



Berkshire Resources for Integration of Diverse Groups through Education

New Pathways of Empowerment & Transformation: Moving the Dial on Race, Class, & Justice Strategies

November 6-9, 2020 | Virtual Conference

Designed and curated by Gwendolyn VanSant with fellow scholars, organizers, and activists Dr. Emily Williams, Dr. Asma Abbas, and Malia Lazu.

Presenters & Panelists

Asma Abbas is Professor of Politics and Philosophy, and Director of Transdisciplinary and Experimental Studies at Bard College at Simon's Rock, and associate faculty at Brooklyn Institute for Social Research. She is founding director at Hic Rosa (an art, education, and politics collective), and the Falsework School, committed to new modes of just and liberatory political, aesthetic, and cultural education. She has served as the Fulbright-Masaryk Distinguished Chair in Social Studies at Masaryk University, and Dean of Academics at Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture. Locating her work at the intersection of politics, ethics, and aesthetics, she is committed to transdisciplinary, anticolonial, antifascist, and materialist, political theory and practice. She is the author of *Liberalism and Human Suffering* (2010) and *Another Love: A Politics of the Unrequited* (2018), and several essays in journals and edited volumes. She is currently at work on *Anti-Odysseus: Fugues of the Non-Homeric*. She lives between Richmond, Mass. and Karachi, Pakistan.

Leah Abel is a circus artist, consultant on equity in circus arts education, and speaker on arts and justice. She uses liberation health as a framework for working with youth from under-resourced and marginalized communities and with organizations that aim to build more supportive cultures for their staff. A longtime member of the social circus, hospital clowning, and Clowns Without Borders communities, Leah is a licensed clinical social worker. She studied with Dawn Belkin Martinez at Simmons Graduate School of Social Work and holds a Master's Degree in Environmental Law and Policy from Vermont Law School. As Founder and Executive Director of Circus Up (circusup.com), Leah is committed to co-designing equitable partnerships with other community organizations. She is also a founding member of DRIVE Forward, a diverse team of hospital clowns across the U.S. who are dedicated to Diversity, Representation, Inclusion, Voice, and Equity.

Dr. Catherine L. Adams is an Associate Professor of African and African American Studies at Claflin University in Orangeburg, South Carolina. She previously held teaching positions at three other Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs): Allen University, the University of the Virgin Islands, and Paine College. Her research interests include: Africana literary history; Africana-based pedagogy and

curriculum development; Africana science fiction, speculative fiction, and Afro-futurism; life and literary works of Frank G. Yerby; and freedom and marronage narratives.

Erika Allison is a financial advisor, engineer, and interfaith minister working to raise the consciousness and spirituality of capitalism, co-create new systems for human evolution, and use the energy of money as a tool for positive change in the world. She is Assistant Vice President of Willow Investments for Loving Change and Board Chair of the Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires. Erika works with individuals and organizations on alignment in all areas of their life, leadership, and investments. Erika's multi-faceted background spans positions with Fortune 100 companies to community organizations, nonprofits, universities and schools. She is the Founder/Owner of EA Unlimited, a coaching consultancy. Prior to joining Willow, Erika was Director of Member Services at 1Berkshire, a regional economic development organization serving 1,000+ members. Earlier, she spent 10 years in STEM Education, serving as Project Director at the Maine Center for Research in STEM Education at the University of Maine (RiSE Center), leading a \$15+M National Science Foundation partnership to create an infrastructure to strengthen rural STEM education in grades PK-16+ across Maine, launching the NYC expansion of science education nonprofit Technovation, lecturing at The Cooper Union, and teaching at The Young Women's Leadership School as a NYC Teaching Fellow with the New York Department of Education. Erika started her career as an engineer in the corporate world, working at the Dow Chemical Company, Schlumberger, SchlumbergerSema, IBM, and Halliburton.

