

**2024**  
**Rotary District 6900**  
**Conference**  
Jekyll Island, GA



*With This Lady With A Song*

**Rotary**   
District 6900

Join District Governor  
**Andrè Hadley Marria**  
and your Rotary friends for the  
**2024 Rotary  
District 6900  
Conference**

**March 21-24, 2024**

**We Are Heaven's Hands**



Scan for Conference Itinerary



# 2024 CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

## THURSDAY - 21<sup>ST</sup>

- 2:00 pm ..... Registration Opens – **Jekyll Island Convention Center Oceanside Registration**
- 2:00 pm ..... “Rotary Disco Lounge” – **(House of Friendship) – Ben G. Porter Oceanside Salon open for set-up**
- 3:00 pm ..... Choir Practice – **Jekyll Island Convention Center Atlantic Hall**
- 5:30 pm ..... Music in the Moonlight – **Beach Party, Karaoke Contest and Games – (Separate Registration)**  
**Great Dunes Park - 101 N. Beachview Drive**

## FRIDAY - 22<sup>ND</sup>

- 7:30 am ..... Breakfast Honoring District 6900 Past District Governors **(Invitation Only)**
- 8:00 am ..... “Rotary Disco Lounge” – **Ben G. Porter Oceanside Salon open for set-up**
- 8:00 am ..... Registration Opens – **Oceanside Registration**
- 8:30 am – 11:00 am ..... Service Project with Boys and Girls Club of Southeast Georgia
- 11:30 am ..... 2023-2024 District 6900 Luncheon *Honoring Presidents, Assistant Governor’s, and District Directors* **(Invitation Only)**
- 12:00 pm ..... “Rotary Disco Lounge” Opens
- 5:00 pm ..... Reception and Dinner Honoring District Governor André Marria and husband Walter – **Atlantic Hall Ballroom**
- 6:15 pm ..... Impact Session 1 – “When Words Fail, Music Speaks”

### DGE Gordon Owens 2024-2025 District Training Assembly Schedule - **Jekyll Island Convention Center (Separate Registration)**

- 8:00 am ..... Leadership Retreat **(\$20)**
- 12:00 pm ..... Lunch (Included in DTA Registration)
- 1:15 pm – 4:00 pm ..... District Training Assembly **(\$40)**

## SATURDAY - 23<sup>RD</sup>

- 8:00 am ..... Registration Opens – **Oceanside Registration**
- 9:00 am – 9:50 am ..... Breakout Sessions
- 10:00 am – 11:00 am ..... Brunch Featuring Our Rotary Youth Presented By “Our Lady With a Song”
- 11:10 am – 12:00 pm ..... Breakout Sessions Repeated
- 12:00 pm – 4:30 pm ..... Leisure Time **(Optional Offerings: Golf, Tennis, Bike Rental, Museum Tours, Tour of MAP International)**
- 4:15 pm ..... Reception in Honor of DGE Gordon Owens and wife Ashley *Hosted by the Rotary Club of Roswell*  
**Prefunction Lobby**
- 5:15 pm – 7:00 pm ..... Impact Session 2 – “We Have Music for Those Who Listen”
- 7:00 pm ..... Club Fun on Jekyll Island

## SUNDAY - 24<sup>TH</sup>

- 7:30 am ..... Non-denominational Service
- 8:00 am ..... Buffet Breakfast – **Atlantic Hall Ballroom**
- 8:30 am ..... Impact Session 3 – “Amplify Rotary to Level Eleven”

# SPOTLIGHT: DISTRICT GOVERNOR ANDRÈ

## ANDRÈ HADLEY MARRIA

Governor, Rotary District 6900  
Rotary Club of Thomasville

Andrè has been a Rotarian since 2005 when she joined the Rotary Club of Thomasville. She served as Youth Services and Foundation chairs prior to serving as Club President in 2018-19. As President, Andrè received the District 6900 Sheffield Leadership Award. She is a Paul Harris Fellow, Paul Harris Society member, Major Donor Level II, Will Watt Fellow, Hue Thomas Fellow, and Jake Cheatham Fellow. Andrè also received the Avenues of Service Citation from the Rotary Club of Thomasville in 2021. She served as an Assistant Governor from 2020-2022. Andrè currently serves as District 6900 Governor. While serving as Governor Elect she also served as the Chair of the District 6900 Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. In 2023 Andrè was recognized as one of six members honored by Rotary International President Jennifer Jones as "People of Action: Champions of Inclusion," for her work in helping to create a more inclusive world. She is a graduate of Rotary Zones 33-34 Emerging Leaders 2020 Summit of Champions, is a member of the International Fellowship of Rotarian Musicians, and is a Rotary Leadership Institute Discussion Leader for the RLI Sunshine Division.

