

Takija T. Gardner is a native of New Orleans, Louisiana, who currently resides in Antioch, California, with her husband, James Gardner and her three children. Takija holds a Master of Public Administration degree with an emphasis in Public Management.

For the past 18 years, Takija has worked for the YMCA of San Francisco. Takija is currently a District Vice President, supporting organizational sustainability, governmental affairs, and financial development. She also serves as the Executive Sponsor to the Diversity, Inclusion and Global Engagement Steering Committee. Some of her accomplishments include representing the YMCA of San Francisco and the United States at the 16th World Council of YMCAs in Durban, South Africa, award recipient of the New Perspectives/Character Development Award, and recognition from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors for outstanding service to the community. Takija was bestowed the honor of being named one of "The Talented 25" by the Sun-Reporter, which includes Congresswoman Barbara Lee, Danny Glover, and Colin Kaepernick.

Outside of her normal scope of work, Takija lends support to community development through her active volunteer involvement with various boards, professional leadership organizations, and social movements. Takija is an active member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated and The Links, Incorporated.

Through Takija's volunteer experience and work history, she has worked hard to ensure that services provide opportunities that support the community in developing a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging, and empowerment. She realizes that it is about viewing people in terms of their power and potential, instead of their risk factors.

Takija credits her success to being spiritually grounded, strong family ties, and a host of mentors who have uplifted and supported her along the way.