

Key Staff

Jennifer Mitchell, *Executive Director*

Jennifer has 20 years' experience leading award-winning programs to build brighter futures for New Yorkers through training, jobs and career advancement. Since joining HOPE in 2011, Jennifer led the organization's boldest phase of growth through the acquisition of Sustainable South Bronx, a partnership which added three new programs to their portfolio and expanded HOPE's work into the growing green jobs sector. She has also led the integration of innovative new services for jobseekers, including embedded mental health and work wellness programming, employer-driven partnerships and more. Under her leadership, HOPE was awarded a \$1.9 million from the Manhattan District Attorney's Office to further innovate in the area of social enterprise and was named a Citi Community Progress Maker. Jennifer is the Vice Chair of the Board of Directors of the New York City Employment and Training Coalition. She has received multiple honors, including the 2016 Smart CEO Deals of Distinction Award and the Macquarie Group Foundation's inaugural David Clarke Fellowship in the United States. Jennifer was a Peace Corps volunteer in Bluefields, Nicaragua. She holds an MPA from Columbia University and a BA in Sociology from SUNY Binghamton.

Irene Branche, *Chief Development and Evaluation Officer*

Irene joined HOPE in 2011 and is responsible for managing all of HOPE's fundraising and communications initiatives, as well as overseeing HOPE's programmatic data. She has been instrumental in HOPE's 130% growth through the launch of a signature fundraising event, achievement of prestigious grants and awards, procurement of new government contracts and other initiatives. She has also served as a key staff member in the acquisition of Sustainable South Bronx and in the development of two HOPE strategic plans. Irene serves on the Board of Directors of College and Community Fellowship. Before joining HOPE, she served as Senior Development Manager for Read Alliance. Irene holds an MPA from Baruch College and a BA in French from Roanoke College and recently completed Columbia Business School's Senior Leaders Program.

Gentian Haxhillari, *Chief Financial and Operating Officer*

Gentian joined HOPE/Sustainable South Bronx in December of 2018 bringing over 15 years of experience in non-profit management and having managed up to \$45 million in annual revenue across multiple non-profit organizations. Gentian oversees our organization's back office including finance & accounting, human resources, technology, and operations departments. His initial priorities include increasing efficiency across the aforementioned departments and improving reporting and support services to the rest of the organization. Gentian has an MBA from Zicklin School of Business at Baruch College (CUNY) with a Double Major in Managerial Finance and International Business Management, and a Bachelor of Science from the Turkish Military Academy with a concentration in Management Systems Engineering and a minor in Finance.

Kelly LoBianco, *Chief Program Officer*

Kelly joined HOPE in 2017 and oversees the program design and implementation of HOPE's signature training programs, HOPE *works*, FOOD *works*, and Sustainable South Bronx. She also supports integration of these programs with best practices in career readiness, employer engagement and work-based learning, and wellness to ensure meaningful employment and advancement outcomes for the HOPE community. Prior to HOPE, Kelly served as Assistant Commissioner of Training in the Workforce Development Division at the NYC Department of Small Business Services. She also worked on education and labor policy in the United States Senate. Kelly holds an MPA from Columbia University and a BA in Political Science and International Studies from Northwestern University.

Toby Sheppard Bloch, *Chief Venture Officer*

Toby joined HOPE/Sustainable South Bronx in 2016 and leads our transitional employment and fee for service programs, including NYC °CoolRoofs and Intervine, our green social enterprise. Under his leadership, Intervine was awarded a \$1.8 million investment from the Manhattan District Attorney's office to expand solar and green infrastructure training to New Yorkers at risk of criminal justice involvement. Previously, he owned and operated a residential remodeling company in New York City that engaged in projects ranging from decks to brownstone gut rehabilitations, with a focus on environmentally sustainable practices. He also has an extensive background in public policy, with fifteen years' experience working as a shareholder activist and corporate researcher for institutional funds. Toby holds a BA in History from Reed College and a Green Roof Professional certification.