Andrè spent thirty-four years in public service with the Georgia Department of Human Resources, retiring as the Director of the Thomas County Department of Family & Children Services (DFCS) in November of 2008. She is a Licensed Therapist and published Author.

André has received numerous awards and recognitions to include the 2016 John C. Burns III Licensed Professional Counselors Association



Lifetime Achievement Award for her 39 years of service and endorsement of the Profession of Counseling. She is a Past Trustee of the Thomasville Thomas County Chamber of Commerce and a Two-time Distinguished Toastmaster of Toastmasters International. She is a member of The Licensed Professional Counselors Association of Georgia, and a member in good standing of the Thomasville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Andrè Hadley Marria graduated from the Fort Valley State University in 1973 with a B.S. degree in Music, and in 1975 with a M.S. degree in Mental Health Counseling.

Andrè's proudest accomplishment was to serve as a 9-11 Ground Zero Red Cross Disaster Mental Health First Responder in New York City in 2001. Andrè has been married to Evangelist Walter Marria, Jr. for fifty years, and they have two birth children, two children given by God and eight grandchildren.

# 2024 SPECIAL GUESTS

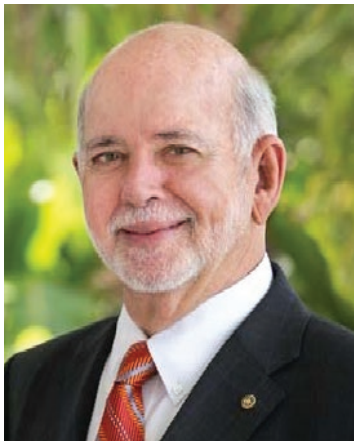
## **BARRY RASSIN**

*Chair 2023-2024, Trustee 2020-2024,*

**The Rotary Foundation**

*President, Rotary International, 2018-2019*

**Rotary Club of East Nassau Bahamas**



**B**arry Rassin is a director and former President of Doctors Hospital Health System in Nassau, Bahamas, where he retired after a 38-year career. He was the first fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives in the Bahamas and was honored

with the National Award of Health Hero by the Bahamas Ministry of Health and the Pan American Health Organization.

A Rotarian since 1980, Rassin served as RI President in 2018-19, when he advocated for closer partnership between Rotary and Rotaract clubs and presented the measure that broadened the definition of mem-

bership in Rotary International to include Rotaract clubs at the 2019 Council on Legislation. He has served RI in many other capacities, including as RI director, Rotary Foundation trustee and now Chair, chair of both the Finance and the Shaping Rotary's Future committees, RI training leader, and seminar trainer. In 2010, Rassin coordinated Rotary's disaster relief efforts in Haiti after a devastating earthquake. That included supervising the completion of 105 relief and development projects throughout Haiti that were made possible by the \$6.5 million raised by Rotary members worldwide. He is currently active on the Bahamas Rotary Disaster Relief Committee and working on relief efforts in the wake of Hurricane Dorian and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Outside of Rotary, Rassin chairs Volunteer Bahamas, a national program to create a culture of volunteerism in the country. He also helped found the Haiti National Clean Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Strategy (HANWASH), a collaborative program to bring potable water and adequate sanitation to all the citizens of Haiti. In 2018, the government of the Bahamas named him as an Officer of the Order of Distinction.

