



Driven by a calling, Nicole Howell dedicates her career to the memories and experiences of her grandma — a Native American facing struggles as a person who spoke English as a second language.

In her grandma's legacy, over a decade-long career began in the nonprofit and then aging communities to fill a void by building programs, teams, and infrastructures, and providing resources to educate and combat the ageism impacting older adults. Nicole has helped cultivate change through the belief that there is both power and equity in shared leadership. She believes that powerful leadership is met with equal parts enthusiasm, engagement, and connection to the team and those she is privileged to work with.

As the Executive Director for Empowered Aging, Nicole is responsible for ensuring that the nearly 29,000 long-term care residents, countless seniors, and their families have access to the highest level of care and respect and, above all, can live free of abuse and neglect.

She has created, launched, and leads a variety of programs that support this mission, including Friendly Visiting and Telephone Reassurance to combat isolation, the Elder Justice Lunch and Learn webinar series to enhance the work of senior service professionals (a program that has reached more than 5,000 individuals in 46 states and four countries - in its first year), and the Healthcare Career Pathway, an innovative workforce development initiative designed to meet the critical shortage of qualified, certified nursing assistants. And that's just the beginning.

*"I've always had a passion for the nonprofit community, but when I became part of the ombudsman services in my prior role as the Director of Operations for Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County, something just clicked. It ignited a connection and those experiences I saw my grandma facing. I quickly became a fierce advocate for seniors and adults with disabilities and was driven to immerse myself in culture-changing initiatives and person-centered care philosophies. It's a true honor to use my voice for all of those in long-term care — residents, their families, and those who have passed. Really, it's not just a community. It's a movement of people."*



Since becoming Executive Director, Nicole has grown Empowered Aging's budget nearly 600%, lowered the use of anti-psychotics in Contra Costa County by 10%, and increased facility coverage by unearthing the problems and issues that are being overlooked. She has helped spearhead many new programs, including the Elder Justice Program Solano, Telephone Reassurance, and Friendly Visiting in Solano County, as well as Healthcare Career Pathways and Residents' Rights in Contra Costa.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Nicole and her team distributed PPE to 15,000 residents in long-term care. They also participated in efforts for residents' rights by collaborating with local reporters to spread the word on the risks facing the vulnerable older adult population. After the height of the pandemic, Nicole and her team were the first to reenter long-term care facilities and spearheaded the return of ombudsmen back to the field.

## Empowered Aging Services

Serving thousands of older adults and adults with disabilities across the Bay Area, Empowered Aging is a nonprofit organization dedicated to representing the interests that impact our isolated senior community. Nicole and her team believe aging is a natural phase of life, deserving of respect and dignity. Every day they empower, educate, and partner with older adults and adults with disabilities to best meet their unique needs – from providing opportunities to stay connected to the activities they love to ensuring they are free from neglect and abuse. Because when our elders thrive, we all benefit from their unique contributions and collective wisdom.

## Nicole's Featured Appearances

Nicole Howell is a coveted speaker and has been a nationally featured guest expert on issues impacting seniors. Nicole has been featured on NBC Bay Area and KQED and in the New York Times, San Francisco Chronicle, Mercury News, East Bay Times, Associated Press, and many more. On behalf of the entire elder care industry, long-term care residents, and their families, Nicole provided testimony during the House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee hearing “Examining the COVID-19 Nursing Home Crisis,” and was also asked to testify in front of the California State Assembly Subcommittee No. 6, also discussing the impacts of COVID-19 in skilled nursing facilities.

## About Nicole Howell

A Las Vegas native, Nicole holds a Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of Nevada, Reno. On October 21, 2020, Nicole was chosen as Woman of the Year by Congressman Garamendi in recognition of her service and leadership in California's third congressional district. As an avid speaker on all topics on elder advocacy and elder justice, she is honored to serve and be a part of the Solano Partners Against Violence as a Solano County appointed chair and board member of the Policy Committee for California Elder Justice Coalition, member of the Rotary Club of Walnut Creek Sunrise, a member of the Core Project Team for the Alliance to End Abuse in Contra Costa County, and a member of the Council for Age-Friendly Communities–Alameda County.



If you need a speaker to shine a spotlight on the issues facing our seniors, or to unearth the driving forces behind elder advocacy and elder justice, then get in touch. I would love to help spark change and enhance the voices of older adults and adults with disabilities in your community, too. [NicoleHowell@EmpoweredAging.Org](mailto:NicoleHowell@EmpoweredAging.Org) | 925.384.1124  
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