COVID-19 has transformed life in California and plunged our nation into a “new normal”. Interviews show that adolescents in particular are struggling with the mental health effects of the isolation and stress of a pandemic. A recent California Partners Project study aims to help caregivers and adolescents understand what is happening beneath the surface so they can support and navigate the healthiest possible response to the loss and changes of the COVID-19 era. In this UCCS special presentation, a former social media executive reflects on some of the potentially pernicious effects of social media on adolescents and their parents. Then a leader from the California Partners Project summarizes key findings from their recent report and introduces a toolkit for mitigating harms now and in a post-pandemic future.

Ms. Laura Sanders Morris is the Director of Policy and Programs at the California Partners Project. She has designed and conducted workshops on conflict resolution, team building, and visioning sessions for students, families and non-profits. She has served on national and local boards advocating for children, gender, and race equity and is a former advisory board member for Dress for Success and national board member for Step Up Women’s Network. She currently serves on the board of trustees for Cathedral School for Boys and the advisory board of Wah Mei School. Recently, Laura transferred her passion for education and media to the pursuit of an advanced degree in education leadership focusing her doctoral research on the role of parents and equity in online learning.

Mr. Tim Kendall is the CEO of Moment, an app that helps adults and children use their phones in healthier ways. Before Moment, he was the President of Pinterest. Prior to Pinterest, he was Facebook’s Director of Monetization, where he led the development of Facebook’s advertising business. Tim serves on the board of UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital. He earned his engineering degree and MBA from Stanford University.