

<sup>NEW</sup> Pittsburgh Courier

*Women of Excellence*

Thursday, December 12, 2024

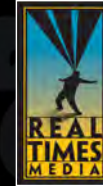
Wyndham Grand Pittsburgh Downtown Hotel

600 Commonwealth Place - Pittsburgh, PA 15222

6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.



Legacy Award Honoree  
**Doris Carson Williams**



NEW Pittsburgh Courier  
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# MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

The New Pittsburgh Courier salutes the “Class of 2024,” Women of Excellence honorees

The Courier’s “Women of Excellence” awards recognizes local African American women who inspire others through their vision, leadership, exceptional achievements and participation in community service. They are women who exemplify extraordinary stature, poise and integrity. These women influence those around them to go beyond the norm and strive for greatness. They

are champions of our economic empowerment and diversity, the backbone of our business, religious and educational organizations, and driving forces in politics and service.

Together, let’s welcome our “Women of Excellence,” the “Class of 2024!”

**Rod Doss**  
Editor and Publisher



**ROD DOSS**

# The Celebrity Host SHELDON INGRAM

Sheldon Ingram is a storyteller on multiple platforms.

He is a television reporter for Pittsburgh’s Action News 4 at WTAE-TV.

He also serves as a contributing talk show host for “WTAE Listens.”

Ingram is an accomplished, award-winning veteran television reporter, whose career spans nearly 40 years.

Before coming to Pittsburgh, Ingram served as an intern reporter for CNN in Atlanta. His career continued as a re-

porter, anchor, and talk show host for WRCB-TV in Chattanooga, Tenn., and WVEC-TV in Norfolk, Virginia.

He also served as the Virginia and Pittsburgh correspondent for BET News.

Ingram is a professional actor in television, film, and theater, and he’s also a voice actor.



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# NEW Pittsburgh Courier

## Women of Excellence

### CLASS OF 2024

**Dr. Elaine M. Allen**

Associate Dean, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Distinguished Service Professor, Engineering and Public Policy College of Engineering at Carnegie Mellon University

**Tyneshia "Ty" Allen**

Founder & Broker Owner  
Unity Concord Real Estate

**Ariell Antonio**

Counsel-Privacy, Cybersecurity and Data Protection  
Highmark Health

**Dr. Jocelyn V. Artinger**

Principal, Markham Elementary School  
Mt. Lebanon School District

**Danica S. Cato**

Senior Vice President, Business Experience Planning & Administration Group Manager  
PNC Financial Services

**Dr. Danielle Davis**

President & CEO  
Davis Consulting Solutions

**Anita L. Drummond**

Founder & Executive Director  
Pittsburgh Positive Young People Association

**Rhonda Fischer**

Chief Operating Officer  
Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon University

**Dr. Lisa Franklin-Robinson**

Executive Director, Mon Metro Chamber of Commerce;  
President, North Braddock Borough Council

**Dr. Shannah Tharp Gilliam**

Director  
Allegheny County Department of Human Services,  
Area Agency on Aging

**Keysha Gomez**

Co-Founder & CEO, Kulture Dance Academy;  
Co-Founder & Executive Director, H.O.P.E. For Tomorrow, Inc.

**Dr. Sherlyn Harrison**

Chief Program Officer  
Pittsburgh Scholar House

**Mary Hester**

Founder  
LifeVenture Real Estate Solutions

**Terina J. Hicks, MPM**

Owner & Chief Baker Officer  
CobblerWorld LLC

**Margo Hinton**

Founder, Heads Up Sports Training LLC;  
Educator, North Allegheny School District

**Myah Moore Irick**

Founder & Senior Vice President  
The Irick Group-Merrill Private Wealth Management

**Keisha Che're Jimmerson**

Dean of Students and Diversity Officer  
Seton Hill University

*Legacy Award Honoree***Doris Carson Williams**

CEO

African American Chamber of Commerce of  
Western Pennsylvania

**Rev. Justine E. Jones**

Chaplain  
Grane Hospice and South Pittsburgh Coalition for Peace

**China Nicole Lee, Esq.**

Lead Counsel, Commercial Transactions  
Federal Express Corporation

**Dina Lee**

Customer Service Representative, Duquesne Light Company;  
IBEW Local 29 Union Steward

**Juanita Lomax**

Founder & CEO  
Hit Like A Girl

**Janine Macklin**

Associate Director of Government Affairs  
Duquesne University

**Margo Marshall**

Co-Event Coordinator, Stop the Violence Pittsburgh;  
Owner, Early Mae's Bakery

**Yvette R. Moore**

Director of Equity & Inclusion of Undergraduate Initiatives  
University of Pittsburgh Swanson School of Engineering

**Ayisha A. Morgan-Lee, EdD**

Founder, CEO & Artistic Director  
Hill Dance Academy Theatre

**Sabrina Saunders Mosby**

President & CEO  
Vibrant Pittsburgh

**Kimberly Huddleston Neely**

Senior Vice President, Solution Train Engineer  
BNY Mellon

**Debbie Norrell**

Owner  
A Look Not A Label LLC

**Bonita B. Pannell, MSW, MBA**

Director of Community Outreach  
UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital

**Marissa Park**

Manager, Client Services Readiness, NRG Energy;  
Executive Board, Urban Pathways Charter Schools

**Pamela Parks**

Principal, Pittsburgh Lincoln PreK-5  
Pittsburgh Public Schools

**Det. Artie H. Patterson**

Homicide Detective  
Pittsburgh Bureau of Police

**Montia Robinson**

Owner & Operator, The M Robinson Group;  
Co-Owner, CKV Suites

**Dr. Crystal Rose-Eddens**

Director of Workforce Development and Capacity Building  
Early Excellence Project

**Yvette Renee Royal**

Owner  
Anastasia's Crown Esthetic Services

**Alexis T. Russell, B.S. Arch, MSL**

Co-Owner  
Russell General Contracting

**Keesha A. Sheffey**

Colleague Relations Manager Pittsburgh Mercy

**Jill Smallwood**

Owner  
J, KoKo Hauling LLC

**Doris A. Smith**

Preload Operations Manager  
United Parcel Service, Inc. (UPS)

**Felicia E. Snead, MD, FASTRO**

Associate Professor, University of Pittsburgh;  
Medical Director, UPMC Hillman Cancer Center,  
St. Clair Health Cancer Center

**Dena Stanley**

Executive Director  
Trans YOUning

**nA' Stubbs**

Founder & Artistic Director  
uNiqu' Arts

**Dr. Aja Thompson**

Supervisor Court Liaison Unit  
Fifth Judicial District of Pennsylvania,  
Allegheny County Adult Probation

**Dr. Tamara Thornhill, LPC, MBA**

Clinical Director Melanin Mommies PGH Inc. and  
The Community Mental Health Collective

**Dr. Shannon K. Watson**

Senior Program Manager  
Healthy Start, Inc.

**Sarah D. White**

Executive Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion/  
Chief Diversity Officer  
La Roche University

**Alice Williams**

Executive Director  
Women Empowered for Entrepreneurial Excellence

**Quaila Wilson-White**

Owner  
STEAM Beauty & Wellness Spa

**Adrienne Young**

Executive Director  
Tree of Hope

**Dr. Julianne Zeigler**

Chief Financial Officer  
Tadiso Incorporated



# The Legacy Honoree

## DORIS CARSON WILLIAMS

**CEO**  
**African American**  
**Chamber of**  
**Commerce**  
**of Western**  
**Pennsylvania**

**Doris Carson Williams is the Chief Executive Officer of the African American Chamber of Commerce of Western Pennsylvania. In fact, she began the local organization by herself in 1998.**

**With her as the driving force, the African American Chamber of Commerce of Western Pa. has become one of the most cherished and largest minority chambers in the U.S.**

**Carson Williams served as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland and is immediate past President of the Pennsylvania Court of Judicial Discipline.**

**Carson Williams co-chaired the 2014 G-20 summit in Pittsburgh. She is a member of the International Women's Forum.**

**She earned a business degree at the University of Hartford; is a graduate of the Graduate School of Banking and Finance at Fairfield University (Connecticut), as well as the Pitt Katz School of Business Management Program for Executives, and holds an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Carlow University. She has been named a Distinguished Daughter of Pennsylvania.**

**She is a board member of Highmark, and Vice Chair of the Highmark Foundation.**

**She resides in Pittsburgh, has one son, James III, and he and his wife, Brooke, are the proud parents of James Vaughan and Jade Marie Williams.**



## DR. ALAINE M. ALLEN

**Associate Dean, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Distinguished Service Professor,  
 Engineering and Public Policy  
 College of Engineering at Carnegie Mellon University**

Dr. Alaine M. Allen is a dedicated educator who has spent over 30 years creating opportunities and amplifying the voices of individuals from groups that have historically been marginalized, underestimated, or overlooked in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. She currently serves as the Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Carnegie Mellon University's College of Engineering. In this role, she collaborates with a team of professionals to strengthen the culture of the College of Engineering and support initiatives for undergraduate and graduate students, staff, faculty, and educational outreach. Additionally, she holds the position of Distinguished Service Professor in the Department of Engineering and Public Policy.

Dr. Allen is passionate about fostering a culture of inclusive excellence that empowers the entire community to collaborate, bridge differences, and thrive together.

Dr. Allen is the Principal Investigator for the NSF AGEF FC-PAM Project ELEVATE (Equity-focused Launch to Empower and Value AGEF Faculty

to Thrive in Engineering), an initiative designed to develop a career advancement model that enhances the professional experiences of early-career engineering faculty of color. She is also senior personnel for the NSF MPS-ASCEND Mentorship Network for Postdoctoral Fellows. Previously, Dr. Allen led pre-college and undergraduate engineering diversity programs, as well as community engagement projects at the University of Pittsburgh, where she served as Co-Principal Investigator for the NSF Eddie Bernice Johnson INCLUDES Alliance STEM PUSH (Pathways for Underrepresented Students to Higher Education) Network.

Dr. Allen holds a B.S. in Physics Education from Lincoln University of Pennsylvania, along with an M.Ed. in Policy, Planning, and Evaluation, and an Ed.D. in Higher Education Management, both from the University of Pittsburgh. She is the proud mother of one adult son, Antoine Allen Jr.



## TYNESHIA 'TY' ALLEN

Founder & Broker Owner  
Unity Concord Real Estate

Ty Allen has 11 years of real estate experience and more than 20 years in sales and leadership across a multitude of industries, including banking, marketing and wireless. Allen exemplifies professional excellence through her remarkable accomplishments in the real estate industry and beyond. Her real estate career began with an extraordinary achievement: winning the Rising Star

Award through Howard Hanna in 2015 during her first year in business. Since then, Allen has received numerous honors, including being featured in Pittsburgh's Real Producer magazine as a "Realtor to Watch" in 2020 and earning the Five Star Professional Award in both 2023 and 2024.

In 2024, Allen founded Unity Concord Real Estate, a female-led, Black-owned real estate brokerage committed to creating equitable pathways to homeownership and personalized real estate experiences. Her mission extends beyond transactions; it's a ministry focused on "housing the unhoused" and ensuring that homeownership is accessible for all. Allen has fulfilled the dream of homeownership to over 290 clients thus far, with more than half being first-time homebuyers.

Allen's educational achievements include a Bachelor of Science in Information Systems Management from Robert Morris University, an MBA from Point Park University, and a special business certification from University of Pittsburgh. As a Pennsylvania State Licensed Broker, she combines academic expertise with industry insights to serve as a trusted leader in Pittsburgh's real estate market.

Allen is also a proud single mom who has three children; Bianca, Isaiah, Lanikai and son-in-law, Ryan. She is also a proud grandmother to her only grandchild, Amir, affectionately known as Peanut.



## ARIELL ANTONIO

Counsel – Privacy, Cybersecurity, and  
Data Protection  
Highmark Health

Ariell Antonio has 16 years of legal experience. She currently serves as Counsel in the legal department of Highmark Health, where she provides expert guidance on privacy, cybersecurity, and data protection. A member of the Privacy Legal practice group, she advises Highmark Health, its subsidiaries, and affiliates — including Highmark Inc., and United Concordia Dental — on complex legal and regulatory compliance. Her work encompasses drafting and negotiating critical data sharing agreements, providing strategic counsel to business stakeholders, and contributing to governance impacting data protection and AI.

Prior to joining Highmark Health, Antonio gained extensive le-

gal experience, including private practice (both large and medium firms), judicial clerkships, contract officer roles, and in-house counsel for an integrated health provider and insurer.

Demonstrating a commitment to both professional excellence and community engagement, Antonio serves on the Pittsburgh Legal Diversity & Inclusion Coalition Corporate Roundtable Working Group and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law Black Alumni Steering Committee. She is a member of the Allegheny County Bar Association, having served on its 2021-2022 Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee and as a graduate of its Bar Leadership Initiative.

Antonio holds a Juris Doctor from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication from Louisiana State University, and is a Certified Information Privacy Professional (CIPP/US).

She embodies the principle of "lift as we climb" through her volunteer work and pro bono initiatives. Antonio is a proud mother to her daughter, Malaya, and an active member of The Girl Friends Inc.



Congratulations,  
*Marissa Park*

Pittsburgh Courier  
Women of Excellence  
Class of 2024



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*Congratulations to Marissa Park, honored as part of the Pittsburgh Courier Women of Excellence! We're proud to have an exceptional team driving our mission forward.*

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## Class of 2023 Honorees

### HON. CYNTHIA A. BALDWIN LEGACY HONOREE

ROMODORE ABDULLAH, MSW  
KENYA ALFORD  
STACIE ALLEN  
TANYA J. ASHBY  
JENEEN ASQUE-WILSON  
DENISE H. BAKER, MSN, CRNP  
GLORIA J. BESLEY  
ANGELA BLANTON  
SHERENE BRANTLEY  
QIANA BUCKNER  
TRACY LYNN CALHOUN  
DR. MELODY CARTER-FRYE  
IMOGENE L. CATHEY, ESQ.  
VALARIE DALLIS COLEMAN  
TRACEY CONTI, MD  
LEONTYNE T. DAFFIN, MSN, RN  
TAMIKA DARWIN  
DR. DAREN A. ELLERBEE  
BRANDI FISHER  
ESTHER M. FRANKLIN  
MICHELLE GAINEY  
L'TESHA J. GAMBLE-PETTIS  
SHEILA GLOVER  
TANIKA S. HARRIS  
DR. VIRGINIA R. HILL  
TIFFANY T. HUFF-STROTHERS  
ROBIN MARSHALL KELLY  
TRACEE KIRKLAND-RIVERS  
SANDRA K. LEWIS  
NICOLE LOGAN  
KENYA SHEPPARD MATTHEWS  
NATASHA N. MITCHELL-JONES  
DR. SHALLEGRA MOYE  
STEPHANIE MOYE  
SHARISE NANCE  
LINGAIRE NJIE  
JACQUELYN OMOTALADE  
PAMELA JOHNSON POWELL  
PASTOR ELLA RAWLINGS  
KENDRA JANELLE ROSS, PHD  
TENECIA M. ROSS  
JACQUELINE SMITH  
DR. JESSICA MERRITT  
SPRADLEY  
DR. MARGARET J. STARKES  
LECHELLE M. STRINGA  
MARISOL WANDIGA VALENTIN  
CYNTHIA VANHOLTEN-DIXON  
DR. DIAMONTE WALKER  
ERICKA D. WINGFIELD  
FANTASY ZELLARS

## DR. JOCELYN V. ARTINGER Principal, Markham Elementary School Mt. Lebanon School District

Dr. Jocelyn V. Artinger has spent over 15 years advocating for children in both public and non-public school settings. As a teacher, tutor, principal, equity affiliate, literacy coordinator of school transformation, and mom, she has worked to ensure that the literature used in education settings represents and speaks to the children she teaches and loves.