Starlin Astacio. My name is Starlin Astacio, and I am a Dominican-born and raised immigrant who came to the U.S. in 2007. I am a licensed marriage and family therapist at the Charlotte Hungerford Hospital in Torrington, Connecticut. I specialized in systemic therapeutic work with families, couples, and children. I am also a trauma-certified and Internal Family Systems oriented therapist. I work with a diverse population from upper-middle to working-class families, immigrants, and undocumented families. I am currently finishing a Ph.D. in Couples Family therapy and Social Justice at Antioch University. During my time at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, I have been involved in diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace and community. I am currently part of the Hartford Healthcare DEI initiative on social justice, and the dismantling of systemic racism in healthcare. I am also a member of the DEI Leadership committee and lead of the Charlotte Hungerford DEI council.

James Baldwin is currently Vice President of Enrollment Management at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford. He is responsible for teams including Admissions, Financial Aid, Enrollment Services, and Institutional Research and has also led Disability Resources And Services, the Academic Advising Center, the Academic Coaching and Tutoring Center, and TRIO Student Support Services. Previously, he was Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and Registrar at Pitt-Bradford. He earned the B.A. and the M.A. from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and the Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He was previously Registrar at Mount Aloysius College in Cresson, Pennsylvania, and Assistant Registrar at Purchase College, State University of New York.

Dr. Tracey A. Benson is an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte and founder of the Anti-Racism Leadership Institute. His book, *Unconscious Bias in Schools: A Developmental Approach to Exploring Race and Racism*, was released with Harvard Education Press in August 2019. Dr. Benson and his co-author Sarah Fiarman wrote this book as a roadmap for school and district leaders who seek to eliminate racial achievement gaps through rooting out and addressing racial bias in schools.

Nancy Wellington Bookhart is an Assistant Professor of Art at Paine College in Augusta, Georgia, where she also serves as the chair of the Department of Humanities. She is the founder of The Museum

Initiative at the College. The arts initiative fosters a philosophical examination of the traditional framework of art and the humanities through exhibitions, educational programs, and lecture series. Ms. Bookhart is a Ph.D. (ABD) at IDSVA, Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts, where she is involved in research that interrogates the politics of race and alterity as belonging first to the epistemological divide in the West concretized through science, technology, and art. Her dissertation examines the work of 18th century Enlightenment thought and the pseudo-science, physiognomy, and its correlation to the work of the artist, Kara Walker. She argues Walker's work as belonging to the aesthetic regime of art. In the aesthetic regime of art, the image performs as an equilibrium of perception in the fashioning of a common world.

Dana Brownlee. If you're seeking a DEI academician, Dana Brownlee may not be for you. Her focus isn't DEI theory. Instead she blends 18 years of experience as a sought-after leadership expert and team building facilitator with three decades of personal experience as a Black woman working in and around corporate America to provide an engaging experience that's down to earth and relatable while insightful and profound. Author of *The Unwritten Rules of Managing Up* (Berrett-Koehler, 2019), Ms. Brownlee is an acclaimed thought leader around managing difficult personalities, navigating challenging situations, and speaking truth to power. If you're ready to take small steps towards big progress, Dana can help.

Samantha Calamari has been working in the field of inclusion and learning design for years with Microsoft, LinkedIn, and Brown University as well as a number of nonprofits, tech startups, and as a Fulbright Specialist. Her work spans global online platforms with the goal of creating equitable educational experiences for adults and children.

Dr. Angela Davis. Through her activism and scholarship over many decades, Angela Davis has been deeply involved in movements for social justice around the world. Her work as an educator – both at the university level and in the larger public sphere – has always emphasized the importance of building communities of struggle for economic, racial, and gender justice. Professor Davis' teaching career has taken her to San Francisco State University, Mills College, and UC Berkeley. She also has taught at UCLA, Vassar, Syracuse University, the Claremont Colleges, and Stanford University. Most recently she spent fifteen years at the University of California Santa Cruz where she is now Distinguished Professor Emerita of History of Consciousness – an interdisciplinary Ph.D program – and of Feminist Studies.

