasurer

MIYA YOSHITANI

CARL ANTHONY
Emeritus

This Indigenous training module is presented on the same day that we discuss land use policies and practices with our fellows. We present both to show the difference between our present-day practices around land management, acquisition, and general commodification of land and that of Indigenous communities' relationship with the land that does not include extraction. Keri led the training in 2023 and 2024.

Ellen Wu, MPH
Executive Director

I have enjoyed working with Keri. She's very open to feedback and making changes necessary to meet our training needs. She meets deadlines and holds herself accountable. She also keeps communication open and transparent. I look forward to continuing to work with her as she grows and develops the Beat Root Resource Center.

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Please let me know if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Larisa Casillas

Program Director, Leadership Development & Advocacy