Rassin has received the Service Above Self Award. He and his spouse, Esther, are Rotary Foundation

## **SATURDAY MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

- **The Future of Rotary** - Presented by TRF Chair and PRIP Barry Rassin
- **Discover Rotary** - Presented by Audley Knight, Rotary Club of North Cobb
- **Impactful Service Projects** - A Panel Discussion featuring the Rotary Clubs of Peachtree City, Alpharetta, North Atlanta, North Fulton, and Thomasville

*All three sessions will be presented from 9:00am-9:50am and repeated from 11:10am-12:00pm on Saturday, March 23rd.*

# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PANEL

## **DR. LELA RENEE MCKNIGHT-EILY,** *Chief Mental Health Officer for Google*



**D**r. Lela Renee Mc-Knight-Eily is a mental health epidemiologist at the forefront of mental illness prevention. She is GA licensed clinical psychologist and serves as the Chief Mental Health Officer for Google. Dr. McKnight-Eily predominantly works with trauma-exposed children and families to promote their mental health and help them heal from mental illness (depression, anxiety, ADHD, autism). She joined the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2005 as a fellow in the Epidemic Intelligence Service, the agency's world-renowned training program where she learned "shoe leather" epidemiology, deploying to shelters in San Antonio, Texas to interview Hurricane Katrina survivors and their families about their mental health. She has also collaborated with scientists and leaders worldwide on a variety of global, public health initiatives and concerns

As a licensed and practicing clinical psychologist for nearly 20 years, Dr. McKnight-Eily has married her real-world clinical expertise in treating vulnerable

populations together with public health action. Her work has led to the initiation of multi-federal agency partnerships, and she has served as a subject matter expert to agency leadership on topics of mental health and substance abuse prevention.

Dr. McKnight-Eily has also served as a spokesperson for the CDC on a variety of topics in mental illness and helped form the Diversity and Inclusion Council at the CDC National Center in Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities. In addition to her work at the CDC, Dr. McKnight-Eily has served as a mental health consultant for the Vera Institute of Justice and sits on the board of directors of her church's Learning Center.

Dr. McKnight-Eily graduated cum laude with degrees in musical arts and child development from Vanderbilt University in 1998. She then completed a Masters of Education degree followed by a PhD at the University of Virginia in Clinical and School Psychology. Then Dr. McKnight-Eily completed an internship at Miami Children's Hospital in behavioral medicine and pediatric psychology and a postdoctoral fellowship through Emory University School of Medicine in pediatric psychology working with kids with cancer and blood disorders.

Dr. Lela R. McKnight-Eily and her husband Kedrick Eily, Esq. reside in Atlanta, Georgia with their two amazing children.



**GET INVOLVED AND HELP  
SHAPE THE FUTURES OF  
OUR YOUTH.**

**Join us for a District Conference Service  
Project with the Boys & Girls Club of  
Southeast Georgia**

**Where: Jekyll Island Convention Center  
When: Friday, March 22, 2024  
from 8:30 am to 11:00 am**



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB  
OF SOUTHEAST GEORGIA**

# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PANEL

## BETH FINNERTY

CEO of Skyland Trail



As the founding executive director, and now president and chief executive officer, Beth Finnerty has helped Skyland Trail grow from a start-up nonprofit serving four clients to a nationally recognized psychiatric treatment organization serving hundreds of clients and their families each year. Finnerty has led the

development and implementation of five strategic plans, the completion of five capital campaigns totaling more than \$65 million, and the development and construction of new treatment facilities across six campuses. Finnerty also has overseen a significant expansion of clinical services and programs. A leader in the field of recovery-focused psychiatric treatment, Skyland Trail offers innovative programs including integrated primary care and wellness counseling, vocational services, interfaith pastoral counseling, cognitive remediation therapy, comprehensive psychiatric assessment and adjunctive therapies such as art, music and horticultural therapy. Together with evidence-based psychotherapy and medication management, these programs help clients recover from