Angela Davis is the author of ten books and has lectured throughout the United States as well as in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and South America. In recent years a persistent theme of her work has been the range of social problems associated with incarceration and the generalized criminalization of those communities that are most affected by poverty and racial discrimination. She draws upon her own experiences in the early seventies as a person who spent eighteen months in jail and on trial, after being placed on the FBI's "Ten Most Wanted List." She also has conducted extensive research on numerous issues related to race, gender and imprisonment. Her recent books include *Abolition Democracy* and *Are Prisons Obsolete?* about the abolition of the prison industrial complex, a new edition of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, and a collection of essays entitled *The Meaning of Freedom*. Her most recent book of essays, called *Freedom Is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement*, was published in February 2016.

Angela Davis is a founding member of Critical Resistance, a national organization dedicated to the dismantling of the prison industrial complex. Internationally, she is affiliated with Sisters Inside, an abolitionist organization based in Queensland, Australia that works in solidarity with women in prison. Like many educators, Professor Davis is especially concerned with the general tendency to devote more resources and attention to the prison system than to educational institutions. Having helped to popularize

the notion of a “prison industrial complex,” she now urges her audiences to think seriously about the future possibility of a world without prisons and to help forge a 21st century abolitionist movement.

Chenzira Davis-Kahina is a cultural griot artist, educator, published author, motivational speaker, media technologist, ordained priestess, visionary, community activist developer, mother and grandmother. Davis-Kahina is a founder and managing director of Per Ankh (House of Life)—an international NGO/NPO promoting Culture, Healing, Arts, Technology and Education for Life, Inspiration, Freedom and Education (CHATS4LIFE). Davis-Kahina is the founding director of the Virgin Islands Caribbean Cultural Center and teaching faculty in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences both at the University of the Virgin Islands, the only HBCU in the Caribbean and a Land Grant Institution.

Ejeris Dixon is an organizer and political strategist with 20 years of experience working in racial justice, LGBTQ, anti-violence, and economic justice movements. She is the Founding Director of Vision Change Win Consulting where she partners with organizations to build their capacity and deepen the impact of their organizing strategies. She also serves as a consultant with RoadMap Consulting (roadmapconsulting.org) a national social justice consulting team. From 2010 – 2013 Ejeris served as the Deputy Director, in charge of the Community Organizing Department at the New York City Anti-Violence Project where she directed national, statewide, and local organizing and advocacy initiatives on hate violence, domestic violence, police violence, and sexual violence. From 2005 – 2010 Ejeris worked as the Founding Program Coordinator of the Safe OUTside the System Collective at the Audre Lorde Project where she worked on creating transformative justice strategies to address hate and police violence. Her essay, “Building Community Safety: Practical Steps Toward Liberatory Transformation,” is featured in the anthology *Who Do You Serve, Who Do You Protect? Police Violence and Resistance in the United States*. In January 2020, she co-edited a book with Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha entitled *Beyond Survival: Strategies and Stories from the Transformative Justice Movement*.

Shirley Edgerton serves as Cultural Proficiency Coach for Pittsfield public schools. She facilitates training in Cultural Competency, initiates cross-cultural projects in collaboration with students, educators, and community partners. She is also part of the Pittsfield Public School District team to diversify the workforce. She is the founder of the Women of Color Giving Circle of the Berkshires and The Rites of Passage and Empowerment program. The mission of R.O.P.E. is to celebrate and honor the entry of adolescent girls into womanhood and provide them with skills and knowledge that they need to be successful, independent, and responsible women! It is designed to help them discover their voice and support all components of personal development. Two primary projects of R.O.P.E are college tours locally, in neighboring states and to Historical Black College and Universities. The second is an international service learning project in South and West Africa. She also serves on the board of 18 Degrees and the executive committee of the N.A.A.C.P. Shirley Edgerton earned a M.Ed from MCLA 2004 and was recognized for her community work with an honorary Doctorate of Humanity from The College of Our Lady of the Elms May 2018 and a Doctorate of Humane Letters from Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts 2019. She is the proud parent of three adult children and five grandchildren.

