

Key Staff

Jennifer Mitchell, *Executive Director*

Jennifer has dedicated her entire career to date to support marginalized communities and identifying and cultivating their talents, securing jobs, and building sustainable careers. Since joining HOPE in 2011, Jennifer led the organization's boldest phase of growth through the acquisition of Sustainable South Bronx, expanding 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 serves on the Boards of Directors of the New York City Employment and Training Coalition (Vice Chair) and Building Skills NY. She is also the co-founder of New York City's Green Economy Network, a consortium of green job training providers and other stakeholders working to align priorities and opportunities for communities historically left out of this burgeoning sector. 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 (2015). Beyond her leadership in New York City's workforce development community, Jennifer leads the social action committee at her synagogue. 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 significant 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 and implementation of two HOPE strategic plans. She has served as a featured speaker at large-scale fundraising events, at citywide conferences on workforce and climate mitigation, and, most recently, at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development annual conference in Antwerp, Belgium. Irene is the Board Chair of College and Community Fellowship and serves as a volunteer with New Sanctuary Coalition. 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 completed Columbia Business School's Senior Leaders Program.

Gentian Haxhillari, *Chief Financial and Operating Officer*

Gentian joined HOPE in 2018 bringing over 15 years of experience in nonprofit management and having managed up to \$45 million in annual revenue across multiple nonprofit organizations. Gentian oversees our organization's back office including finance & accounting, human resources, technology, and operations departments. 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.

Ana Chapman, *Chief Program Officer*

Ana joined HOPE in 2021 and oversees the program design and implementation of HOPE's signature training programs. 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. Ana has over 20 years of experience leading workforce development programs prior to her work at HOPE, including at the Queens Library, Hudson County Community College, and CUNY School of Professional Studies. Ana holds an MA in Individualized Study from NYU and a BA in Liberal Arts from The New School. She is also currently working toward an EdD in General Education with an emphasis on the Efficacy of Workforce Development Programs.