



Paj Nandi, MPH

Board Member, Health and Sanitation

A native of India, Paj Nandi has lived in the U.S. for over 25 years and happily calls Seattle home. Early in his career, Paj worked in childhood education (India) and tuberculosis prevention (Thailand) and learned firsthand the value and efficacy of using culturally relevant and community-rooted approaches to improve health. Paj earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Community Health Education from Western Washington University and a Master of Public Health degree from the George Washington University in Washington D.C.

Paj is a seasoned public health practitioner, leader, and strategist with over 20 years of experience. He currently serves as an Associate Vice President at Desautel Hege (DH) Communications where he provides strategic counsel and leads key initiatives to advance equity-centered communications and DEI practices. Previously, he served as the Director of Community Relations and Equity for the Washington State Department of Health (DOH). As an agency leader, he advised the Secretary of Health, the State Health Officer, and other agency leaders on key equity and community relations issues and represented DOH on the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities from 2016 to 2021. He also directed his team's work on various equity and social justice strategic initiatives, including during the COVID-19 pandemic response. In addition, Paj built and sustained partnerships with the Governor's Office, non-governmental entities, community-based organizations, and academic partners, with an emphasis on achieving health equity, centering community voices, and eliminating structural inequities.

Paj's prior experience at DOH, in healthcare, and private sectors include leading and managing statewide chronic disease prevention and management programs; working on maternal, child and adolescent health campaigns and priorities; and leading enterprise-wide employee health and wellness benefits efforts. He also served on the Board of the Washington State Public Health Association for seven years, including a term as President in 2016-17 and briefly served as faculty on the Health and Wellbeing Curriculum Committee for Leadership Tomorrow, a program designed to cultivate the next generation of Puget Sound leaders.

As part of exploring new pathways within public health practice, Paj recently co-founded a small, independent consulting firm specializing in health equity strategy, The Upstream Group. He also holds a Clinical Faculty position at the University of Washington's School of Public Health and has previously taught at the Gillings School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill and the Evergreen State College.

At home, Paj enjoys spending time with his husband, their cat, and singing with his music circle.