mental illness and live as independently and successfully as possible in the community. The American Psychiatric Association recognized Skyland Trail with the Gold Award in 2004 and with a special presidential commendation in 2014. Skyland Trail has also received the Rosalynn Carter/Johnson & Johnson Caregiver Award, the Managing for Excellence Award from the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, the 11-Alive Community Service Award, and the Georgia Center for Nonprofits Revolutions Award. Finnerty received her bachelor's degree from Davidson College and a dual master's degree in business and healthcare administration from Georgia State University. She currently serves on the advisory board of the Institute of Health Administration (Georgia State University). She is a current member of Achievement Rewards for College Scientists (ARCS). Finnerty is a past member of the boards of the Fuqua Center for Late Life Depression (past president), the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's Metro Atlanta Chapter (past president), the Board of Mental Health America - Georgia (chair), the Emory Board of Visitors, the Georgia Community Trust, the Atlanta Business Leaders Initiative and the President's Commission on White House Fellowships (Atlanta region). She is a Diplomate in the American College of Healthcare Executives and is a 2006 graduate of Leadership Georgia and a 2009 graduate of Leadership Atlanta. Finnerty was a Woman of the Year honoree in 2007 by Atlanta Woman magazine and received the 2006 Leadership Award from the Georgia Psychiatric Physician's Association. In 2014, she was selected as a YWCA Woman of Achievement and was recognized with a Womenetics POW! Award.

## STEVE STIRLING

President & CEO  
MAP International



When disaster strikes, MAP International, led by Rotarian and Polio Survivor Steve Stirling, stands ready to respond right away because lives are at stake. MAP's dedicated volunteers play a vital role in assembling signature Disaster Health Kits. Through its extensive network of emergency response partners, MAP provides rapid and efficient

distribution of MAP medicine and health supplies. MAP's Disaster Health Kits provide crucial hygiene items

like shampoo, soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and more, offering comfort and dignity to those affected by disasters. With a comb, washcloth, deodorant, and a first aid kit included, these packs make a significant impact, supporting the well-being and resilience of disaster-affected communities during challenging times.

Steve is offering a unique opportunity for District 6900 Rotarians to tour the headquarters of MAP International at 4700 Glynco Parkway, Brunswick, Georgia, on Saturday, March 23, 2024 at 1 pm as part of the 2024 District Conference, where we will have the opportunity to assemble these Disaster Health Kits. Contact Stephanie Windham at [swwindham@icloud.com](mailto:swwindham@icloud.com) if you are interested in participating.

# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PANEL

## **KATHY COLBENSON**

**CEO of CHRIS 180**



**K**athy is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist with 40 years of experience. She has been the Chief Executive Officer of CHRIS 180 since 1987. Under her leadership, CHRIS 180 has grown to include eight group homes, a permanent supportive housing

program, a counseling center, a comprehensive community program designed to strengthen families, a drop-in center for homeless youth and young adults, an adoption program, a homeless outreach and community housing program, the At-Promise Center in partnership with the Atlanta Police Foundation and a training institute – all of which focus on behavioral health, recovering from the impact of childhood trauma, and helping people develop the skills necessary for self-sufficiency.

Over the years, Kathy has provided consistent leadership through innovation and initiatives that break down barriers and result in outreach and help for underserved, invisible populations. New programs

include the opening the Southeast's first program for homeless youth that targeted outreach to LGBTQ youth in January 2000, creating the first supportive housing program in the state for homeless youth and youth aging out of foster care in 2010, creating new trauma-informed models for service delivery and adoption, and many other positive changes in services for children and families throughout the state.

In 2003, Kathy was humbled to receive the Dan Bradley Humanitarian Award from the Human Rights Campaign; in 2010 Kathy was recognized with the Evelyn Ullman Innovative Leadership Award; and in 2013, Kathy was honored to receive the Turknett Leadership Character Award. CHRIS 180 programs, services, and staff have been recognized for expertise and leadership in trauma-informed care. Recent recognitions include the TeleHealth Facility of the Year Award from the Georgia Partnership for TeleHealth for the CHRIS Counseling Center, and the Keeping Families Together Program, which received the National Innovation and Excellence Program Award from the National Center for Excellence and Innovation. Additionally, CHRIS 180 is the two-time winner of the Managing for Excellence Award (1998 & 2011) from the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta. In 2019, Kathy was honored as one of the Atlanta Business Chronicle's Most Admired CEO's. In 2020, Kathy was named to the Atlanta 500 and as one of Atlanta Magazine's Women Making a Mark. In 2021, she was once again named to the Atlanta 500 list.

