

## **Karen Mack - Biography (250 words)**

Karen Mack is a passionate, visionary leader in Los Angeles focused on leveraging the power of arts and culture to empower individuals, build connections and develop communities. Twenty years ago, she founded LA Commons, a South LA based nonprofit implementing artistic and cultural programs reflecting the unique character of diverse neighborhoods to foster interaction, dialogue and a shared understanding of Los Angeles. Through grassroots art projects, festivals and tours in partnership with communities across Los Angeles, LA Commons plays a unique role facilitating local engagement in arts and culture as well as in other important issues - health, transportation and education to name a few, giving residents and particularly young people, a voice and an onramp to making positive change. Prior to work with LA Commons, she served as Public Service Fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University where she researched the role of culture in community building and Vice President at Community Partners, responsible for Program Planning and Development. She holds an MPA from Harvard University and an MBA from the John Anderson School of Management at UCLA. She has served as the President of the City's Board of Neighborhood Commissioners and of the nonprofit Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative and is currently a mayoral appointee to the City of Los Angeles Planning Commission (Equity Subcommittee Chair). She is also an appointee serving as co-chair of the Los Angeles County Cultural and Inclusion Initiative. Finally, she co-chaired the national initiative, Creative Placemaking from the Community Up.

Email: [karen@lacommons.org](mailto:karen@lacommons.org)

Facebook: [facebook.com/karen.mack.79230](https://facebook.com/karen.mack.79230)

Linkedin: [linkedin.com/in/karen-mack-502a4b6](https://linkedin.com/in/karen-mack-502a4b6)