After receiving her B.A. in Communication Rhetoric from the University of Pittsburgh, Dr. Artinger



## DANICA S. CATO

### Senior Vice President, Business Experience Planning & Administration Group Manager PNC Financial Services

Danica Cato is a Senior Vice President at PNC Financial Services.

Cato has spent her career, spanning 29-plus years, at PNC Financial Services and its subsidiaries. She has demonstrated career growth with in many roles, starting as a banker, progressing to branch manager, project manager, program manager, and most recently, senior business experience planning & administration manager within PNC Investments.

In her current role, she leads a group of six teams that comprise of both sales and service activities for PNC Investments. In addition, Cato is responsible for providing strategic guidance on internal activities and initiatives designed to improve the client experience; the development and oversight of sales initiatives; supporting team members with complex client issues; executing PNC's talent management strate-



received an M.A. in Elementary Education from Chatham University. Dr. Artinger obtained her Principal's Certification from the University of Pittsburgh. She has also studied at the Reading Institute at Columbia University's Teachers College and was a 2022 State of Black Learning Black Excellence in Education Honoree.

In April, Dr. Artinger finished her doctoral studies at the University of Pittsburgh. Her dissertation titled: Moving Beyond the Margins: A Phenomenological Study of Elementary Social Studies Teachers Incorporating Historically Marginalized Perspectives, centered on understanding how one can interrupt the dominant narrative portrayed in many elementary social studies classrooms to include the perspectives of those historically marginalized and support teachers in embedding those stories into their lessons and units of study.

Dr. Artinger is the granddaughter of Isabell (John) and Doris (ValJean), both of whom were educators and fierce champions of the education of Black children. She is the daughter of Don and Trina, who taught her to pursue her dreams relentlessly and always believed she could achieve them.

She is the wife of Justin, who has helped set up multiple classrooms, carried countless boxes of books all around Pittsburgh, and has always believed in and supported her. She is the proud mother of William and Isabell who inspire her in ways she wouldn't have imagined and lit the spark that turned a passion into a wildfire. She is the sister to Don Jeremy and Jasmine, her two first friends, who played school with her repeatedly, even when they wanted to play something else. Countless friends and professional colleagues have poured into Dr. Artinger throughout the years. Without any of these people, Dr. Artinger would not be who she is, and for that, thank you would never be enough.

gy within the Sales and Service Group; and providing forward-looking insights on client issues and trends.

Cato's client service teams play a vital role in building and maintaining client relationships, prioritizing exceptional client experiences. And her sales teams include financial advisors who play a pivotal role in guiding clients through financial challenges and opportunities, making informed decisions that drive growth, manage risks, and optimize resources.

Cato served terms on the Diversity and Inclusion councils for PNC Retail and PNC Investments.

Cato earned her Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of Pittsburgh. She is an active member of Mount Ararat Baptist Church where she serves as a Vice Chair on the Board of Trustees and the Mount Ararat Community Activity Center Board.

## Class of 2022 Honorees

### ESTHER L. BUSH LEGACY HONOREE

MAYA ADAMS  
MICHELLE L. BERRYMAN  
DANIELLE BLACKBURN, PHD  
ANGELA BLAIR  
LATANYA J. BROWN  
REV. DR. LAWANA L. BUTLER  
DR. PAULINE CALLAWAY-LONG,  
D.S.C.  
MARCIA CARTER  
TEAIRA COLLINS  
KENYOKEE C. CROWELL  
CARMELLA ANTOINETTE  
DEARMON  
KEIHA R. DRUMMOND  
ROXANNE EASLEY  
LATRICE EBO, BSN  
ANNE GERMANY, BSN, RN,  
CCM  
CYNTHIA A. GILMER  
VICTORIA L. GOINS  
DAWN GORDON, M.ED.,  
MSW, LSW  
TERESA M. HAWTHORNE  
MIKEY HOOD  
GAIL E. JACKSON  
ARDANA "AJ" JEFFERSON  
REV. JUNE JEFFRIES  
DR. MALEEA JOHNSON  
INIKA JONES  
JAEEL JONES  
LATARA J. JONES  
DR. TOYA JONES  
AYANNA LEE-DAVIS  
EBONY LUNSFORD-EVANS  
DENISE S. MEYERS  
TAMIA MITCHELL  
YOLANDA J. MURPHY  
TYRA OLIVER  
THERESA POINDEXTER  
REV. NIKKI PORTER  
KELLY PROTHO  
STACEY E. RANDOLPH  
ANGELA REYNOLDS, PHD  
ALICIA L. SCOTT, MSN, RN  
RONNIECE SHEALEY-SIRMONS  
ANDREA CLARK SMITH  
MONICA TILLMAN SMITH  
DEBORAH STARLING  
ALEXIS JAMES STEALS  
MICHELLE MARIE STEWART  
REV. AISHA I. TATE, M.DIV.  
DR. TAMMY WASHINGTON  
NICOLE R. WEBSTER  
MELISSA K. WHARTON

## DR. DANIELLE DAVIS

President & CEO  
Davis Consulting Solutions

Dr. Danielle Davis, President and CEO of Davis Consulting Solutions (DCS), is an innovative leader in management consulting and community economic development. She is known for her strategic vision for business and workforce solutions, dedication

to social impact, and commitment to supplier Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Dr. Davis has experience in planning, developing, and overseeing programs, procedures and policies to increase DBE participation in over \$800 million in procurement, services, and construction processes for housing and revitalization projects. Under her leadership, DCS excels with its multi-generational talent management solutions, averaging over 400 prospects per year that either improve their skills, overcome barriers, or access job opportunities. She has collaborated with over 100 businesses and entrepreneurs, assisting them in enhancing their capabilities and expanding their access to funding, training, and contracting opportunities. Her experience encompasses work with corporate, governmental, and nonprofit sectors, fostering collaborative growth and performance improvement. With a strong team and network of associates, she is dedicated to achieving higher levels of success for clients.



## ANITA L. DRUMMOND

Founder & Executive Director  
Pittsburgh Positive Young People Association

Anita Drummond is the proud daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley and Maudine Drummond, former owners of Drummond's Corner Market.

Anita Drummond is the proud mother of NFL Pro-Bowler Eddie Drummond of the Detroit Lions, Pittsburgh Steelers and Kansas City Chiefs. She also is the mother of Darlene Berry and 13 daughters that Anita Drummond adopted and fostered. She also is the founder and executive director of the Pittsburgh Positive Young People Association. She is retiring this year and is passing the torch to her daughter, Darlene, and family.

She is a community activist and organizer for 48 years, working with the Harambee festivals for 21 years. She is the director of the East Liberty Merchants Black Arts and Wellness Festival Mardi-Gras and second-line parade.

Over the years, Anita Drummond has celebrated Thanksgiving by providing dinners for senior citizens, and during Christmas, she holds a toy drive for more than 200 families. She believes that God gives everyone a gift, and her gift is to help people.

When she was in her late 20s, Anita Drummond rushed inside of a burning

apartment building, saving several families.

Here are Anita Drummond's keys to success. 1) Always give glory and praises to God. 2) Always love and cherish your family and friends. 3) Always give respect and feed your community. Each day, say something nice to someone. Work hard and make a positive difference in your neighborhood.



## WOMEN OF EXCELLENCE

We celebrate women whose professional and personal achievements serve as a model for success in shaping our region.

At Pennsylvania American Water, our female employees are women of distinction. No matter the role, **we appreciate all they do to provide our customers with safe, reliable water and wastewater service.**



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American Water was included in the 2023 Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index for the 5th consecutive year.

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## CONGRATULATIONS TY ALLEN

Owner and Broker of Unity Concord Real Estate

Pittsburgh Courier Women of Excellence Honoree

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## Class of 2021 Honorees

### LYNNE HAYES-FREELAND

#### LEGACY HONOREE

DR. AMY ALEXANDER  
DR. TAMARA ALLEN-THOMAS  
OLIVIA BENNETT  
CHRISTINE BETHEA  
KENYA BOSWELL  
DANNIELLE N. BROWN  
DR. ELIZABETH A. CARTER  
LESLIE CARTER  
CHANDI CHAPMAN  
DR. LISA COFFEY  
DR. CHARLENE  
HILL-COLEMAN  
DAYNA DELGADO  
JOI EDMONDS  
TONYA EDMONDS  
LAJUANA FULLER  
CORINNE GIBSON  
PAMELA GOLDEN  
DR. TERRIE GRIFFIN  
DR. LORA HUBBARD  
TINISHA HUNT  
REV. HELEN JACKSON  
GLADYS JELKS  
ELAINE B. JENKINS  
JA-NEEN JONES  
DOROTHEA LEFTWICH  
DEBORAH MARSHALL  
DR. TAMMI MCMILLAN  
MARSHALL  
LOIS TONI MCCLENDON  
ERICA MCDILL  
BILITA MCINTOSH  
MUFFY MENDOZA  
SHATARA MURPHY  
MARY NESBY  
REV. CARRIE PUGH  
SHARON L. ROBINSON  
SHEMARIA SCHARMANN  
JERVONNE SINGLETARY  
DENISE SINKLER  
REV. EILEEN SMITH  
CHERYL SMITH  
CAROL SPEAKS-HADDOCK  
JAMILA SYKES  
NGOZI D. TIBBS  
KIYA TOMLIN  
JERIMAIN WARD  
ERNESTINE WATTS-TAYLOR  
JANICE WHITE  
TERAYA WHITE  
TERRI WILLIAMS  
DR. BONNIE YOUNG

## RHONDA FISCHER

**Chief Operating Officer  
Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon  
University**

Rhonda Fischer is a seasoned leader who is motivated to help mission-based organizations increase their impact through operational excellence. She joined the Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon University as its inaugural Chief Operating Officer in June 2019. At Tepper, she is responsible for the effective management of the school's administrative functions – including Finance, Technology Services, Facilities and Human Resources. She partners closely with the school's deans, faculty and staff members to operationalize the school's strategic and educational priorities. Fischer values collaboration and partnership and has worked with stakeholders across the university in support of Tepper's goals, on search committees for key leadership roles, and most recently on CMU's strategic planning committee.

Prior to her role at Tepper, Fischer served as the Chief Operating Officer of the East Lake Foundation, an organization in Atlanta with a mission to ensure that every member of its community has equitable access to the resources, tool and supports needed to thrive. At the East Lake Foundation, she



## DR. LISA FRANKLIN-ROBINSON

**Executive Director, Mon Metro Chamber of Commerce;  
President, North Braddock Borough Council**

Lisa D. Franklin-Robinson is a native of suburban Pittsburgh, living most of her life in North Braddock. She is a product of public, parochial, and private education. Franklin-Robinson has a Bachelor of Science in Human Resources Management from Geneva College and a Master of Divinity with a Certificate of Urban Ministry and a Doctorate of Ministry from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Her passion is to help others to know God, to know themselves and to know what God has called them to do to promote flourishing and freedom in the world.

In 2017, Franklin-Robinson concluded her work at Pittsburgh Seminary as a member of the Board of Directors and the Alumni Council but continues to serve on the Metro Urban Institute Advisory board. She also served in a global capacity as a member of the Transatlantic Roundtable on Race, under the leadership of the Rev. R Drew Smith, Ph.D. She now serves as a board member of the Local Government Academy, Main St: a multimedia service company, the Braddock's Battlefield History Center and as a proud member of The Greater Pittsburgh Business and Professional Women Inc., the National Council of Negro Women and the Top Ladies of Distinction Pittsburgh Steel City Chapter.

Franklin-Robinson is a servant leader who understands that her call is to strive to bring hope and flourishing to the people of her region. Franklin-Robinson is a member of the Mt. Ararat Baptist Church, under the leadership of Rev. Dr. William H. Curtis, where she is pursuing minister candidacy.

Lisa is a fourth-generation resident of North Braddock where she serves as the president of the borough

was responsible for finance/administration, programs and programmatic partnerships in support of the foundation's mission. Fisher and her husband, Charles, remain connected to this community through their support of a scholarship named in their honor at the East Lake Foundation for graduating seniors.

Fischer has dedicated over 20 years of her career to serving organizations that are committed to addressing societal challenges and is a committed civic leader.

Fischer earned a B.S. in Finance and Marketing at the University of Virginia's McIntire School of Commerce, and an M.B.A. at the Goizueta School of Business at Emory University. She has served communities in both Atlanta and Pittsburgh through nonprofit board service. Currently, she serves on the Board of Trustees for the POISE Foundation, and the Advisory Board for the Advanced Leadership Institute (TALI), where she has also been an Executive Mentor.

Fischer is an active member of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the Links Inc., and Jack and Jill of America Inc. She was named a 2021 Woman of Distinction in Business by the Girl Scouts of Western Pennsylvania and is a member of the current class of Leadership Pittsburgh (LP XLI).

Fischer is the proud wife of Rev. Charles L. Fischer III, and mom to two amazing sons, Charles IV and Cameron. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with friends and family, attending arts and cultural events, and traveling.

council. She's also worked with a core team to develop a regional comprehensive plan for Braddock, East Pittsburgh, and North Braddock (BEN) and is developing ways of executing that plan as the Executive Director of the Mon Metro Chamber of Commerce.

Franklin-Robinson has been the wife of Lawrence Robinson Jr. for 24 years. Her community work for flourishing and freedom began at home with her seven children (5 biological and 2 bonus), Maurice (wife Ebony), Brandon, Abriana, Taylor, Adam (wife Anisha), Dorian (wife Donaeya), and Lawrence III as well as her seven grandchildren, Brandon Jr, Marley, Michael III, Moses, Monica, Tristan and Logan.



