

Invited Guests for WA Psilocybin Workgroup – 10/31 Meeting:

Alex Cardenas, MD, MA, is practicing psychiatrist based out of Eugene, OR. He is the son of first and third generation immigrants and the grandson of a curandera (healer). He is a community and safety-net psychiatrist who has worked in the public mental health and public education space since 1999 as a provider, administrator, researcher, and advocate. Educated at Yale (BA in psychology) and Stanford (MD, MA in Policy, Organizations, and Leadership Studies), his clinical background pulls from relational, dynamic, and biological lineages. He has dedicated his clinical career to bringing the highest standards of care to underserved communities. After graduating from the inaugural class of the Certificate in Psychedelic Assisted Therapy and Research Program from CIIS, Dr. Cardenas began to engage the community around the need for infrastructure-level institutions to legitimize, develop, and community-govern the reemergence of the psychedelic field.

As Co-Executive Director of the American Psychedelic Practitioners Association (APPA), he is focused on the policies and advocacy needed to ensure that psychedelic-assisted therapies are shepherded into the healthcare system with integrity and fidelity to their history and transformative potentials so that they are safe, effective, and accessible to all who could benefit.

Brian Anderson, MD, MSc, is a resident physician in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of California San Francisco. He earned his MD at Stanford University. He also has an MSc in Biomedicine, Biotechnology and Society from the London School of Economics where he wrote his thesis “Classifying Ayahuasca: The Role of Subjective Experience in Psychiatric Research with Psychedelics” under the orientation of Dr. Ilina Singh. He has a BA in Biochemistry with a minor in Latin American and Latino Studies from the University of Pennsylvania.

He speaks English, Spanish and Portuguese, and he has been conducting ethnographic research with different communities of drug users since 2005. He has studied migrant Mexican communities in the United States, the Uniao do Vegetal ayahuasca religion in Brazil, cognitive enhancer use in the UK, and mutual aid groups for addiction recovery in Mexico.

Henry Harbin, MD, is a psychiatrist with over 30 years of experience in the behavioral health field. He has held a number of senior positions in both public and private health care organizations. He worked for 10 years in the public mental health system in Maryland serving as Director of the state mental health authority for 3 of those years. He has been CEO of two national behavioral healthcare companies – Greenspring Health Services and Magellan Health Services. At the time he was CEO of Magellan it was the largest managed behavioral healthcare company managing the mental health and substance abuse benefits of approximately 70 million Americans including persons who were insured by private employers, Medicaid, and Medicare.

In 2002 and 2003, Dr. Harbin served on the President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health. As a part of the Commission, he was chair of the subcommittee for the Interface between Mental Health and General Medicine. In 2005, he served as co-chair of the National Business Group on Health’s work group that produced the Employer’s Guide to Behavioral Health Services in Dec 2005. Since 2004, Dr. Harbin has been providing health care consulting services to a number of private and public organizations.

Bob Jesse has long been a quiet, guiding force behind the contemporary psychedelic renaissance. He was instrumental in forming the psilocybin research team at Johns Hopkins, helped to set its course, co-authored its influential 2006 paper among others, and continues as part of that team. He has led the drafting of foundational documents: a Code of Ethics for Spiritual Guides (1995), an amicus brief (2005) for the U.S. Supreme Court in a successful religious liberty case, and a statement on Open Science (2017) now signed by numerous leaders in the field. He has served on boards and advises various individuals and groups in the space, including the new Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics. Earlier in life, Bob trained at Hopkins in electrical engineering and computer science, consulted for AT&T Bell Labs, and worked at Oracle as a VP of business development.