Elizabeth Frishkoff, MSW has been a guest instructor for BRIDGE for seven years. Her programs have been inspired in part by working with the founder’s daughter, Jessica, who in turn has been integral in coaching what activities and trainings staff and students experience. Elizabeth has an insatiable desire to discover what is easy for people and what makes life challenging. She delights in exploring subtle ways to shift paradigms and guide people of all ages to higher function and inner freedom. She combines years of study with HANDLE®, Spacial Dynamics®, Waldorf Pedagogy, and Reflex Integration to support unique personal transformation. Elizabeth began her journey as a HANDLE practitioner 25 years ago and has consulted with families, schools, and programs throughout the East Coast, as well as abroad. The

youngest person she works with in her private practice right now is three years old, and the oldest is 95. Elizabeth has experience working with people living with the effects of Autism, Tourette's Syndrome, Stroke, Down Syndrome, Epilepsy, ADD/ADHD, Dyslexia, Sleep Disorders, Motor skills/planning irregularity, and more.

Pascale Florestal is a Director, Educator, Writer, and Collaborator based in Boston. Her recent directing credits include; *Back The Night* by Melinda Lopez at Boston College, *We Are Proud to Present...* by Jackie Sibblies Drury at Brandeis University, *Marie & Rosetta* by George Brant at Greater Boston Stage Company, *Code Listen* by Shaw Pong Liu at The Millenium Stage of The John F. Kennedy Performing Arts Center, *Shrek The Musical!* (Greater Boston Stage Company), and *An Education in Prudence* (Open Theatre Project). Pascale is a lover of new play development working as the Boston Project Coordinator with *SpeakEasy Stage* 2018-2019. She has also directed several staged readings of new plays by Michael Hisamoto, Marcus Gardley, Obehi Janice, Phaedra Michelle Scott, Greg Lam and others. As an Assistant to the Director she has worked with Kimberly Senior, Liesl Tommy, Billy Porter, Paul Daigneault and M. Bevin O'Gara. Pascale is also a dramaturg, recently working on *Pass Over* by Aniontte Nwandu with *SpeakEasy Stage* co-produced with The Front Porch Arts Collective. She also serves as the Education Director for Front Porch Arts Collective where she created the Summer Reading Series and The Young Critics Program, an educational program that strives to foster and incubate the next generation of arts critics. Her ten minute play *Blended* premiered at the Open Theater Project Slam in December 2019. She currently works as the Massachusetts Municipal Arts Response Coordinator with the Barr Foundation and Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture with the City of Boston. She is an Assistant Professor of Theater at Boston Conservatory where she teaches *Devised Theatre*.

Louis Forouhar-Graff is a psychiatrist at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital in Torrington, Connecticut in an outpatient clinic. He practices the management of medication administration to patients as well as both individual and group therapy with a specialty in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy. He is on the leadership team of the Charlotte Hungerford Hospital Diversity Equity and Inclusion Council and a member of the Hartford Healthcare "Service Provision to Patients" Diversity Equity and Inclusion subcommittee.

Ayla Gavins is an equity and inclusion consultant and educator who brings deep knowledge of what it takes to create equitable and just education environments and engages educators locally and globally to design inclusive programs. She regularly consults with and leads discussion groups on racial equity and inclusion for a variety of organizations, assisting individuals and teams to see their role in creating inequities and supporting them to change that narrative. She is the former principal of the Mission Hill School in Boston, one of the most progressive, inclusive, and democratic schools in the country.