## Class of 2019 Honorees

### VALERIE MCDONALD

#### ROBERTS

#### LEGACY HONOREE

DONNA ALLEN-ROSEMOND  
SONITA BELL  
JOANNE BOYD  
SIMQUITA BRIDGES  
REV. TALEETA CANADY  
AURELIA CARTER  
ELAINE COLE  
INEZ COLON  
DR. RANDI CONGLETON  
BETH CRAWFORD  
BETHANY CRISWELL  
SUSAN DOPICO  
DR. WILLA DOSWELL  
LISA EPPS  
KATHRYN FITZGERALD  
KIMBERLY FRANCETTE  
DR. TRISHA GADSON  
DR. TYRA GOOD  
DR. ALICIA B. HARVEY-SMITH  
DR. SHARON HIGGINBOTHAN  
MAISHA HOWZE  
PHYLLISS JOHNSON  
LATOYA JOHNNSO-RAINEY  
DR. DAWNDRA JONES  
JACQUELINE JONES-MITCHELL  
FRANCES JORDAN  
CARLEEN KING, MBA  
DENA LAMAR  
NICOLE NARVAEZ MANNIS  
SHARON MCINTOSH  
JUDITH WOODSON MCNEIL  
ANGELA MIKE  
TERRI MINOR-SPENCER  
TONI MURPHY  
AMANDA NEATROUR  
EVELYN NEWSOME  
DR. JOYLETTE PORTLOCK  
DR. RUTHIE REA  
CAMILA RIVERA-TINSLEY  
TIMIRA RUSH  
TRICIA SHELTON  
AMBER SLOAN  
CHARLISE SMITH  
LISA SYLVESTER  
FLO TAYLOR  
JUEL THOMAS-SMITH  
TAMMY THOMPSON  
NATALIE S. TYLER  
RAMONA RUTH WILKES  
JUDY WRIGHT



## DR. SHANNAH THARP GILLIAM

**Director  
Allegheny County Department of Human  
Services, Area Agency on Aging**

Shannah Tharp Gilliam, Ph.D., is the Director of the Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging at the Department of Human Services (DHS-AAA). She graduated from Georgetown University, has a Master of Science and Doctorate from the University of Pittsburgh, and holds certifications in program evaluation, public policy, and innovations and social impact in gerontology.

Since her hire at DHS-AAA in 2022, Dr. Gilliam has organized the agency's restructuring to better position Aging Services to address old challenges in new ways. She has also brought innovative workforce partnerships to the area that address direct-care workforce issues and in-home care waitlists.

Before her hire at DHS-AAA, Dr. Gilliam served as a nonprofit leader in Homewood for over a decade, where she developed and led community-driven advocacy initiatives to equip residents to engage with policymakers for racial, economic, and social justice. She has spearheaded efforts that elevate equity issues and activate resources. As a behavioral scientist, she values rigorous processes that increase understanding of the systemic implications of public policy and practice at levels from national to the community. Her previous work experience includes two decades as a director of

research and evaluation for Homewood Children's Village and as a behavioral scientist at RAND Corporation, where she developed data-based policy recommendations and provided technical assistance for state and local, community, education, and health initiatives. Dr. Gilliam is also the president of the Allegheny County Sanitary Authority (ALCOSAN) board of trustees.

Under her leadership, the Allegheny County AAA was awarded the 2024 US-Aging Achievement Award and the 2024 John A. Hartford Foundation Business Innovation Award.



## DR. SHERLYN HARRISON

**Chief Program Officer  
Pittsburgh Scholar House**

Dr. Sherlyn E. Harrison is a dedicated educator, leader and scholar with over 20 years of experience providing high-quality educational programming and mental health services to children and families. Currently, Dr. Harrison is the Chief Program Officer for the Pittsburgh Scholar House, a program that promotes generational prosperity by providing coordinated supportive services for parenting students who are pursuing higher education. Prior to that, Dr. Harrison served as the Early Head Start Program Manager for Pittsburgh Public Schools' Early Childhood Education program where she managed high-quality classroom and home-based early learning programs for children ages birth to three.

Centering race while elevating issues of diversity, equity, inclusion and justice are primary to the work that Dr. Harrison has been passionate about for many years. In March 2023, under her leadership, the PPS Early Head Start program received the PA Early Childhood Equity Champion Gold Award for engaging in innovative professional development designed to enhance culturally responsive practices and cultivate learning environments where all children, particularly children of color and their families, feel a

sense of belonging.

Dr. Harrison earned a Master of Science in Applied Developmental Psychology from the University of Pittsburgh in 2006 and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Administration from Point Park University in 2021. Her research focused on promoting positive racial identity in young African American children, specifically exploring how parents' effective racial socialization practices can be integrated into early childhood instructional delivery.

Dr. Sherlyn Harrison is a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. Currently, she serves as chair of the Heritage and Archives committee for the Pittsburgh Alumnae Chapter.



## KEYSHA GOMEZ

**Co-Founder & CEO, Kulture Dance  
Academy;  
Co-Founder & Executive Director,  
H.O.P.E. For Tomorrow, Inc.**

Keysha Gomez, a first-generation American raised in Miami, brings to her community a legacy of service, cultural pride, and an unwavering dedication to youth development. Born in the Bronx and deeply influenced by her family's Jamaican cultural values, Gomez was raised to prioritize family, community, and hard work. Her early passion for the arts led her to study dance and drama from a young age, earning her prestigious honors like the Silver Knight Award and recognition as "Most Likely to Succeed in Fine Arts." By the time she left for college at Bethany College, she had accumulated more community service hours than any of her peers, earning scholarships and recognition for her commitment to service.

Gomez's professional journey spans inventory planning, branch management, and operational oversight, which she has used to empower communities across Miami, Atlanta, and Pittsburgh. Since relocating to Pittsburgh in 2010, she has devoted herself to transforming the lives of youth and their families. In 2012, she co-founded H.O.P.E. for Tomorrow (Helping Ourselves Produce Excellence), a nonprofit organization dedicated to equipping young people with the skills

they need to thrive in a global economy.

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, Gomez co-founded Kulture Dance Academy in 2020 to provide a nurturing environment for minority dancers. This academy offers high-quality dance training while celebrating cultural identity, reflecting Gomez's lifelong dedication to creating inclusive, supportive spaces for young people. Gomez's commitment extends to local leadership, including board service with YBMKQ and her role as President of the LIFE Male STEAM Academy PTO. She lives in Pittsburgh with her husband, John Paul, and their four children, K'ai-jha, Malachi, Micah, and Jeremiah, who are a constant inspiration in her work.

Gomez's accomplishments underscore her vision, resilience, and the power of community, marking her as an enduring force for positive change and an invaluable honoree for Black women professionals.



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Dr. Sherlyn Harrison,  
and all Women of Excellence  
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## Class of 2018 Honorees

### CECILIE M. SPRINGER - LEGACY HONOREE

TIA BAKER  
SALOAM BEY  
BETTY BRAXTER  
LAKEISHA "KI KI" BROWN  
BRITTEE CLAY  
LORI CRISWELL  
LARAE CULLENS  
LATIKA DAVIS-JONES, PHD,  
MPH, MSW  
DEBRA DENNISON  
MALESIA DUNN  
CHRISTIN DURHAM  
MAMAR GELAYE  
VICTORIA A. GARNER  
MARITA GARRETT  
JUDITH K. GINYARD  
ARAINA GRAHAM  
MARSHA GRAYSON  
LASHAUNDRAM HAMMONDS  
SHERDINA HARPER  
ALETA HEARD  
REV. CARMEN D. HOLT  
NIKKIA INGRAM  
MINIKA JENKINS  
DIANE JOHNSON  
CHERYL JOHNSON  
SHEILA L. JOHNSON, PHD, DMIN.  
NICHOLE KINDRED  
VALERIE KINLOCH  
CLAUDIA M. KREGG-BYERS, PHD  
REV. SHANEA D. LEONARD  
JANET K. MANUEL  
NICKEIA MASON  
GRACE WANKIIRI ORSATTI, ESQ.  
DIANE POWELL  
SIMONE QUINERLY  
ALETA RICHARDS  
BONITA L. RICHARDSON  
DIONNA ROJAS  
YASMIN SHAHEED  
M. SHERNELL SMITH  
SHAWNA SOLOMON  
KARLA STALLWORTH  
DEVON TALIAFERRO  
IRIS TOWNSEND  
RUTH WALKER  
FAWN WALKER-MONTGOMERY  
LENORE WILLIAMS  
LINDA WILLIAMS-MOORE  
ROWINEA WOOTEN

## MARY HESTER

### Founder LifeVenture Real Estate Solutions

Mary Hester is a Pittsburgh native and founder of LifeVenture Real Estate Solutions, a real estate advocacy organization that focuses on bridging the racial wealth gap for Black families by promoting affordable access to homeownership and homebuyer education. Hester draws on robust relationships with local banks, non-profits, and city agencies to leverage funding sources, expand housing opportunities and support low- to moderate-income homebuyers to create housing affordability and inventory for families.

Hester also leads a diverse team of real estate agents at LifeVenture Buy Choice Homes, a full-service real estate agency for commercial and residential sales. Dedicated to providing professional representation and creating wealth-building opportunities through real estate, LifeVenture Buy Choice Homes stands on a "people and community first" model, relying on robust relationships built on integrity to best serve organizations and families fairly and with care.

As a licensed real estate professional, Hester brings over 20 years of real estate and mortgage



lending expertise to her role as a distinguished leader in the industry. Recognized as a changemaker, Hester's dedication to Black wealth-building through homeownership has earned her the Keller Williams 2021 'con of the Year Award and the East Liberty Development Inc., 2023 Impact Award. At the heart of her initiatives is the "Black Excellence in Real Estate" movement, demonstrating her commitment to fostering equitable opportunities for wealth-building and showcasing the importance of impact and recognition amongst the real estate industry.

Hester's impact extends beyond individual transactions. She currently serves on the board of directors for Penn Hills Community Development Corporation and serves as a Program Facilitator for Schools That Can Pittsburgh, educating high school students on career skills, entrepreneurship and real estate as a profession. Hester also chairs the Hill District Federal Credit Union's Mortgage Program Advisory Committee.

A graduate of Penn Hills Senior High School, Hester furthered her education at Point Park University, LaDolce Real Estate Academy, and the Realtors Association of Metropolitan Pittsburgh. Beyond her professional endeavors, Hester is a proud mother of four and grandmother of five, with a passion for travel, painting, and outdoor recreation.

## TERINA J. HICKS, MPM

### Owner & Chief Baker Officer CobblerWorld LLC

After many years of watching her beloved mother make the most delicious peach cobblers for every family holiday celebration, Terina Jett Hicks learned to make them, at the tender age of 14. The secret to the perfect crust and filling was shared with her and so began a love affair with baked goods that would eventually turn into a passion.

After being laid off from her corporate position, Hicks decided to become a full-time entrepreneur and opened a smoothie business called "Heaven's Nectar." While

business was good in the warmer months of the year, it was not consistent enough to be financially sustainable. Hicks realized that she was being called to do what she had an early passion for; baking, and CobblerWorld was born.

Once Hicks landed on her niche, it didn't take long for others to fall in love with CobblerWorld and soon after she launched, her products were sold in major grocery chains, such as Giant Eagle and Shop N' Save. Hicks has contracted with Giant Eagle's Market District stores (Shadyside, Waterworks, and Settlers Ridge) to sell her amazing blueberry lemon mini bundts and sweet potato gobb. Hicks was also invited by Google to do a tasting for the employees.

The goodness of CobblerWorld is spreading far and wide and Hicks has now entered into multiple partnerships with Millie's Ice Cream, Levy Restaurant, and ACTION Housing. She has also catered for many companies and corporations throughout the city.

Additionally, Hicks served as the program chair for NAWBO (National Association of Women Business Owners), received the 2014 Community Spirit Award for Excellence in Media from North Side Institutional Church and was recognized by Full of Grace Dance Studio for her work in the community.

She has earned her Master of Public Management degree, with a focus on Entrepreneurship Project Management Consulting from Carnegie Mellon University and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Systems Technology and Communication from Duquesne University.

Hicks credits her success to keeping Jesus first in all that she does, along with the support of her wonderful husband and business partner, Joseph L. Hicks, and her children Eric, 34, and Robert, 26.

She enjoys spending time with her family, singing, working on her manuscript, inspiring and assisting others with their startups, and shopping.



## Class of 2016 Honorees

DIANE NEELY BATES  
TYIAN BATTLE  
MARIA LEWIS BETHEL  
TAMMY SPENCER BEY  
DINA 'FREE' BLACKWELL  
REV. MAUREEN F. CROSS  
BOLDEN  
SONYA R. CHAMBERS  
LORRAINE CROSS  
DIANE I. DANIELS  
TAMMY L. DAVIS  
TENEL DORSEY  
AMY LYN ELLIOTT  
KATHI R. ELLIOTT  
JACQUE FIELDER  
RHONDA L. FLEMING  
RENEE GALLOWAY, PhD  
CAROL LYNN GREER  
RONELL GUY  
ERICA COCHRAN HAMEEN,  
PhD  
NICOLA HENRY-TAYLOR, ESQ.  
KIM HOOTS  
LINDA J. IVERSON, PhD  
CHARMELLE JACKSON  
LORIE JOHNSON-OSHO, EdD  
MARCELLA L. LEE  
BISHOP CYNTHIA  
MOORE-KOIKOI  
REV. NICHELLE NELSON  
TORY N. PARRISH  
ERIN PERRY  
TAMARE P. PIERSAINT, PhD  
ERIN E. POTTER  
DARLENE L. POWELL  
LUCILLE PRATER-HOLLIDAY  
REV. DR. JOAN PRENTICE  
THERAINE A. RANSOME  
YOLANDA ROBERTS  
RENA A.S. ROBINSON  
REV. APRIL D. ROEBUCK  
JESSICA RUFFIN  
TAMARA SANDERS-WOODS,  
EdD  
ROXANNE NORMAN SEWELL  
DANIELLE M. SMITH  
MATHILDA SPENCER, PhD  
ARZELLA STEWART-  
MCCAULEY, PhD  
CHRISTEL N. TEMPLE, PhD  
RENEE D. THOMAS  
TE'ONA M. WILLIAMS  
BOFTA YIMAM

## MARGO HINTON

**Educator, North Allegheny School District;  
Founder, Heads Up Sports Training LLC**

Margo Hinton is an author, entrepreneur, teacher and coach dedicated to transforming young lives. With over 32 years of experience as a teacher and coach, she has inspired countless students to pursue their passions in activities ranging from sports to the arts. Hinton has coached basketball, softball, and volleyball, encouraging students to develop their skills and confidence across disciplines.