## **SPECIAL THANKS TO THE 2024 ROTARY 6900 DISTRICT CONFERENCE TEAM:**

**Andrè Hadley Marria** – District Governor  
**Stephanie Windham** – Conference Chair  
**Carol Colón** – Conference Coordinator  
**Ryan Clements** – AV Manager  
**Bob Hope** – Talent Coordinator  
**Steve Mulder, Ardy Bastien,**  
**and Barry Oxford** – Rotary Choir Masters  
**LouAnn Medlock** – Stage Manager  
**William Wilson** – District Photographer  
**Elwyn Gaissert** – Sergeant at Arms Coordinator

**Kelly Hughes** – Decorations Coordinator  
**PDG Fran Milberg** – Awards Chair and Aide to PRIP Barry Rassin  
**PDG Georgia Granade** – Rotary Disco Lounge Coordinator  
**Teri White** – Conference Treasurer  
**PDG Alec Smythe** – Webmaster  
**Tracy Van Norman** – Breakout Sessions Coordinator  
**Mandy Timmons and Jackie Cuthbert** – Conference Promotions  
**Lisa Carlisle and Audley Knight** – Beach Party Guru's  
**Bobby Wheaton** – Conference Newsletter

# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PANEL

## **BELISA URBANA**

*CEO of Ser Familia*



**B**elisa Urbana has been fighting to remove the stigma from mental health and get treatment to those in need for more than 20 years.

She and her husband Miguel Urbana in 2001 co-founded the nonprofit Ser Familia Inc., which is the leading program in Georgia providing co-

ordinated multi-disciplinary family, social and mental health services to Latinos.

Ser Familia is nationally accredited for mental health treatment by CARF, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, and Belisa has spoken nationally about its unique model — using best practices and the appropriate cultural lens to coordinate services for all members of a Latino family to achieve long-lasting positive outcomes.

Born and raised in Puerto Rico, she studied Business Administration at The University of Puerto Rico and graduated Valedictorian of her class.

Among many organizations she is involved in, she is a member of Cobb County's 2020 Steering Committee and Kennestone Hospital's Regional Board of Directors past chairperson. She is also a member of the Prevent Child Abuse Georgia Advisory Board and Georgia's Child Protective Services Advisory Council. She has been a part of Georgia's Department of Public Health COVID-19 Health Equity Council. She is involved in many national efforts benefiting Latinos, including as a member of the Advisory Council of the National Network to Eliminate Disparities in Behavioral Health.

Among the many recognitions she has received for her work, in 2014, she was chosen as one of the 11 Who-Care by Atlanta's 11 Alive Channel. In 2017 she was honored by the Georgia Women's Legislative Caucus with the Nikki T. Randall Servant Leadership Award and recognized with the NFL Hispanic Heritage Leadership Award by the Atlanta Falcons. In 2018, the Atlanta Braves chose her along with her husband Miguel as Braves' Community Heroes. She has also been named as one of Georgia's 50 Most Influential Latinos in 2018, 2019, and 2020. In 2021, Urbana and her husband were inducted into the Georgia Latinos' Hall of Fame.

She is a graduate of Leadership Atlanta (2017) and the Regional Leadership Institute (2019).

## **MODERATOR: TOM WAYNICK**

*CEO of the Pastoral Institute*



**C**H (COL) Thomas C. Waynick (Ret.) spent 35 years in the Army as a chaplain. He is an Iraq combat veteran and recently retired as the Director/CEO of the Pastoral Institute in Columbus, GA. He has three master's degrees. He served as the Clinical Director and Supervisor of the Fort

Benning Family Life Training Center during a critical time in our war on terrorism. He worked at the Pentagon for the FMWRC assisting in making Army Family policy and later served as the Pentagon Chaplain. He is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in both Georgia and Louisiana. He is a past Diplomate in the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, an ACPE Pastoral Psychotherapist, a Diplomate in the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy, and a Clinical Member and Approved Supervisor of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. He is the author of several book chapters for counseling textbooks, as well as journal articles. He is a frequent speaker on topics concerning trauma, suicide, PTSD, moral injury, and the military family.