Tracy Gray is the Founder and Managing Partner of The 22 Fund (The 22), an impact, growth equity, and advisory firm with a mission of creating the quality jobs of the future by increasing the global competitiveness of manufacturing companies, intentionally targeting women- and minority-owned businesses. She is a Board of Director of Applife Digital Solutions, Inc (OTC: ADLS), a publicly traded, fully reporting start-up incubator and venture studio, and of the California State University, Dominguez Hills Philanthropic Foundation endowment, where she serves as Treasurer/Secretary on the Investment Committee. She is also an Executive in Residence at the Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator (LACI) and chairs LACI's Diversity in Entrepreneurship Advisory Council. Ms. Gray is the first Social Impact Fellow at the UC Berkeley Haas Business School's Center for Equity, Gender and Leadership. In 2015, Ms. Gray gave a TEDx Talk entitled "Why It's Time for Women to Be Sexist with Investment Capital." Due to the response from her TEDx Talk, Ms. Gray founded the non-profit We Are Enough (WAE). WAE's only mission is to educate ALL women on how and why to invest in women-owned, for-profit businesses or with a "gender lens." WAE recently released the study *Creating LAIA: The Feasibility of a*

Women-Focused Incubator and Accelerator in Los Angeles and chosen by Variety magazine as a global 50 most "impactful" nonprofits.

Donna Haghighat came to the Women's Fund with over 12 years of experience developing programs, cultivating relationships, launching startups, fundraising, directing communications strategy, creating strategic plans and building advocacy programs. Under her leadership, the Women's Fund has successfully launched The Young Women's Initiative for girls and young women of color in Springfield and forged a partnership with University of Massachusetts Amherst where participants in the LIPPI leadership program receive 500 level academic credit. Prior to joining the Women's Fund, Haghighat was Principal at Collabyrinth Collective, LLC. Previous roles have included Executive Director of the Aurora Women & Girl's Foundation, Chief Engagement and Advocacy Officer for YWCA Hartford Region, a strategic consultant, Chief Development Officer for Hartford Public Library, Interim Director and Grants/Program Manager of the Women's Education and Leadership Fund, and Co-President of AAUWCT. Haghighat was awarded the Trinity College Alumni Medal of Excellence in 2019, was the grand prize winner of the 2012 University of Hartford's Barney School of Business International Business Plan Competition and was recognized as The Trinity Club of Hartford's Person of the Year in 1999 and the Trinity College National Alumni Association Award in 1996.

Dr. Eden Renee Hayes is the Director of the Davis Center at Williams College in Williamstown, Mass. She plays a critical role in advancing campus-wide engagement with complex issues of identity, bias, and equity and has been involved in cultural competency, retention efforts, and inclusion in organizations for over 15 years. Dr. Hayes has presented papers on her research at a number of conferences including The International Convention of Psychological Science, and has published her research in various outlets including The Handbook for Feminist Diversity. Dr. Hayes also serves on the editorial boards for journals including Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology as well as the Board of Directors for several organizations focused on diversity and inclusion. Dr. Hayes earned a bachelor's degree from Wesleyan University and an MS and Ph.D. from Tulane University before being awarded a National Science Foundation postdoctoral fellowship to conduct research at The Pennsylvania State University.

Leticia Smith-Evans Haynes is the Vice President for Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Williams College. She is a member of the college's senior staff, and in her role, she serves as the institution's primary strategist working to ensure the Williams community is diverse, equitable and inclusive. She brings more than two decades of experience as an administrator, educator, civil rights advocate, and lawyer. Haynes directs the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, which includes the Davis Center and the Office of Special Academic Programs, and committees and initiatives focused on matters of diversity, equity and inclusion. As the college's chief diversity officer, she leads the institution's departments and committees that develop and implement non-discrimination policies, facilitate critical conversations on equity and inclusion, assess campus climate, resolve conflicts, advise and mentor students and faculty, support academic pathway programs, and recruit and retain a diverse faculty, staff, and student body. She engages the broader community to create and sustain diverse, equitable, and inclusive places where families live, learn, and work. Haynes has been lauded for her work as a strategist, facilitator, and problem-solver and keeping matters of diversity, equity, and inclusion at the fore of conversation and action. Immediately prior to joining Williams, Haynes directed the Education Practice at the NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) and used legal and policy advocacy to ensure access to equal educational opportunities at the pre-kindergarten through post-secondary education levels. Her portfolio at LDF included school desegregation, access to higher education and the school-to-prison pipeline. She also served as a judicial law clerk to the late Honorable Dickinson R. Debevoise of the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey, an associate at

O'Melveny & Myers LLP, a policy advisor to former Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle, and a public elementary school teacher in New York City.