As a leader in her school, Hinton has spearheaded initiatives that have raised over \$150,000 for local and national



charities, emphasizing philanthropy and community service as core values. Her ability to motivate students in these efforts earned her the Ann Monoit Award from the Pennsylvania Middle Level Educators Association for outstanding community service.

A four-time Hall of Fame inductee, Hinton's athletic achievements include her 2002 induction into the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Athletic Hall of Fame, her 2017 and 2023 inductions into the South Hills High School All-Sports Hall of Fame (both individually and as part of a team), and her 2018 induction into the Pittsburgh Public Schools City League Hall of Fame.

Hinton is also a published author, blogger, and podcast host. Her two children's books, "Lailah's Lesson: You Can Do Anything" and "JoJo's Dream: You Can Do Anything!" inspire children to believe in their potential. Through her blog, "Best Thing I Heard Today," and her podcast, "Give It Up," Hinton shares uplifting messages and actionable advice, engaging guests from fields such as sports, education, and community service.

Hinton earned a basketball scholarship to Indiana University of Pennsylvania, where she received a Bachelor's in Health and Physical Education. Committed to social justice, she later completed her Master's in Social Justice and Community Organizing at Prescott College and is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Educational Leadership at Duquesne University.

## MYAH MOORE IRICK

**Founder & Senior Vice President  
The Irick Group-Merrill Private  
Wealth Management**

Myah Moore Irick joined Merrill Private Wealth Management in January 2020 to found The Irick Group. She focuses on providing wealth-planning strategies to successful executives, sports and entertainment professionals, individuals and families navigating sudden wealth and nonprofits and foundations. Irick possesses a deep understanding of the psychology of wealth: the challenges that executives, individuals, seasoned professionals and even up-and-coming athletes face when making decisions about their financial futures. With this knowledge, Irick helps her clients identify what they really want their money to do for their lives, families and communities; and then creates a wealth plan for achieving that.

She sits on several boards and committees that promote access and inclusion in the classroom and in the boardroom. Regionally, she serves on the boards of United Way, Carnegie Science Center, and the Energy Innovation Center Institute. On a national level, she serves as a strategic partner to InvestmentNews and serves on the advisory board for The Advanced Leadership Institute (TALI). Her experience as Miss Oregon in 2003 inspired her ongoing commitment to promoting edu-

cational opportunities for women.

In addition, Irick and her husband are committed to lifting up others who come from similar backgrounds as they did. To that end, they fund several endowed scholarships for under-resourced students at their alma maters and provide academic scholarships for Miss USA organization contestants in Idaho, Washington and Oregon.

Irick received a B.A. from Lewis & Clark College, an M.A. from Columbia University, and a joint international M.B.A. with honors from Brown University and Instituto de Empresa. She also holds a certificate in Financial Planning from Northwestern University and the Chartered Financial Consultant designation.



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**Keisha C. Jimmerson**

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## Class of 2014 Honorees

**ALMA SPEED FOX—  
LEGACY HONOREE**

**KATIE EVERETTE JOHNSON—  
LEGACY HONOREE**

MURIEL FOX ALIM

ANGELA ALLIE

CARMEN ANDERSON

TERRI L. BALTIMORE

CHARLENE FOGGIE BARNETT

RASHALL M. BRACKNEY

ANDREA D. BROWN

TERRY L. BURDEN

LASHAWN BURTON-FAULK

BRIDGETTE N. COFIELD,

JD, SPHR

KAREN COLBERT

ALIYA D. DURHAM

MAXINE ENGRAM

SHARON FLAKE

LISA B. FREELAND

MINISTER DEBRA GERMANY

VALIDIA M. GIDDENS

AMERA GILCHRIST

MICHELE GOODMAN-JONES

DEANNE HAMILTON

VERA HEFFLIN-EDWARDS

BIBIANA HILL

REGINA B. HOLLEY, PHD

FRANCES TAGGERT HOLLY

ELIZABETH L. HUGHES, ESQ.

ERIN ISSAC, DMD

KIMBERLY M. JACKSON

NATALIE D. JACKSON

DIANA JAMES

LORETTA JETER

PAMELA JOHNSON

REV. MARIE KELLY

CHARLESE MCKINNEY

VELVET V. MICKENS

SHAUNDA MILES

MARIMBA MILLIONES

CAROL W. MOHAMED

REV. DR. JUDITH C. MOORE

CHRISTINA PRESTON

SHEILA L. RAWLINGS

LA DAWN ROBINSON

CHERYL RUFFIN, MDIV

CARYL J. SHEFFIELD

DIANNE BILLIE SWAN

SONYA M. TOLER

ERICA L. UPSHAW-GIVNER

LISA STROTHER UPSHER, MS

TISHEKIA E. WILLIAMS

## KEISHA CHE'RE JIMMERSON

**Dean of Students and Diversity Officer  
Seton Hill University**

Keisha C. Jimmerson has served Seton Hill University students in various ways for 26 years. Currently serving as Dean of Students and Diversity Officer at the Greensburg university, Jimmerson provides strategic leadership in support of student success and engagement as well as the university's commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in keeping with its Catholic, Setonian mission and identity.

A native of Virginia, Jimmerson came to the Pittsburgh region to attend Seton Hill, graduating with her bachelor's degree in communication in 1997. She would later earn her MBA from Seton Hill in 2006.

Jimmerson joined the Seton Hill staff in 1998 as an Admissions Counselor and spent seven years in various roles on the admissions team. In 2005, she transitioned to Student Affairs beginning as the Assistant Director of Residence Life and has since held numerous roles within Student Affairs, including Director of Intercultural Student Services, Director of Intercultural Student Services and Judicial Affairs, and Associate Dean of Students, Multicultural and International Services. Prior to her promotion in July 2023 to Dean of Students and Diversity Officer, she served as Associate Dean of Students for Diversity, Inclusion and International Student Services.

Jimmerson also served Seton Hill on the Alumni Advisory Council and has been active in a number of

community organizations, including the Rotary of Westmoreland County, the YWCA of Westmoreland County Board and the Western Pennsylvania Diaper Bank.

In 2019, she received the YWCA of Westmoreland County's Racial Justice Award.

Jimmerson is a graduate of Leadership Westmoreland, a cohort-based program designed to foster the development and growth of community leaders and enhance creative leadership skills for future Westmoreland County leaders.



## REV. JUSTINE E. JONES

**Chaplain**

**Grane Hospice Care and  
South Pittsburgh Coalition for Peace**

Rev. Justine E. Jones has been in ministry for over 40 years and is employed as a hospice Chaplain at Grane Hospice Care, where she provides compassionate spiritual care and support to patients and their families. Rev. Jones is a member of a team of professionals that provide medical, psychological and spiritual support to those who are diagnosed with a terminal illness to help them with dignified end of life comfort and care, regardless of the duration.

Rev. Jones is also employed as a Chaplain with the South Pittsburgh Coalition for Peace Peacemakers. The peacemakers work to bring peace to the streets using the CURE Violence model, which recognizes gun violence as a public health problem. Rev. Jones provides spiritual care and support to team and community members affected by gun violence, and assists with mediations and related retaliations. She also works to develop and organize faith-based community partners for the purpose of bringing awareness to and involvement in violence prevention. Rev. Jones is also a former Peacemaker



/Cure Violence Outreach worker, assisting community members with locating resources applicable to their specific needs.

For over 30 years, Rev. Jones served at the former Potter's House Ministries under the leadership of the late Apostle Otis L. Carswell, in multiple leadership roles. In addition to preaching and teaching the Word of God, she has been an Associate Pastor, the Chief Financial Officer, the Dean of the School of Ministry, a member of the Board of Directors, facilitator for the Griefshare ministry, counselor, and mentor to many. Under the leadership of Apostle Carswell, the Primate and Presiding Prelate of Potter's House Fellowship Alliance, Rev. Jones was consecrated as an Auxiliary Bishop in the Lord's Church.

Rev. Jones currently attends Love Fellowship Church of Pittsburgh. She has recently been affirmed as an Auxiliary Bishop in the Right Connection Covenant Fellowship under the leadership of Daysman David A. Brock.

Rev. Jones holds a Master of Divinity in Pastoral Counseling and is a member of the American Association of Christian Counselors. She serves as a volunteer with the American Red Cross Disaster Spiritual Care Team, providing spiritual care and support to individuals and families who have been impacted by a major disaster.

In her leisure time, Rev. Jones enjoys outdoor activities. Most recently she completed her second skydiving adventure, and enjoys white water rafting, parasailing, ziplining and is a certified scuba diver.

## Class of 2013 Honorees

**BEV SMITH—2013 LEGACY  
HONOREE**

CAROL L. ADAMS

MARLA D. BRADFORD

CHARLOTTE BROWN, PhD

VICTORIA E. BRYANT

FRANCINE B. CAMERON

MESSENGER ANNETTE

CARSWELL

RENEE SMITH CLARK, PhD

TRACY L. CLARK

LUTITIA A. CLIPPER PhD

MARY L. COFFEY

PAMELA COLLIER

DR. ESA MATIUS DAVIS, MPH

STEPHANIE DURRETT

MONICA EARLY

KIM EL

ROBYN E. FRANCIS

OLGA T. GEORGE

RONITA S. GILES

ROBYN GREER

TERINA JETT HICKS

IMOGENE MILES HINES

RUTH J. HOWZE

SHANICKA L. KENNEDY, ESQ.

MONICA D. LAMAR

DESIREE S. LEE

KILOLO LUCKETT

A. KELLY MCCORMICK

MONIQUE MCINTOSH, MED

DONNA MICHEAUX, PhD

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TRACEY NASH

CAROL AWKARD NEYLAND

CONSTANCE PARKER

STAYCEE R. PEARL

EBONY RENEE PUGH

MINETTE SEATE

DEBRA VALENTINE-GRAY

ALLEGRA WAKEFIELD

ANITA B. WALKER

CAROL A. WASHINGTON

CHRISTINE B. WHITE-TAYLOR

EdD

GAIL L. WHITEHEAD

TAMARA L. WHITING

LISA A. WILDS

ARLETTA SCOTT WILLIAMS

DETECTIVE CHRISTINE

WILLIAMS

DENISE L. WILLIAMS

ERROLINE WILLIAMS EdD

GAYLE M. YOUNG

**CHINA NICOLE LEE, ESQ.**

**Lead Counsel, Commercial Transactions,  
Federal Express Corporation;  
Executive Director, Life PREP, Inc.**



China Lee is the executive director of Life PREP Inc., a non-profit organization which provides affordable housing and re-entry services for individuals in Allegheny County, and the co-founder and board chair of the Wilksburg Land Bank, which encourages affordable homeownership by clearing titles to blighted, tax-delinquent properties. She is a licensed practicing attorney and currently lead counsel in the legal department at FedEx, a \$90 billion annual grossing Fortune 50 enterprise, where she handles real estate and corporate transactional matters. Lee also owns and operates a successful residential property investment and management company with her husband.

She is a proud Pittsburgh Public Schools graduate and alumna of Westinghouse High School. Lee also holds a B.S. in Business Administration and Marketing from Penn State University, an M.S. in Criminal Justice Administration from Point Park University and a J.D. from The North Carolina Central University School of Law.

While Lee wears many hats, in her spare time she enjoys traveling, reading and spending time with her family. She is married and has two children.

**DINA LEE**

**Customer Service Representative,  
Duquesne Light Company;  
IBEW Local 29 Union Steward**

Dina Lee is employed at Duquesne Light Company as a Customer Service Representative and an IBEW Local 29 Union Steward. She has been a DLC employee for 11 years and is currently on the front lines assisting customers with simple requests and also complex issues. She often works on special projects that require working closely with other departments such as Billing, New Construction and Metering. For the past five years, she also has a dual role as an IBEW local 29 Union Steward. She has been one of the



key voices in helping to bridge the gap between the union and non-union workforce. She is seen as a leader amongst her peers and management and is often consulted when upcoming changes are being implemented. Lee served as the Judge of Elections in the most recent IBEW Local 29 Officer Elections.

Lee sits on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council at DLC and is a very active member of the BRIDGE BERG, which is an Employee Business Resource Group focused on Black and African American employees. She recently attended the Unlocking Leadership Excellence inaugural workshop designed by The Advanced Leadership Institute (TALI). She is also a member of the DLC Site Safety team and is a Floor Marshall in the event of a building emergency.

Lee is one of 10 children from her parents, the late Pastor Ozette Lee and her beloved mother, Joan Lee. She credits her drive for success and her kind and understanding heart to her strict upbringing which she truly now appreciates.

She has three daughters, ages 25, 24 and 13, and her goal is to continue to be the best possible strong Black woman role model for them.

Outside of work, Lee enjoys helping the elderly in her neighborhood take their garbage to the curb, help carry groceries into their home and anything else they may need help with. In her spare time, she enjoys going on cruises, reading, going to the movies, socializing with close friends, and taking care of her aquatic turtle, Donatello.

## St. Clair Health congratulates Felicia E. Snead, MD, FASTRO

as a recipient of the  
New Pittsburgh Courier's 2024  
Women of Excellence Award



## Class of 2012 Honorees

### JEAN BRYANT

#### LEGACY HONOREE

DARA WARE ALLEN, PhD  
 JERRY ANN ALLEN  
 ELAYNE ARRINGTON, PhD  
 JARENE BARNES  
 TIANDA BLOUNT  
 NANCY TRAVIS BOLDEN  
 JEANNE V. CRICHLAW  
 JUDITH M. DAVENPORT, DMD  
 LYNETTE DRAWN-  
 WILLIAMSON  
 BARBARA EVANS, EdD  
 CHERYL SQUIRE FLINT  
 KAREN FLORENCE  
 LISA M. FORD, MSW, LSW  
 LOVETTA FORD, MSW  
 LISA MICHELLE GARLAND,  
 MBA  
 CHERYL HALL-RUSSELL  
 ELAINE HARRIS-FULTON  
 GINA R. HICKMAN  
 DIANE R. HUGHLEY  
 MICHELLE JACKSON  
 SHIRLEY A. JOHNSON  
 OLIVIA JONES  
 TONI S. KENDRICK  
 MARGARET L. LANIER  
 LISA M. MCBRIDE, PhD  
 ROBIN M. MUNGO  
 DENISE L. NORRIS  
 ROCHELLE OAKS, PhD  
 CASSANDRA ODEN  
 JOELYNN H. PARHAM  
 GEORGETTE D. POWELL  
 CHARLEEDA REDMAN,  
 RN, MSN, ACM  
 MELISSA RICE  
 MICHELE RICE  
 FELICIA LANE SAVAGE  
 MARY L. SHIELDS  
 MARCIA M. STURDIVANT, PhD  
 SARAH L. SUMPTER  
 LYNNETTE TAYLOR-CRIEGO  
 LENALL THOMAS, PhD, MSW  
 DR. CATHERINE UDEKWU  
 CHLOE VELASQUEZ  
 DEBORAH L. WALKER  
 LARA WASHINGTON  
 GWENDOLYN L. WATKINS  
 REV. LAURAN B. WEBB  
 BRENDA B. WELLS  
 REV. ELEANOR WILLIAMS  
 LATASHA WILSON-BATCH

## JUANITA LOMAX

### Founder & CEO Hit Like A Girl

Juanita Lomax is the transformative founder behind Hit Like A Girl, a premier organization that concentrates on increasing diversity and business opportunities through the sport of golf, with an increased focus on Black women, in a supportive and judgment-free space. Based in Pittsburgh, Lomax and her organization empowers, engages and promotes diversity in the sport of golf, bridging the gap of missed opportunities on the green by providing immersive golf instruction and organized play through golf socials, outing and league meetups.

