

Ron Lessard

Strategic Advisor for Native American Affairs, Corporation for National and Community Service



Mr. Lessard is an American Indian from the Mohawk and Abenaki Tribes. He is the Strategic Advisor for Native American Affairs for the Corporation for National and Community Service which includes AmeriCorps State and National, VISTA, NCCC, Senior Corps, and Learn & Serve America Programs. He is the agency's primary liaison to American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian tribal communities and the organizations and federal agencies that serve them. He works across all program and support units to increase Native American participation in national service and works to develop and enhance programming to address the unique needs of Native American communities. Reporting directly to the CPO, he promotes coordination among the agency's programs and partners, collects information on challenges facing Native American communities, and evaluates progress. Mr. Lessard chairs the CNCS Committee on Native American Affairs and the education sub-

committee of the Interagency Working Group on Indian Affairs.

Mr. Lessard has a broad background dealing with federal, state, and local programs in partnership with Native American communities. He has worked in support and advocacy roles across a wide range of issues including housing, health, economic development, and cultural competency. Previously, he was the Program Manager for cultural competency for the National Minority Aids Education and Training Center at Howard University College of Medicine where he was responsible for the development HIV/AIDS cultural competency education, training, and capacity building tools for the purpose of educating and training, minority and minority-serving HIV/AIDS clinicians with a major concentration on the American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian populations.

Mr. Lessard was a member of the National Institute of Health's advisory planning committee for the National American Indian/Alaska Native HIV/AIDS 2006 conference and was a member of the National Urban Indian Family Coalition Advisory Board. He serves on the National Planning Committee for Collaborative Regional Trainings for the Indian Health Service. Mr. Lessard received a special appointment by the Governor of Maryland to serve as the Native American Liaison/ Community Development Director for the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. He was the Executive Director for the Baltimore American Indian Center in Baltimore, MD and served on the Baltimore City Crime Victim's Advisory Board and the Governor's Commission Subcommittees on Seniors Issues.

Mr. Lessard has extensive experience working in the nonprofit sector. He was the Technical and Management Assistance Specialist for NCALL Research, Inc., a nonprofit housing organization that provided housing education and technical and management assistance to Native American tribes and Tribal Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs) through a contract with USDA's Rural Housing Service.

Mr. Lessard has been the keynote speaker and trainer at various national events, seminars, and conferences related to issues affecting Native American communities.

Bernard K. Melekian

Director, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice



Mr. Melekian was announced as the Director of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) by Attorney General Eric Holder on October 5, 2009. As Director of the COPS Office, Mr. Melekian leads an organization responsible for working closely with the nation's state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to enhance the safety of communities by advancing community policing. Mr. Melekian is committed to using COPS Office programs and resources to help law enforcement build relationships and solve problems, which he sees as the basic building blocks of community policing.

Mr. Melekian was the Police Chief for the City of Pasadena, CA for more than 13 years before assuming leadership of the COPS Office. He also served with the Santa Monica Police Department for 23 years where he was awarded the Medal of Valor in 1978 and the Medal of Courage in 1980. Mr. Melekian has been the recipient of numerous other leadership and service awards, and is recognized within the law enforcement field as a leader whose commitment to the advancement of community policing is built equally on years of patrol and SWAT experience, as well as a strong record of incorporating the needs of the community into police operations.

Mr. Melekian has served as the acting Fire Chief and Interim City Manager for the City of Pasadena. He was Chairman of the California Attorney General's Blue Ribbon Committee on SWAT Policy and is the former President of the 2009 Los Angeles County and California Police Chiefs Associations. Mr. Melekian also served on the National Board of Directors of the Police Executive Research Forum.

Mr. Melekian holds a bachelor's degree in American history and a master's degree in public administration, both from California State University, Northridge, and is a doctoral candidate in public policy at the University of Southern California. He is a graduate of the 150th session of the FBI National Academy and the 20th class of the California Command College.

Mr. Melekian served in the U.S. Army from 1967 to 1970. As a member of the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, he was called to active duty in 1991 during Operation Desert Storm and served in Saudi Arabia. Melekian served a second tour of active duty in 2003. He retired from the Coast Guard Reserves in 2009 after 28 years of service.