



## brown girl surf - Brain Trust

A group of advisors and collaborators formed in 2013



### **Dionne Ybarra, Founder, The Wahine Project**

Dionne Ybarra dedicated the first 15 years of her career as a Parent Educator. As the single mother of 3, she balanced career and parenting and became the Founding Director of The [Wahine Project](#) in 2010. The daughter of a migrant farm worker, the idea for the project emerged from her life experience as a Latina woman who was raised in a marginalized neighborhood in East Salinas.

Becoming a surfer in her 30's who knew first hand the liberating and transcending power of surfing, and recognizing that girls, especially girls of color, are underrepresented in the sport, she grew this project into what it is today. The [Wahine Project](#) continues to grow and make an impact on the young girls and young women, known as "Wahines" throughout California as they discover their potential and take it out into the world. As of 2024 [The Wahine Project](#) has served over 20,000 youth including gender expansive youth and youth living with disabilities.



### **Manav Thapar, Educator**

Manav Thapar is a passionate coach, empathetic educator and creative entrepreneur. His experience includes working as a youth instructor for Outward Bound, guiding youth through nature as a way to foster personal and emotional growth. He has also served as a grants and project manager for the Foundation for Youth Investment, co-founded Crunch Culture, a company specialized in producing vegan yogurt and served over a decade as a faculty lecturer in the Recreation, Parks, and Tourism department at San Francisco State University. Manav is an avid athlete, surfer and climber.



### **Krista Comer, Scholar, Rice University**

Krista Comer is a Professor of English at Rice University where she teaches literature, culture, and theory courses. She is the author of *Landscapes of the New West: Gender and Geography in Contemporary Women's Writing* and *Surfer Girls in the New World Order*, where she explores surfing as a local and global subculture, looking at how the culture of surfing has affected and been affected by girls, from baby boomers to members of Generation Y. In 2014, Krista co-founded the Institute for Women Surfers (IWS), an international grassroots political education initiative in the Public Humanities.



### **Mira Manickam-Shirley, Creator, Educator, Organizer, Advocate**

“Mira has spent over 25 years working at the intersection of nature, community, arts, and advocacy. Her focus throughout has been on creating change to support equitable, culturally rooted, and just pathways for connecting with the outdoors, building healthy communities, and living sustainably on this earth. She is also an artist, writer, and performer whose work reflects her wide range of lived experiences and explorations in this space, as a child of two continents, and a jill of many trades.”

Excerpted from Mira's full bio: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/mira-manickam-7b364030/>

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