Lomax is an accomplished IT Portfolio/Project Manager, Change Consultant and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion champion offering more than 20 years of experience in the IT field and 15 years managing BRG/EBRG (Diversity & Inclusion Employee/Business Resource Groups).

Lomax has a strong background in application development/management, integration and implementation with progressive experience in promoting accountability and awareness around diversity and inclusion, employee engagement, skillfully recruiting and hiring talent, and leading organizational change. Lomax joined WellSense by way of Radost in April 2024 as an Executive Project Manager and is now responsible for ensuring the health plan achieves and retains its accreditations along with assisting the organization in positioning itself to gain additional market shares.

Lomax also serves as the Board President and Development Chair for CHS (Community Human Services). Past boards that Lomax has served on include PWN,

## JANINE MACKLIN

### Associate Director of Government Affairs Duquesne University

Janine Macklin is a proud native of Pittsburgh who brings a wealth of experience to her role as the Associate Director of Government Affairs at Duquesne University's Office of Civic Engagement and External Relations. With over 20 years of dedicated service as a senior education administrator, Macklin has navigated various facets of the education sector with finesse.



Dress For Success, American Heart Association, and WST. Lomax is also the Co-Founder of Allegheny Allies for Vibrant Pittsburgh and worked on the Delaware Racial Justice Collaborative (DRJC) at the United Way of Delaware.

She holds a M.S. in IT Project Management, B.S. in Business Administration with a Concentration in Management, Associate Degree in Computer Management & Business and is a certified Six Sigma Yellow Belt. She is a Pittsburgh native and resides in the Penn Hills area with her two daughters, Mya and Mariah.



Her journey includes impactful stints such as corporate relations work at Duquesne University, where she fostered and cultivated key partnerships. Macklin's tenure as the Director of Federal Programs and Partnerships for an esteemed charter school yielded opportunities to spearhead initiatives that positively impacted students' lives through purposeful programming as well as optimum parent engagement. Notably, she also served as the Chief Operating Officer for a mid-sized youth workforce development agency where she contributed significantly to its growth and success.

Macklin's academic prowess has led her to acquire an undergraduate degree in human resources management and a master's degree in organizational leadership from Geneva College. Her commitment to education and policy extends beyond the classroom; she had the honor of serving on two gubernatorial transition teams: Governor-elect Josh Shapiro's Transition Team for Higher Education and Governor-elect Tom Wolf's Education Transition Team, where her insights shaped pivotal decisions. Macklin was recently appointed by Governor Shapiro to sit on the Judicial Conduct Board for Pennsylvania.

Outside of her professional endeavors, Macklin's passion for volunteerism is unwavering. She has chaired the Pittsburgh PK-16 Council and held esteemed board positions with the Pennsylvania Association of Federal Program Coordinators (PAFPC) and the Western Pennsylvania All Service Academies Ball (ASAB). Her dedication has been recognized with the status of Board Member Emeritus for Onyx Alliance. Moreover, she has been actively involved in leadership roles within the Pittsburgh Chapter of Jack and Jill of America Inc.

Macklin resides in Fox Chapel with her husband, Warner N. Macklin III. Together, they are proud parents of three wonderful children.

## Class of 2011 Honorees

### PATRICIA PRATTIS JENNINGS LEGACY HONOREE

ATIYA ABDELMALIK-JOHNSON,  
 RN, BSN  
 RENEE P. ALDRICH  
 MARIA D. ANDERSON  
 THE HON. CYNTHIA A.  
 BALDWIN  
 ROBIN D. BECKHAM  
 JACKIE BLAKEY-TATE  
 CYNTHIA BRADLEY-KING,  
 PHD  
 TAMMY MILES BROWN,  
 PHD  
 CARLOTTA K. BURGESS  
 KARLA THREADGILL BYRD  
 PAULA B. CASTLEBERRY  
 VALIRE CARR COPELAND,  
 PHD, MPH  
 MAGALI CURIEL  
 SHARON DANIELS  
 KAREN EADY-LOCKETT  
 GLADYS E. EDMUNDS  
 REV. BRENDA J. GREGG  
 LINDA CAWTHON GRIFFIN  
 MELANIE HARRINGTON  
 LYNNE HAYES-FREELAND  
 ANNA E. HOLLIS  
 LAVERNE BAKER HOTEP  
 KIM L. JEFFERSON  
 CECELIA JENKINS  
 RHONDA JONES-FITCH  
 KIM LAMPKINS  
 CARMEN J. LEE  
 DEBRA L. MASON  
 SHARON L. MCDANIEL,  
 PHD  
 COLLEEN MCMULLEN  
 LISA E. MINOR  
 KIMBERLY MOSES, ESQ.  
 DARLENE GAMBILL  
 MOTLEY, PHD  
 MAELEN J. MYERS  
 CHARLENE NEWKIRK, JD  
 CONNIE PORTIS  
 GRACE ROBINSON,  
 LUTC, MBA  
 LATONYA SALLEY-SHARIF  
 MARY HAITH SAVAGE  
 JENNIFER BRUCE SCOTT,  
 RN, BSN  
 ROBIN HORSTON SPEN-  
 CER, MHS, MS, MBA  
 EVANGELIST LOLA M.  
 THORPE  
 SHELLEY FANT UKU  
 CRYSTAL MCCORMICK  
 WARE  
 CHRISTINA L. WILDS, PHD  
 ANDREA M. WILLIAMS  
 JACQUELINE WILSON  
 SYLVIA WILSON  
 KIMBERLY L. WOOD

## MARGO MARSHALL

**Co-Producer, WPA Juneteenth & Pittsburgh Soul Food Festival  
Stop the Violence Pittsburgh**

Margo Marshall is the co-producer of Stop the Violence Pittsburgh (STVP), started in 2013 as an advocacy organization to help curb youth violence in Allegheny County, to promote African American culture and education, and to provide economic opportunities for small business owners. Her primary functions within the organization are the implementation of programming and site preparation.

In 2013, STVP and Marshall created the Pittsburgh Juneteenth Celebration which then hosted less than 100 people. By 2024, this Juneteenth celebration became the largest festival in Pennsylvania seeing over 70,000 attendees and providing over 150 small business owners with the opportunity to sell their goods and services. Per Visit-PITTSBURGH reports, it generated over \$5 million in economic impact via tourism.

In 2018, STVP created the annual High School Student Black History Month Summit at Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall which serves over 1,000 students from across Western Pa. The summit includes Black History Educational Sessions, free lunch, entertainment and essay contest awards. Since 2018, STVP has helped expose over 6,000 students, grades 9-12, to Black History information.

In 2019, STVP created the annual Pittsburgh Soul Food Festival in honor of historic

Black food operators in Downtown Pittsburgh. This Festival draws in over 30,000 attendees from across the nation, and per Visit-PITTSBURGH reports, generates over \$3 million in economic impact for Allegheny County.

In 2021, in partnership with the Pittsburgh Steelers, Pittsburgh Pirates, Duolingo and Pittsburgh Penguins, Marshall and her husband, B. Marshall, created the annual Juneteenth YouthFEST at Mellon Park, which serves some 5,000 students and residents from across Western Pa. with sporting activities (baseball, basketball, deck hockey and football tournaments), a Youth Fun Zone, entertainment, food vendors and more.

Margo Marshall is also a small business entrepreneur, a licensed cosmetologist and the owner of Early-Mae Bakery. Her baked goods can be found at PAIR Charcuterie, Smithfield Street, in Downtown Pittsburgh.



## YVETTE R. MOORE

**Director of Equity & Inclusion of Undergraduate Initiatives  
University of Pittsburgh Swanson School of Engineering**

Yvette Moore has worked directly with undergraduate scholars in engineering and the arts and sciences. She is currently the Director of Equity and Inclusion of Undergraduate Initiatives. Within this role she leads the Pitt EXCEL program, an undergraduate diversity program within the Swanson School of Engineering at the University of Pittsburgh. Through her career, Moore has held several roles in higher education at various universities and has worked with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion-based programs in the Pittsburgh region. She has earned various diversity awards at Shippensburg University and the University of Pittsburgh for her community engagement among the undergraduate scholars, staff, faculty, and community stakeholders.

Moore received her Bachelor of Science in sociology/history from Shippensburg University, Master of Science in gerontology from Shippensburg University, and she is completing her doctorate in higher education management at the University of Pittsburgh. Her doctoral work focuses on understanding the importance of staff of color, the work they do, and the racial microaggressions, ra-

cial campus climate, and racial battle fatigue experienced among staff of color working to protect their undergraduate scholars in engineering.

Moore is a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. She is also active in the community collaborating with young scholars of color. What Moore is most proud of and what she credits is her faith and being able to walk in her gift. Moore has been blessed to influence the lives of so many who would not have had such opportunities without experiencing her programs. As a servant leader, Moore believes mediocrity is not an option.



Congratulations to  
Legacy Award Honoree,  
Doris Carson Williams, and  
Honoree, Ariell Antonio!  
You aspire. You lead. You accomplish.



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Congratulations to the Women of Excellence,  
especially one of our own...



**Sarah White**

*Executive Director for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion  
Chief Diversity Officer*



**LA ROCHE  
UNIVERSITY**

[laroche.edu](https://laroche.edu)

## Class of 2010 Honorees

MIYOSHI ANDERSON  
 GAYLE LIGHTFOOT BALL  
 KIMBERLY WADDELL BARR  
 LINDA IMANI BARRETT  
 SHEILA BEASLEY  
 DR. WILMA SMITH BEAUFORD  
 JEANETTE BLACKSTON,  
 EdD  
 GLORIA MCGHEE BROWN  
 PATRICE KING BROWN  
 JOANNE COBB BURLEY,  
 PhD  
 OPHELIA COLEMAN  
 TENE CROOM  
 AMARGIE DAVIS  
 DR. CAROLYN GEE DAVIS  
 ELIZABETH NIECY DENNIS  
 ORLANA DARKINS-DREWERY  
 JOYCE ELLIS  
 ALMA SPEED FOX  
 ALBERTHA GRAHAM-ELLISON,  
 PhD  
 REV. BARBARA GUNN  
 HOLLY HATCHER-FRAZIER  
 PASTOR CHARLAYNE  
 HENRY  
 MARLENE GARY HOGAN  
 DEBORAH HOLLAND  
 LISA HALEY HUFF  
 MARGUERITA V. JOHNSON  
 PATRICE WADE JOHNSON  
 AMELIA MICHELE JOINER,  
 ESQ.  
 GERALDINE M. JONES,  
 PROVOST  
 MARSHA ELLIS JONES  
 LINDA S. LANE, EdD  
 ALLISON LEE-MANN  
 DR. EMMA LUCAS-DARBY  
 DARCEL MADKINS  
 TARA MARKS  
 LA'TASHA D. MAYES  
 LAUREL RAGLAND  
 DR. BEVERLY  
 ROBERTS-ATWATER  
 FLORENCE ROUZIER  
 CECILE SHELLMAN  
 JOY STARZL  
 BRENDA TATE  
 EMMA THORNTON  
 KATHY MAYLE TOWNS  
 CHATON T. TURNER, ESQ.  
 MARGARETSMITH  
 WASHINGTON  
 SHEILA A. WASHINGTON  
 REV. B. De NEICE WELCH  
 VALERIE WHEATLEY  
 ELISE ROBY YANDERS

## AYISHA MORGAN-LEE, Ed.D.

**Founder, CEO & Artistic Director  
Hill Dance Academy Theatre**

Ayisha A. Morgan-Lee, Ed.D., at age of 21, became the Founder, CEO & Artistic Director of Hill Dance Academy Theatre (HDAT), located in the Historic Hill District. In 2021, Hill Dance Academy Theatre was named a "Pittsburgh Cultural Treasure" by the Ford Foundation and The Heinz Endowments for centering support for the Black cultural sector, the historic contributions of Blacks, and a commitment to racial equity.

Since 2005, Morgan-Lee has been a Champion for Equity in the Arts; her leadership and vision is grounded in a belief and work ethic that strives for excellence, valuing working authentically, and realizing that if you stay the course, you will achieve your goals. As CEO, she believes that growth happens by listening to those you encounter, respecting humanity, being open to diverse voices, taking risks, measuring what works and recognizing that each is a different but powerful agent of change.

Morgan-Lee's bodaciously bold approach to advocating for social justice, equity, representation and valuing the humanity of Black artists is her life's work. She is committed to continuing to move Pittsburgh, to be a city that recognizes and intentionally champions that representa-



## SABRINA SAUNDERS MOSBY

**President & CEO  
Vibrant Pittsburgh**

Sabrina Saunders Mosby is the President and CEO of Vibrant Pittsburgh, a premier economic development organization focused on advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion across the workforce in the Pittsburgh region. Under her visionary leadership, Vibrant Pittsburgh supports over 50,000 constituents, collaborating with employers, educational institutions, and civic organizations to foster inclusive workplaces and retain diverse talent in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

A recognized leader in workplace inclusion, Mosby brings deep experience from senior roles in the non-profit sector and nearly a decade in government service. Among her notable achievements, she founded Graduate Pittsburgh, the city's first dropout prevention initiative, and the African American Achievement Trust Collective Focus, a mentoring program connecting students with mentors of color. During her tenure leading Strong Women, Strong Girls, she launched impactful programs like the Strong Awards Breakfast and Advocates for Ambition Fund to advance mentorship and women's empowerment.