Throughout her career, she has contributed to and helped shape the national dialogue around best practices in education. In addition, she has led coalitions working to advance the rights of individuals with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and immigrants. She has successfully argued before state and federal trial and appellate courts, most recently before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in a case in which she represented plaintiffs in a decades-old school desegregation case. She recently co-authored *Eliminating Excessive and Disparate School Discipline: A Review of Research and Policy Reform in Inequality in School Discipline* (2016) and *Unlocking Opportunity for African American Girls: A Call to Action for Educational Equity* (2014). She has served as adjunct faculty at a number of educational institutions, including the University of Pennsylvania Law School and the University of Wisconsin-Madison Graduate School of Education. She has been a member of several non-profit boards, including the Board of Visitors of the University of Wisconsin Law School, the Board of Trustees of Pine Cobble School, and the Alumnae Board of the Spence School. She received a B.A. from Williams College, J.D. from the University of Wisconsin Law School, M.S. in Educational Administration and Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Andre Henry has a passion for making the invisible visible. In the summer of 2016, he began lugging a solid granite boulder around Los Angeles to show the weight of systemic racism on the black psyche. Months later, he walked around dressed for a funeral with the names of the victims of state violence written on his jacket; and in response to the police involved death of his mentally ill neighbor, J.R. Thomas, Andre founded an activist collective called "Something Disruptive" dedicated to creative, nonviolent direct action. Together, "Something Disruptive" convened a group of community leaders, students, clergy, and civilians from around Los Angeles County for a year-long vigil in protest of police brutality in the wake of J.R. Thomas' death at the doors of the Pasadena Police Station called "A Subversive Liturgy." Through this year-long action, the group raised financial support for J.R.'s family and local Black Lives Matter activists, as well as mobilized support for the Black Lives Matter Pasadena Freedom School serving the youth of Northwest Pasadena. Andre is a student of nonviolent struggle and social change, including studying leadership in nonviolent movements for social change through the Harvard Kennedy School. He specializes in using digital media to educate and mobilize audiences for racial justice and social progress. He has served as managing editor at RELEVANT Media Group and is currently a contributing editor for The Sider Center for Peace and Justice in Philadelphia, a Content Expert for the Fuller Leadership Platform, and a Research Assistant for the Innovation for Vocation Project. He has also earned theology degrees from both Southeastern University and Fuller Seminary.

Senator Adam Hinds State Senator Adam G. Hinds (D- Pittsfield) was elected to the Massachusetts Senate on November 8, 2016 and assumed office on January 4, 2017. Senator Hinds is now serving his second term and proudly represents the largest geographic territory in the Legislature, comprised of 52 western communities situated across Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin, and Hampden Counties. He serves as the Senate chair of the Joint Committee of Revenue and the vice chair of the Senate Committee on Redistricting. He is a member of the powerful Senate Committee on Ways & Means as well as several other policy committees with jurisdiction over matters of importance throughout western Mass: Health Care Financing; Education, Tourism, Arts & Cultural Development and Senate Rules. He is the former Senate chair of the Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts & Cultural Development (2017-2018). Senator Hinds also serves as the Senate co-chair of the Rural Caucus, the Senate vice-chair of the Cultural Caucus and is an active member of the Gateway Cities, Regional Schools, Regional Transit Authority, Criminal Justice Reform, Clean Energy and Food Systems Caucuses. Senator Hinds was raised in

Buckland and attended Mohawk Trail Regional High School, where his mother was a librarian and his Vietnam Veteran father was a school teacher. He attended Wesleyan University and then studied international law and negotiation at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. He is a Truman National Security Fellow. He married Dr. Alicia J. Mirles Christoff, Assistant Professor of English at Amherst College on August 24, 2019.

