

**Michele Prichard**  
**Senior Director for Strategic Initiatives at**  
**Liberty Hill Foundation**  
**Resident, Mar Vista, CA (CD 11)**



Michele Prichard is the Senior Director for Strategic Initiatives at the Liberty Hill Foundation. Today, Liberty Hill's reputation as one of the country's most innovative public foundations can be attributed significantly to her early and ongoing leadership.

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:** As Liberty Hill's executive director from 1989 to 1997, Michele spearheaded the foundation's expansion into new grantmaking and donor education programs focused on poverty, racial justice and environmental health. Before coming to Liberty Hill, Michele worked at the Southern California Council of Churches during the 1980s on homelessness, peace, and human rights issues where she learned about grassroots organizing and coalition building. During the late 1970s at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, she worked as a research assistant to the renowned environmental scientist, Dr. Barry Commoner, to whose mentorship Michele attributes her lasting commitment to social change.

Michele's professional work is to guide collaborative efforts that seek to change public policy through a combination of cutting-edge research, alliance building and community organizing. In 2014, she led the UCLA Community Scholars program which coordinated Urban Planning graduate students and community leaders to research climate change reduction strategies in low-income neighborhoods of Los Angeles. In 2015, she co-founded the STAND LA (Standing Together Against Neighborhood Drilling) Coalition, and facilitated the LA Collaborative for Environmental Health & Justice which established three "Clean Up Green Up" Zones in the toxic hotspot communities of Boyle Heights, Pacoima/Sun Valley and Wilmington in 2016. This nearly ten-year effort was awarded the LA American Planning Association Award for Excellence in Innovation in Green Community Planning. Liberty Hill, under Michele's leadership, was one of the key project partners in the development of the "OurCounty" Plan, Los Angeles County's first-ever sustainability roadmap adopted by the Board of Supervisors in August 2019.

**PUBLICATIONS:** Michele is co-author of several publications, including:

- Liberty Hill Foundation, *DRILLING DOWN: The Community Consequences of Expanded Oil Development in Los Angeles*. 2015.
- UCLA Community Scholars, *ENVISIONING A GREENER LOS ANGELES: Environmental and Economic Sustainability for Boyle Heights, Pacoima & Wilmington*. 2014.
- Pastor, Manuel, Jennifer Ito, Michele Prichard, *LA RISING: The 1992 Civil Unrest, the Arc of Social Justice Organizing, and the Lessons for Today's Movement Building*. 2012.

- Liberty Hill Foundation, *HIDDEN HAZARDS: A Call to Action for Healthy, Livable Communities*. 2010.
- Liberty Hill Foundation, *BUILDING A REGIONAL VOICE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND JUSTICE*. 2004.

**PHILANTHROPIC SERVICE:** Over the last 30 years, Michele has worked to expand the philanthropic community's commitment to social and environmental justice by serving in a leadership role for the California Health and Environmental Funders Network, LA Urban Funders, the Southern California Association for Philanthropy (now Southern California Grantmakers), the Funding Exchange and the Neighborhood Funders Group.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE:** Michele was appointed by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa in 2011 to the Board of the Harbor Community Benefit Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to improving the Port communities of Wilmington and San Pedro. Since 2012, Michele has served as a senior advisor to California Calls, a statewide alliance of social justice organizations working to expand voter engagement in low-income communities of color. She also served on the boards of Venice Community Housing, the Green LA Coalition, and the LA Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness (1990s). Since 2007, Michele has served as a Senior Fellow in the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs where she mentors graduate students from the Urban Planning and Social Welfare programs. In 2001-2003, she served as PTA President at McKinley Elementary School in Santa Monica where her children attended school.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS:** In April 2012, Michele received the Distinguished Service Award from the Council on Foundations, the association's highest honor. Liberty Hill honored her with their Founders Award in 2015, given in recognition of individuals whose philosophy and philanthropy embody the spirit of "Change, Not Charity." In 2018, she received the Board Chair "Green Leadership" award from Supervisor Sheila Kuehl. She was also awarded the UCLA Chancellor's and Dean's Awards for Excellence in 1989.

**EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE:** Michele earned her M.A. in Urban Planning from UCLA in 1989 and her B.A. in Political Science and Urban Studies from Washington University in St. Louis in 1976.