Mosby's dedication extends through her involvement in community and professional organizations. She is a charter member and the Treasurer of the Top Ladies of Distinction Pittsburgh Steel City Chapter and a mem-



tion matters in all aspects of life, work, institutions, and communities.

Morgan-Lee, in 2022, was named the recipient of the YWCA's Equity Award for Creativity and Innovation in the arts that brings public attention to the empowerment of women, especially women of color, and empowers an audience through awareness, education, and inspiration. Also in September 2022, Morgan-Lee was selected as one of Pittsburgh Magazine and PUMP's 40 under 40 outstanding individuals, whose creativity, vision and passion enrich the Pittsburgh region.

Morgan-Lee received her Doctorate in 2020 from the University of Pittsburgh. She is a 2007 Carnegie Mellon University graduate with a Master's in Arts Management from the Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy. In 2005, she received her BFA in Dance and Theatre from Howard University.

Morgan-Lee is a member of Pittsburgh Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., and the Pittsburgh Chapter of Pierians Inc. She serves on the local boards of Oakland Catholic High School and Pittsburgh Public Theater. She is the national Board Chair of The International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD).

She and her husband, Eric A. Smith, and their daughter, Aniyah, are residents of the Hill District. Morgan-Lee is a member of St. Benedict the Moor Parish.

ber of the United Way of Southwestern Pa.'s Women United. Additionally, she serves on the boards of Allegheny Health Network, the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Level Home Equity Buildings, the Pittsburgh Women's Alliance, Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership, NACD's Three Rivers Chapter, and Mount Ararat Community Activity Center, and an Advisory Council member for the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. Her past leadership roles include serving as Vice Chair of the board at her alma mater, Oakland Catholic, and as a board director for Pennsylvania American Water.

Mosby's achievements have not gone unnoticed. She has received numerous awards and honors, including recognition as an Athena Young Professional Finalist, inclusion in Ebony Magazine's Top 30 on the Rise, the New Pittsburgh Courier Fab 40, Pittsburgh Magazine's 40 under 40, and Whirl Magazine's 50 Finest. She also earned a place on the inaugural City and State Power 100 list, recognition as a prestigious C-Suite Leader in 2023, inclusion in the Pittsburgh Business Times' Power 100 list from 2021 to 2024 and was named a R.I.S.E. honoree by the HBCU Pittsburgh Collaborative this fall.

An alumna of Carlow University's College of Leadership & Social Change with a Master's in Science and a Bachelor of Arts from Edinboro University, Mosby resides in the Pittsburgh region with her husband, Brandon, and their son, Lincoln. Her legacy continues to shape a more inclusive future for Pittsburgh and beyond.

## Class of 2009 Honorees

CLAUDIA L. ALLEN  
 TIMYKA ARTIST  
 MARILYN BARNETT  
 JO-ANNE BATES  
 DEMEATRIA GIBSON  
 BOCCCELLA  
 YVONNE BURNS  
 KATHY BYNUM  
 SHEILA CARTER-JONES  
 DINA CLARK  
 MICHELE RONE-COOPER  
 PHYLLIS COMER  
 ETTA COX  
 ROSEMARY C. CRAWFORD  
 DARIA CRAWLEY  
 LUCILLE DABNEY  
 HELEN DAVIS  
 TOI DERRICOTTE  
 VALERIE DIXON  
 TRACY L. EDMUNDS  
 GAIL D. EDWARDS  
 YVONNE ENGLISH-  
 ROEBUCK  
 KIVA FISHER-GREEN  
 DARRYL FORD-WILLIAMS  
 MONA GENERETT  
 KAREN HALL  
 MARVA H. HARRIS  
 GERRI HOLDEN  
 KARRIS JACKSON  
 OLA R. JACKSON  
 DENISE JONES  
 RHONDA CARSON  
 LEACH  
 CLAUDETTE R. LEWIS  
 EVANGELIST BARBARA  
 MANN  
 LYZONA MARSHALL  
 MARCIA A. MARTIN  
 INEZ K. MILES  
 ARLINDA MORIARTY  
 AUDREY J. MURRELL  
 JANE PRESSLEY  
 NICHOLSON  
 CARMELLE NICKENS  
 PHILLIPS  
 GREER REED-JONES  
 DIANE RICHARD  
 ELISA SANDERS  
 CHARENA SWANN  
 DAWN R. WEBB TURNER  
 CURTISTINE WALKER  
 OLGA WELCH  
 KAREN FARMER WHITE  
 CAMEIL D. WILLIAMS  
 MARY A. WINSTON



## Class of 2008 Honorees

CHERYL ALLEN  
 DONNA BAXTER  
 TINA WILLIAMS BREWER  
 MARILYN BROOKS  
 JEAN BRYANT  
 ESTHER BUSH  
 RUTH BYRD-SMITH  
 CANDI CASTLEBERRY  
 SINGLETON  
 DARIETH CHISOLM  
 KIM BERKELY CLARK  
 YVONNE COOK  
 VERNA CRICHLAW  
 PAULA DAVIS  
 JACKIE DIXON  
 ELAINE EFFORT  
 HELEN FAISON  
 LILLIA MICHELLE FERGUSON  
 SYLVIA HILL FIELDS  
 KAREN GARLAND  
 JUDITH GRIGGS  
 ERNESTINE HARRIS  
 PEGGY HARRIS  
 ELSIE HENDERSON  
 KATHY HUMPHREY  
 RHONDA MOORE JOHNSON  
 PHYLLIS JONES  
 MARGARET LARKINS-  
 PETTIGREW  
 VERNELL LILLIE  
 LOIS MUFUKA MARTIN  
 JOYCE MEGGERSON-MOORE  
 VELMA MONTEIRO-TRIBBLE  
 M. GAYLE MOSS  
 SHIRLEY MUHAMMAD  
 MARY SMITH PETERS  
 VALERIE MCDONALD  
 ROBERTS  
 ALICE SCALES  
 TONI Y. SILVA  
 BEV SMITH  
 JEANNETTE SOUTH-PAUL  
 CECILE SPRINGER  
 CELESTE TAYLOR  
 WINIFRED TORBERT  
 NANCY WASHINGTON  
 BRENDA WATERS  
 DORIS CARSON WILLIAMS  
 LEAH WILLIAMS-DUNCAN  
 JANIS BURLEY WILSON  
 JOY MAXBERRY WOODRUFF  
 JULIE ZEIGLER

### KIMBERLY HUDDLESTON NEELY

Senior Vice President, Solution Train Engineer  
BNY Mellon



Kimberly Neely is an experienced Solution Train Engineer with a deep expertise in Agile frameworks and large-scale solution delivery. With 18 years in the field of business analysis, project management, software development, systems engineering, and Agile transformation, she specializes in managing complex, multi-team programs and ensuring alignment to deliver high-value solutions in fast-paced, dynamic environments.

Currently, Neely serves as the Solution Train Engineer at BNY Mellon, where she oversees the successful execution of critical business initiatives through the coordination of multiple teams. In this role, she provides leadership in the application of the Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe), working closely with Product

Management, System Architects, Engineers, and stakeholders to drive strategic alignment and ensure that solutions meet business objectives, are delivered on time, and adhere to quality standards.

Neely is passionate about optimizing the flow of work across teams, fostering collaboration, and creating a culture of continuous improvement. She is skilled in navigating complex dependencies, mitigating risks, and guiding teams through the challenges of large-scale Agile transformations. Additionally, Neely is dedicated to mentoring and coaching teams on Agile practices and SAFe principles, helping organizations scale Agile to achieve better outcomes.

Holding a BS in Management Information Systems from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Neely also holds several certifications such as Project Management Professional (PMP), Certified Scrum Master (CSM), and Professional Agile Lead-

ership (PAL I).

Outside of work, Neely is a dedicated wife to Kenneth Neely and proud mother to Jordan, 15, and Kenny, 11. She also serves on the Board of Pittsburgh Dynamo, a local youth soccer organization. As a part of her work with Pittsburgh Dynamo, Neely serves as a Travel Commissioner where she coordinates and schedules over 25 teams of talented youth soccer players from ages 8-19, serving over 400 local boys and girls. She also serves as a coach of her son Kenny's travel soccer team. During her time as coach, the team went from zero wins in a season to an undefeated first-place finish during the fall 2024 season.

Neely enjoys traveling and playing soccer with her kids and DynaMoms FC. She is a strong advocate for DEI and spends time interviewing and mentoring young people to help them navigate the corporate landscape and make moves towards achieving their life goals.

### DEBBIE NORRELL

Owner  
A Look Not A Label LLC

Debbie Norrell is a card-carrying union actress with local and national credits that include community theatre, television, radio and feature films. As a polished professional emcee and keynote speaker, Norrell shares her story of surviving breast cancer, breaking the chains of debt and reinventing yourself. Norrell doesn't mind being "seen" as best dressed in the SEEN column (Pittsburgh Post Gazette) in a \$29 gown. She has modeled in the tri-state area for over 50 years and has commented and coordinated hundreds of fashion shows. You have seen her in

local, regional and national commercials. She is most proud of her role in the series, "A League of Their Own," where she plays the Prayerful Auntie in episode 3.

Once again, Norrell reinvented herself after retiring from U.S. Bank and the New Pittsburgh Courier in 2019. She joined Soul Pitt Media where she contributes to their website, magazine and podcast. In 2020, she discovered a national robust thrifting community that conducts live sales on Facebook and launched "A Look Not A Label LLC." Norrell now sells her thrifted finds from Pittsburgh to California and recently celebrated four years in business. She calls herself the "Shopper in Chief" and does it all; sourcing, preparing, selling, packing, customer service, accounting and more. Her employment history in-

cludes 34 years of banking, news anchor and talk show host at radio station WJMM, morning show co-host on WJMM radio, PR Manager, Pittsburgh International Airport, and more.

Norrell is a charter member of the Pittsburgh Steel City Chapter of the Top Ladies of Distinction and currently serves as the president of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the Charms. She says she is over the moon to be honored by the Courier.

"Working at the New Pittsburgh Courier was an honor and was one of my favorite positions," she said.

She is excited to add this honor to many Toastmaster International Awards, along with Pittsburgh Fashion Week Inductee (2013), Taylor Alderdice Hall of Fame Inductee (2013) and the Circle of Courage Award, from 2022.



### BONITA B. PANNELL, MSW, MBA

Director of Community Outreach  
UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital

Bonita Pannell brings over 30 years of experience in health care and currently serves as the Director of Community Outreach at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital. In this role, she acts as a liaison between the hospital and the community, working to enhance access to care, broaden care options, and foster meaningful partnerships. A passionate advocate for the BIPOC community, Pannell develops and leads initiatives aimed at raising awareness and promoting self-empowerment. Her initiatives include organizing Community Health Fairs featuring on-site health screenings, hosting Maternal Health Educational Baby Showers, and providing ongoing mentoring and support groups.

Pannell is an active member of several UPMC councils, including the Diversity Council, the Family Advisory Council, and the Community Doula & Birth Worker Advisory Board, where she advocates for policy changes that strengthen trust and collaboration between health care providers and

the community. Additionally, she serves as the Director of the UPMC Affiliate Council of Girls on the Run, a national nonprofit organization focused on empowering girls in grades 3-8 by strengthening their social, emotional, physical, and behavioral skills. The program operates at 64 school sites



and serves over 1,500 girls annually.

Before joining UPMC, Pannell was part of the Gateway Health Plan case management team, where she managed insurance authorizations and cases for individuals with special needs. She also served as the General Manager for Hospice Care of Pittsburgh and Viator Hospice, overseeing care for terminally ill patients for 16 years and Director of Lutheran Senior Life Home Care.

Pannell holds a Master of Business Administration from Waynesburg University, a Master of Social Work from the University of Pittsburgh, and a Bachelor's degree in Health Science from Slippery Rock University. She is also a licensed Clinical Social Worker and earned a certificate in Project Management from Villanova University.

A devoted mother, Pannell has two children—Aaron Burden and Tyler-Nicole Pannell—as well as two bonus children, Teona Williams and Brandon Pannell. She is an active member of Triumph Church, where she serves as a Deacon and the Coordinator of the Usher Ministry.

Pannell is also a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., Alpha Alpha Omega Chapter.

## MARISSA PARK

**Manager, Client Services Readiness, NRG Energy;  
Executive Board, Urban Pathways Charter Schools**

Marissa Park is a dynamic leader with a remarkable nine-year career at NRG, where she has consistently driven initiatives that foster learning, culture and DEI. Park began her career with NRG nine years ago and quickly distinguished herself as a top performer on the National Accounts Sales Team. Her exceptional efforts earned her the prestigious President's Club Award, which then led to her promotion to Manager of Customer Relations.

In her current role, Manager of Client Services Readiness, Park oversees learning & development, training, and culture enhancement for NRG's Client Services organization.

Park has implemented several influential initiatives this year, including several employee recognition programs, both manager and supervisor development programs, and the recent launch of the "Coach to Grow" mentorship program, further supporting career growth and development.

Beyond her corporate contributions, Park is deeply involved in community engagement. As an Executive Board mem-

ber of Urban Pathways Charter Schools, she spearheaded partnerships with NRG to support local students through initiatives such as back-to-school drives, mentoring programs, and supporting their Black Student Union. When her son played football at University of Pittsburgh, she recognized there was a communication gap between the families and football program. Park took initiative and founded the inaugural Pitt Football Parent Association, serving as its President for three years.

Park is a proud mom to her three sons and loves spending time with family, traveling and attending concerts.



## DET. ARTIE H. PATTERSON

**Homicide Detective  
Pittsburgh Bureau of Police**

Detective Artie H. Patterson, a Pittsburgh native from the Hill District/Stanton Heights, has dedicated 28 years to law enforcement within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Her journey began with the City of Pittsburgh Housing Authority from 1996 to 2007 and merging with the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police in May 2007. Driven by a passion for helping others, Detective Patterson fulfilled her childhood dream of becoming a police officer, serving her community with unwavering commitment.



After graduating from Peabody High School, Detective Patterson pursued criminology at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and became a member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. She completed her training at the Allegheny County Police Academy in 1996 and quickly built a career marked by extensive education and certifications.

She holds certifications in areas such as human trafficking, stalking/strangulation investigations, special needs, guns/gang violence, crisis intervention, domestic violence response, Municipal Police Officers' Education and Raining Commission, juvenile justice, child victims of human trafficking, and more.

Detective Patterson's career with the Housing Authority's police department focused on community-oriented policing (COP), where she walked a beat in the Northview Heights and Bedford Dwellings housing communities, and she later specialized in narcotics as a plainclothes detective. In 2007, she joined the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police, where she excelled, earning multiple recognitions, which included Officer of the Month awards. Her professionalism led her to roles/investigations in Missing Persons, Sex Assault-SVU and Robbery before she settled into her current role as a Homicide Detective, serving her communities for over two decades.

Beyond her service, Detective Patterson takes pride in her family, particularly her son, LyDay, whose achievements and spirit have been a source of inspiration.

## PAMELA PARKS

**Principal, Pittsburgh Lincoln PreK-5  
Pittsburgh Public Schools**

Pamela Parks' journey through education and community involvement is a testament to her dedication and passion for making a difference. Hailing from the Hill District, specifically Sugar Top, she received her foundational education from Madison Elementary School, Margaret Milliones Middle School, and the esteemed Schenley High School.

Continuing her pursuit of knowledge, Parks earned her undergraduate degree in Elementary Education from Point Park College (now Point Park University) and pursued her master's degree in educational leadership at Carlow College (now Carlow University). Armed with her academic achievements, she embarked on a remarkable 25-year career within the Pittsburgh Public Schools district.

Parks' tenure in education has been marked by a steadfast commitment to innovation and collaboration. For 15 years, she served as a dedicated teacher before transitioning into administrative roles, culminating in her current position at Pittsburgh Lincoln PreK-5 STEAM Academy. She has championed cross-disciplinary programs, working together with colleagues, families, and community partners to foster holistic learning expe-

periences for her students.

Parks' collaboration with the many community partners for Lincoln School has resulted in the creation of three short films, a published book, and an enriching summer program that expanded students' knowledge in the STEAM fields.

Parks is also a proud member of the Kingsley Association's board of directors.

With unwavering passion and commitment, Parks continues to be a beacon of inspiration in the field of education, enriching the lives of students and communities alike. Her efforts and innovative approach serve as a testament to the transformative power of education and community engagement.



## MONTIA ROBINSON

**Owner & Operator, The M Robinson Group;  
Co-Owner, CKV Suites**

Montia Robinson, owner and operator of The M Robinson Group, is an industry leader in dual sectors and her iconic professional commitment to excellence is evident through her numerous accolades and impactful work within both the community building and event planning/decor sectors.

She has been named by Pittsburgh City Paper as a Best of Pittsburgh Event Planner, a distinction that recognizes her as one of the city's leading professionals in her field. Her success is further underscored by the PCRG Community Award she received, acknowledging her contributions to the Pittsburgh community. Robinson is responsible for mentoring upcoming professionals in both genres.

As an event planner and designer, Robinson has proven to be the wind beneath the wings of corporate events, allowing business owners to focus on the mission of business while she plans and executes the details with innovation and excellence.

Robinson is the co-owner of two event spaces, both CKV Suites, a space dedicated to the heart of the community, and an upcoming luxury venue in Downtown Pittsburgh's Black-owned Greenwood Building.

Robinson is a lifetime learner at insti-

tutions of educational acumen including Cornell University, Carlow University and the University of Pittsburgh's Shadyside School of Nursing. She has plans of utilizing her expertise as a committed advocate for the increased joy and capacity of livelihood in Black Pittsburgh.

Robinson has been newly appointed as a board member of the illustrious Greenwood Plan.

Of these accolades, Montia Robinson is most proud of her granddaughters Samiya, Samia and Samari and her daughters, Brea (Penn State University), Zianne (Temple University) and Zaire (Spelman College).

Robinson attributes her success to the unwavering support of her community, team and her family, including her late mother, artist and journalist A. Vivienne Robinson.



## DR. CRYSTAL ROSE-EDDENS

**Director of Workforce Development and Capacity Building  
Early Excellence Project**

Dr. Crystal Rose-Eddens has over 18 years of experience in education. She holds a BA in Social Sciences from the University of Pittsburgh, Master's degrees in both Early Childhood Education and Special Education from Carlow University, along with an Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership from Point Park University. She has served in many capacities within schools and education programs with the goal of culturally responsive education in mind.

Dr. Rose-Eddens became the Director of Workforce and Capacity Building with the Early Excellence Project on Aug. 1, 2023, where she heads the executive coaching efforts for equity and sustainability of Black and brown childcare providers. She is also an adjunct in the education department at the University of Pittsburgh where she contributes



to the development of the next generation of early educators. Her mission to support the academic growth and holistic development of African American children fuels her passion to contribute to the sustaining of the African American educator pipeline. Her work since moving beyond the classroom has been devoted to ensuring culturally sustaining pedagogies from early childhood to higher education. With strong collaborative efforts from access organizations and its funders, childcare centers and education organizations that serve underrepresented populations across our region deserve direct and culturally relevant support.

Dr. Rose-Eddens currently serves on multiple advisory boards and committees for organizations that promote equity, access and community service.

## YVETTE RENEE ROYAL

**Owner  
Anastasia's Crown Esthetic Services**

Yvette Royal is a native of Pittsburgh, also graduating from the University of Pittsburgh. She served eight years in the United States Navy Reserve. She spent three years working in the social services and mental health fields.

She then decided to pursue her longtime passion, a career in the cosmetic and skin care industry.

Over the next 18 years, Royal would earn multiple top sales awards and promotions representing the Clinique and MAC cosmetic brands. Knowing that her ultimate goal was to open her own business, Royal enrolled at the South Hills Beauty Academy, where she received her esthetic license in 2013.

She resigned from MAC cosmetics in May 2016 and launched Anastasia's Crown Esthetic Services. Royal became the first African American woman in the U.S. to open an esthetic salon with endermologie as the signature service.

In 2022, Royal received her certification from the National Academy of Sports Nutrition, as a sports nutrition coach to support her vision of helping women achieve a higher level of self-care from the inside out.



## ALEXIS T. RUSSELL, B.S. ARCH, MSL

**Co-Owner  
Russell General Contracting**

Alexis T. Russell, B.S. Arch, MSL, is a Pittsburgh native with a diverse background in architecture, organizational leadership and construction management. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Architecture from Temple University's Tyler School of Art in 2007, before gaining valuable experience at a Philadelphia-based architectural and interior design firm specializing in hospitality design, green building practices, and LEED-certified spaces. In 2009, Russell returned to Pittsburgh to pursue a Master of Science in Organizational Leadership and Development.

In 2015, Russell and her husband founded Russell General Contracting, initially focusing on home renovations. The company has since expanded its services to include preconstruction management, architectural consultation, pre-acquisition analysis, and project management. Russell General Contracting has become known for its structural stabilization

work with local nonprofits, completing notable projects such as the restoration of August Wilson House, the National Opera House, the Historic New Granada Theater, and the Greenwood Smithfield Building.

Beyond her professional work, Russell is committed to community service, having served as Vice President on the boards of Radiant Hall and Civically Inc. She currently serves as the Vice President of the board for The Greenwood Plan, where she continues to contribute her expertise in leadership, community development, and preservation.



## KEESHA A. SHEFFEY

### Colleague Relations Manager Pittsburgh Mercy

Keesha Sheffey is a dynamic leader and human resources professional with over 15 years of experience in strategic HR management, employee relations, and organizational development. Known for her people-first approach, Sheffey has a proven track record of leading high-performing teams, driving organizational growth, and implementing innovative strategies that enhance employee engagement in fast-paced environments.

Her dedication to mentoring is evident in her role as a Praise and Worship Leader at Mount Ararat Baptist Church, where she provides vocal coaching and spiritual guidance to the youth praise team. Sheffey's leadership encourages young people to develop their musical talents, build confidence, and deepen their faith.

Beyond her professional achievements, Sheffey has made a significant impact through her community service. She volunteers as a Sexual Assault Counselor with Pittsburgh Action Against Rape, facilitates professional development workshops for INROADS interns, and supports the United Way Literacy Campaign, helping Kindergarten students discover the joy of reading. At Pittsburgh Mercy, she founded the Workforce Equity Board to promote inclusion and equity, building on her earlier success as chair of Allegheny County's Black Empowerment Committee.

Sheffey's accomplishments have been recog-



nized with the Peace of Gratitude Award for her invaluable contributions to Vision Towards Peace Counseling Services. She holds a bachelor's degree in Organizational Leadership and is pursuing a dual MBA/MHR degree, underscoring her commitment to continuous growth and excellence.

In addition to her professional and community endeavors, Sheffey is a classically trained singer with a rich Gospel background. Her vocal talents have allowed her to sing background for some of the top Gospel artists in the industry.

Sheffey has been married to her husband, Arthur Sheffey, for 29 years, and together they have two children, Dominique and Kirsten. Her leadership, dedication to mentoring, and commitment to fostering growth in others make her a true Woman of Excellence.

community empowerment.

As the Preload Operations Manager, Smith plays a critical role in ensuring that package processing adheres to stringent safety, quality, and productivity benchmarks.

Her community engagement is equally commendable. As a board member of the Northside Institutional Church in Pittsburgh and the President of the Pittsburgh Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., Smith has spearheaded impactful programs such as Project Z, which focuses on job readiness and personal development. She also has led webinars on entrepreneurship and guiding communities through challenging times, equipping individuals with the necessary skills to navigate economic adversity.

Smith holds a Bachelor's degree in Management Information Systems from Temple University, a Master's degree in Science Management from Rosemont College, and an Executive Certificate in Women's Leadership from Yale University.

Smith's distinguished career at UPS is marked by her unwavering commitment to leadership, empowerment and community service. Her influence on women in operations, coupled with her initiatives for economic empowerment, inspires positive change and nurtures the next generation of leaders. Currently residing in Westmoreland County, Smith exemplifies the powerful intersection of corporate success and social responsibility, serving as a beacon of excellence and advocacy in her community.



## DORIS A. SMITH

### Preload Operations Manager United Parcel Service, Inc. (UPS)

Doris A. Smith's professional journey at UPS exemplifies a profound commitment to excellence and transformative leadership across various domains. With an impressive career spanning 34 years, Smith has held numerous leadership positions in Technology, Industrial Engineering, Package and Transportation Operations, Human Resources, and Health and Safety, effectively showcasing her operational expertise along with her dedication to advocating for women's leadership and

## JILL A. SMALLWOOD

### Owner J KoKo Hauling LLC

Jill A. Smallwood, born in Kokomo, Indiana, is a Pittsburgh resident and super proud mother of a daughter and two grandchildren. She joined the U.S. Army Reserve, serving nine years; doing an Active Guard Reserve tour as a Unit Clerk for 479th Field Artillery Brigade, Pittsburgh.

Smallwood entered the Pittsburgh Police Academy, in 1987, to become an officer. She was promoted to detective in 1993, becoming the first woman assigned to the Pittsburgh Police Homicide Unit.

In 2009, she created a program to increase firearm safety and understanding responsibilities of gun ownership among city residents, sparking a collaboration with offices of the Pittsburgh Mayor and Allegheny County Coroner. The initiative contributed to Smallwood receiv-



ing the 2010 LEAD Award from the U.S. Attorney of Western Pennsylvania, Mary Beth Buchanan.

In November 2014, Smallwood obtained her Commercial Driver's License as an operator for Port Authority of Allegheny County. In January 2018, with knowledge gained and assistance from Pittsburgh's small business development centers, she became the founder/owner-operator of a dump truck service. The next year, Smallwood purchased her first dump truck, a brand-new MACK Granite. Her company, J KoKo Hauling LLC, is now a small business vendor and certified as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program (PA UCP). Smallwood also owns a short-term rental in Sheraden, with a city-scape view.

Smallwood believes any success is credited to Christian beliefs, and values ingrained by her parents and grandparents, discipline and courage gained from both military and law enforcement, plus opportunities she had throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

## FELICIA E. SNEAD, MD, FASTRO

### Clinical Associate Professor, University of Pittsburgh; Medical Director, UPMC Hillman Cancer Center/St. Clair Health Cancer Center

Dr. Felicia Snead is a board-certified radiation oncologist with 21 years of medical practice experience. She joined UPMC Hillman Cancer Center at St. Clair Health in 2013 where she cares for patients with a variety of cancers and continues to be an active advocate for her patients, colleagues and staff locally and nationally. She is currently a University of Pittsburgh Clinical Associate Professor of Radiation Oncology and Medical Director of Radiation Oncology at UPMC Hillman Cancer Center at St. Clair Health. She is a member of the UPMC Physician Thrive committee, UPMC Physician Inclusion Council of the University of Pittsburgh, and founder of the Feel Well Arts Survivorship program at St. Clair Health.

For her tireless advocacy work highlighting mental health, she was awarded the UPMC Joseph C. Maroon Physician of Courage Award in 2022. Dr. Snead has yearly been named nationally as a Castle Connolly Top Doctor since 2022.

Dr. Snead began her career in radiotherapy oncology as a licensed technologist after training at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in her hometown of New York City, receiving the

Clinical Excellence Award. She graduated Magna cum laude from Manhattan College in Riverdale, N.Y., and completed medical training at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx, NY.

She resides in Point Breeze with her son, Marley, and trusty four-legged companion, Oscar. As a lifelong artist, advocate and arts patron, she serves on multiple boards and advisory groups including the August Wilson African American Cultural Center, Pittsburgh Cultural Trust and the Alumni Theater Company.

She was founder and co-director of Atypical Arts, LLC, an art events and special project production company operating in Jacksonville and briefly in Pittsburgh. She now uses that previous experience to continue curating art experiences in health care with her wellness company, Feel Well Arts, in partnership with Pittsburgh's own Legacy Arts Project Inc.



## DENA STANLEY

Executive Director  
Trans YOUniting



Dena Stanley is a distinguished leader and advocate for transgender rights, recognized for her tireless dedication to the upliftment and empowerment of marginalized communities, particularly Black trans women. As the founder and Executive Director of Trans YOUniting, Stanley has been a pivotal force in providing mutual aid, crisis housing, workforce development, and essential resources to TLGBQIA+ individuals across

## DR. AJA THOMPSON

Supervisor Court Liaison Unit  
Fifth Judicial District of Pennsylvania,  
Allegheny County Adult Probation

Dr. Aja Thompson has been employed with the Fifth Judicial District for 17 years. She currently serves as the first African American supervisor of the Court Liaison Unit for Allegheny County Adult Probation. In this position, she is responsible for overseeing and supervising the day-to-day procedures in the probation courts violation and intake department. She supervises probation officers that work daily as liaisons with the numerous elected criminal division judges. Prior to working for Allegheny County courts, Dr. Thompson worked in corporate law while attending college, but she found her passion in criminal and social justice.

Dr. Thompson recently became a Racial Equity Facilitator. Its core focus is for participants to support and focus on transformational change within institutions. Dr. Thompson continues to meet quarterly with court officials and community leaders to support these goals within the court system.

Dr. Thompson graduated from Point Park University in 2022 with a Doctorate in Education Leadership & Administration. In 2022, she also published

Pittsburgh.

In 2020, Stanley co-founded the Pittsburgh Pride Group, which has grown into the largest Pride festival in the state. In 2024, Stanley's leadership achieved a historic milestone when First Lady Jill Biden attended Pittsburgh Pride.

Stanley's groundbreaking achievements extend into both advocacy and business. She made history as the first openly Black trans woman to establish and operate a business in Pittsburgh with her successful venture, Maddezsweetz LLC, a bakery known for its creative and community-focused confections. Stanley is also an influential voice on issues affecting transgender people, advocating at both state and national levels. Her work continues to inspire meaningful change and advance the rights of TLGBQIA+ communities.

Stanley's commitment to her community is further exemplified through her extensive board and committee work, including serving on the Etna Human Relations Commission, the Thomas Merton Center, the International Women's Day Strike Coalition, TransPride Pittsburgh, and SWOP Pittsburgh. She is also a board member of Baltimore Safe Haven and an active member of the Pittsburgh DSA and the Trans Justice Program, a campaign through the ACLU of Pennsylvania, among others.

Stanley is also the first LGBTQIA+ Executive Committee Chair in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the NAACP, further solidifying her role as a trailblazer and advocate for inclusivity and equity.

the first study in Western Pennsylvania, "Examining the Potential Best Practices used by Adult Probation Officers." This study continues to be used for research study to reduce recidivism and better the relationship between probation officer and their offenders. Dr. Thompson also received her master's degree in criminal administration in 2008 from Point Park University. Two years prior, she received her bachelor's in legal studies.

Dr. Thompson is a proud member of Alpha Phi Sigma Criminal Justice Honor Society, since 2008. She is a proud mother and wife to her husband, Marcus, and their four children, Andrew, Elijah, Ayrionna, and Ava. She loves to spend time with her family and travel back home to Alabama with her husband.



## nA' STUBBS

Founder & Artistic Director  
uNiqu' Arts

nA' Stubbs is a creative artist driven by a relentless pursuit of artistic excellence and an ever-increasing desire to profoundly impact both artists and audiences through the creative and performing arts. As the founder and artistic director of uNiqu' Arts, she channels her boundless love for artistic expression into a multifaceted role. Proficient in singing, dancing, acting, writing, choreography, directing, producing, as well as developing and teaching arts programs for K-12 students, she brings a wealth of expertise to her craft.

Through uNiqu' Arts, Stubbs and her team have established a platform to connect, inspire, and empower artists and audiences worldwide. For over two decades, she has orchestrated performances and productions, as well as more organization-specific projects such as workshops, trainings, artistic ministry support, symposiums, assemblies, and conferences aimed at fostering positive change and enriching lives. Crafting the scripts for the renowned production "godguys: The Stage Play" and the highly anticipated sequel production "godSis! The Stage Play" are clear demonstrations of her artistic ambitions aimed at broadening the scope of where the arts meets outreach... ARTS-REACH. Leading a dynamic ensemble of talented artists, she spearheads impactful projects that resonate nationally and internationally. This impact has reached audiences as far as Italy and Liberia, where she and her team were afforded the opportunity to educate 400 students, integrating the

arts with essential life skills through a transformative program.

In 2020, she embarked on a new creative journey, transitioning her acclaimed stage play, "The No More! Project" (which toured nationally for 13 years), into a compelling 6-part film series titled "Life on Stage... The No More! Project." This venture launched her filmmaking journey, inspiring a wealth of screenplays slated for future works on the big screen, further expanding her diverse artistic portfolio.

With a commitment to innovation and collaboration, Stubbs continues to cultivate her distinctive vision while uplifting fellow creatives to embrace their unique talents and GOOO! Stay tuned for her forthcoming film and stage projects, as she heads towards new horizons, paving the way for creative options and opportunities for others to shine, thrive and fully live out their purpose in the arts as she strives to do daily.



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**Congratulations Board Member  
Lisa Franklin-Robinson for being selected as  
as one of the Pittsburgh Courier's  
Women of Excellence!**

## DR. TAMARA THORNHILL, LPC, MBA

**Clinical Director**

**Melanin Mommies PGH Inc. and The  
Community Mental Health Collective**

Dr. Tamara R. Thornhill, also referred to as “Dr. T,” is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Certified Clinical Trauma Specialist, Certified Grief Professional and Clinical Director. Dr. Thornhill earned her Master of Professional Counseling from Carlow University and a Doctorate of Education and Leadership from Point Park University. Dr. Thornhill has over 19 years combined experience working in the mental health and non-profit sectors in various capacities.

Dr. Thornhill is also the founder and clinical director of The Community Mental Health Collective, which started in April 2022. The CMHC vision came from wanting to directly reach and impact community members that have experienced and/or been affected by trauma. The services provided by the CMHC are free or at low cost to participants. Their mission is to help heal the community one member at a time through education, empowerment, resources and support. In 2023, she co-founded the Mama Trauma Conference. A free conference geared to help break the generational trauma and

heal the mother/daughter relationship.

As a true renaissance woman, Dr. Thornhill is gifted in multiple areas, such as a licensed massage therapist, event planning, and other ventures.

Dr. Thornhill had a stellar role model growing up. Her grandmother was a true treasure to the community, as a church member, making sure others were fed, and always willing to help anyone in need. When Dr. Thornhill became a teen mother, her grandmother provided deep and unending support, so that Dr. Thornhill could accomplish the goals that she had set for her life.

As a mother of five, Dr. Thornhill has a passion for helping and empowering other mothers, especially teen mothers. She intends to carry out her mission as a “Mental Health Maven.”



## SARAH D. WHITE, M.A.

**Executive Director of Diversity, Equity  
& Inclusion/Chief Diversity Officer  
La Roche University**

Sarah D. White, M.A., serves as La Roche University's inaugural Executive Director for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer. As a member of the President's Executive Council, White oversees the development and implementation of the university's strategic diversity and inclusion plan. She collaborates with various university constituencies to address education, training, advocacy and policy and remains committed to supporting students, particularly those from historically marginalized groups. White also chairs the La Roche University Inclusion Council.

Beyond the university, White's dedication to equity extends into the community. She is a trained Healing Justice Ambassador and Community Engagement Consultant with the YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh's Center for Race and Gender Equity, where she facilitates dialogues on the harms of racism and pathways to healing justice. Additionally, she is an active member of several local organizations, including the Ross Township Equal Opportunity Board.

White has over 20 years of experience in higher education, supporting under-represented student populations through responsibilities in academic advising, student support, student affairs, Title IX, and disability services. Her background also includes work in social services, where she

supported children, youth, families, individuals with disabilities, and juvenile justice systems.

White holds a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership in Postsecondary Education with a specialization in Student Affairs from San Diego State University and a Bachelor of Science in Social Work from Slippery Rock University. Ever committed to lifelong learning, she earned a post-baccalaureate certificate in Autism Spectrum Disorders from La Roche University and maintains a national ADA Coordinator certification.

A resident of Pittsburgh's northern suburbs, White enjoys spending time with her husband, Michael, and their three children, Saffron, Zoe, and Gabriel. In her free time, she loves connecting with family and friends, listening to music, running, reading, and exploring resin crafting.



## DR. SHANNON K. WATSON, DHA, MA, PCHA

**Senior Program Manager, Healthy Start, Inc.;**  
**Administrator, Forbes Road Personal Care**

Dr. Shannon Kelli Watson is a force of compassion and dedication, tirelessly serving her community with an unwavering commitment to empowering others. During her doctoral studies in health administration at the Medical University of South Carolina, Dr. Watson had an epiphany while studying maternal mortality rates in the U.S. She realized that to truly understand the complexities and challenges driving the troubling statistics displaying the staggering numbers of maternal mortality among African American women, an outsider's perspective wasn't enough. This is what led her to pursue a career with Healthy Start Inc., as a Senior Program Manager. There she champions maternal and child health, leading vital initiatives, such as the doula program, that supports families and improve birth outcomes, particularly within the Black community. Her unwavering dedication to eradicating health disparities and empowering families makes her a true champion for mothers and children in Allegheny County.

Healthcare is wide in range and so is Dr. Watson's passion for serving all those in need of care and support. This desire to aid those in need of care lead Watson



to one of her longest and fondest positions, a Personal Care Home Administrator. Within this role, she spends much of her time fostering a nurturing environment for residents and staff at Forbes Road Personal Care.

Twice, she chose HBCU's, earning a B.A. at Johnson C. Smith University and an M.A. from North Carolina Central University.

A woman of deep faith, Dr. Watson serves as a Deacon at Petra International Ministries.

As a proud Spring 2024 initiate of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., Dr. Watson embraces a new chapter of sisterhood and service. She is poised to continue her journey of impactful leadership, uplifting communities and empowering women.

## ALICE WILLIAMS

**Executive Director  
Women Empowered for  
Entrepreneurial Excellence**

Alice Williams is a trailblazer in community development and empowerment with a career steeped in strategic leadership and unwavering commitment to societal progression. As the founder and current Executive Director of Women Empowered for Entrepreneurial Excellence (WEEE), Williams exhibits a devoted advocacy for equity and empowerment. Through WEEE, she has cultivated an environment rich in opportunities for peer support, shared learning experiences, and business growth, offering a vital platform for the financial stabilization of Black-owned businesses and fostering the success of small enterprises through impactful workshops and small group cohorts.

Under Williams' visionary leadership, WEEE launched the remarkable “WEEE Care” initiative, significantly impacting under-resourced and marginalized com-

munities by facilitating the vaccination of thousands of seniors, as well as Black, Hispanic, and homeless individuals. This initiative stands as a testament to her dedicated and strategic approach to community development.

Parallel to her role at WEEE, Williams holds the CEO position at the women-owned enterprise, Strategic Community Engagement, where she leverages her expertise to enhance strategic demographic outreach fortified with reinforced data analysis, thereby orchestrating substantial positive changes in communities through data-driven strategies.

Endowed with the ability to articulate intricate issues to diverse stakeholders, government agencies, and community organizations, Williams navigates relationship development with a clear goal orientation, facilitating effective presentations and nurturing fruitful collaborations towards a common vision of a brighter, more inclusive future. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Human Resources and a Master of Science in Organizational Leadership, both from Geneva College.





## QUAILA WILSON-WHITE

Owner

STEAM Beauty & Wellness Spa

Quaila Wilson-White is a passionate and accomplished professional with extensive expertise in the beauty and wellness industry. A devoted wife, mother, and business owner, Wilson-White has dedicated her career to making a positive impact on the lives of others. With a strong focus on self-care, mental health, and wellness, she empowers her clients to embrace their natural beauty while prioritizing their overall well-being.

Wilson-White's journey began with a bachelor's degree in marketing and management from Slippery Rock University. Armed with a solid business foundation, she spent over a decade in corporate sales and marketing, where she gained invaluable experience in strategy, customer relations, and brand development.

In 2013, Wilson-White followed her passion for skincare and became a licensed esthetician. Over the past 10 years, she has built a reputation as a skilled and knowledgeable professional. Specializing in brow architecture, Brazilian waxing and paramedical skin revision, she is dedicated to helping clients achieve optimal skin health while enhancing their natural beauty.

In 2019, Wilson-White founded STEAM Beauty and Wellness Spa, a sanctuary for relaxation and results-driven skincare. Her spa reflects her commitment to providing exceptional, personalized services in a peaceful and welcoming environment. Beyond her role as a business owner, Wilson-White also serves as an esthetician trainer, sharing her knowledge and experience to inspire and mentor the next generation of beauty professionals.

Through her expertise, entrepreneurial spirit and unwavering dedication, Wilson-White has become a respected leader in the beauty and wellness community. As a licensed esthetician, business owner, mentor and industry advocate, she continues to transform lives and empower others to pursue their dreams, making a lasting impact on the industry and those she serves.

## ADRIENNE YOUNG

Executive Director

Tree of Hope

Adrienne Young was the secretary to Allegheny County Commissioner Larry Dunn and the coordinator for the NAACP prison program, assisting parolees to avoid recidivism with employment and programs. In 1994, Young's award-winning artist and scholar son, Javon Thompson, who had received a scholarship to Carnegie Mellon University, came home for Christmas break and was senselessly murdered by a gang member, leaving behind an unborn baby girl. Young saw the plight of numerous mothers and grandmothers struggling to take care of these children being left behind with no fathers and some without mothers. Young went to CMU, the late Pittsburgh Police Commander Gwen Elliot, retired FBI agent Ralph Cush, Dan Wholey of Wholey's Seafood, the Usher Foundation, area psychologists and the medical community and most of all, her church, Allegheny Center Alliance Church. Pastor Rock Dillaman, Young and these concerned professionals started the Tree of Hope to provide help, hope and healing to these traumatized families with a special focus on the children. The Pittsburgh Steelers came on board with Larry Foote and James Farrior to help provide crucial sustenance for these broken families. Judge Eugene Ricciardi has also been with the Tree of Hope for almost 20 years providing wisdom and guidance on how to strategically navigate the criminal justice system. This is the 25th year the Tree of Hope will be providing a



Christmas for these "forgotten casualties of a senseless war" with dinner, entertainment and lots of gifts for the children and caretakers.

## DR. JULIANNE ZEIGLER

Chief Financial Officer

Tadiso Incorporated

Dr. Julianne Zeigler is employed with Tadiso Incorporated and currently serves as the Chief Financial Officer for Tadiso Incorporated. In this position, she is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day functions of the company's financial operations and oversees its fiscal health by developing financial strategies, budgets, and forecasts, ensures financial reports are accurate and completed on time, tracks cash flow and ensures customer payments are made on time, mitigates financial risk and controls expenses, analyzes financial data and the company's financial strengths and weaknesses, makes recommendations for mergers and acquisitions, funding, and other financial matters, works with other executives to strategize growing areas of interest, such as technology, sustainability, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Dr. Zeigler graduated from Carlow University with a Bachelor of Liberal Arts and a minor in Biology, Point Park University with a Master of Business Administration in Management and a Doctorate of Science in Information Systems and Communications from Robert Morris

University. She also holds a Six Sigma Black Belt and a Certificate in Accounting and Finance from Harvard University Business School. She also has a diploma in Addictions, Substance Abuse and Mental Health.

Dr. Zeigler is a Docent at the Pittsburgh Zoo and Aquarium, serves as an appointed member of Crescent Township Planning Commission, and is also an active member of the United Rays Corvette Club and United Council of Corvette Clubs.





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