Senator Hinds is the founding director of the Pittsfield Community Connection, a program designed to proactively engage at-risk youth before exposure to and engagement in violence and crime. He, along with Pittsfield City officials, was successful in winning a grant that will bring up to \$5 million to Pittsfield to move young men engaged in illegal activities towards education, jobs, and counseling. Senator Hinds is the former Executive Director of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, based in North Adams. As the leader of this organization he worked to connect, engage and empower regional residents to respond to local challenges, including issues related to employment, health and addiction. Senator Hinds previously worked for the United Nations and spent nearly ten years focused on issues at the heart of US national interest in the Middle East. He spent three-and-a-half years in Iraq, including as team leader of an UN-led negotiation between the Kurdistan Region and Government of Iraq. He was based in Jerusalem for two years as chief regional advisor to the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process. He worked with Kofi Annan to attempt to broker a ceasefire in Syria and was part of a team that worked to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons program. Senator Hinds believes the same skills and problem-solving spirit make him a powerful advocate and voice for western Massachusetts on Beacon Hill. Early in his career Senator Hinds worked for former Congressman John Olver and as a regional director for John Kerry for President, where he served under Susan Rice, the former US National Security Advisor.

Helen Higginbotham, Esq., MBA is an attorney specializing in matters of labor and employment law. She began her career doing community outreach and as a bilingual social worker in the NJ state prison system. Always she has remained actively engaged in her community. Her passions are matters involving race, women and children. Miss Higginbotham has served on several community boards, volunteered as a human rights commissioner and president of an upstate NY chapter of the NAACP. Currently she is president and founder of When Black Women Gather, LLC, an initiative charged with promoting relationship building and intergenerational conversations between women. She is a change agent and champion for equality in human rights and social justice issues; never hesitating to rise as the leader to confront injustice and inequality anywhere. Preservation and celebration of civil rights and Black history in America is important to her. She has been acknowledged for uplifting the community through acts of volunteerism, mentoring, educating, advocacy and community development. Currently Miss Higginbotham is a labor and employment consultant with an established non-profit legal organization and an Adjunct Professor at a local university. She has lived in several states, traveled to several countries on six of the seven continents and lived, worked and studied internationally in Spain and in Ghana. She is a native of New Jersey, graduate of Rowan University, Howard University and Rutgers University, School of Law, respectively.

Sharon Albert Honore, Ph.D. is the former Chairperson and current Associate Professor of the Department of Communication, Art Theatre, and Music at the University of the Virgin Islands on St. Thomas (STT) and St. Croix (STX). She is mass communication internship/faculty faculty advisor to Black News Channel HBCU Show, the UVI Voice 2.0, online student newspaper, and the state monitor for the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund. Dr. Honore is also the founder/ coordinator for the only film festival in the USUV territories, Caribbean Film & Artistic Cinematic Festival (CFACF) which was first first held on STX in 2019. Born in Dallas, and a native of Baton Rouge, she taught at numerous colleges and universities and lived in Denver, Colorado before moving to STX. Honore maintains that "my personal legend"

involves giving voice to those Unsung Heroes, of intergenerational countenance, who inspire and influence current and future society.” Honore believes these objectives may be accomplished through diligent research interpretation by scholars dedicated to oral and written history from peoples from the African diaspora. As the child of college educators Honore initially came under the influence of many unsung heroes in the close-knit, segregated, middle-class black suburb of Southern Heights, in Baton Rouge, La. Her sense of purpose and humanitarian values were shaped by men and women, who, though, ceremoniously unnoticed by mainstream society, served as models of inspiration to youth in their immediate communities. Honore says, “Access to unmeasurable knowledge was within my immediate grasp and a range of understanding [both intellectual and pragmatic] about the world at-large highlighted my daily existence.” As an adult, she maintains that her travels around the country led to insightful interactions with others from under-represented communities.

Honore is the first African American to earn a doctorate of philosophy in mass communications (Journalism) Ph.D, from the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa. She also holds a Master of Arts (Humanities, African American World Studies) from the UI as well as Master of Arts and Bachelor of Arts degrees (Communications, Mass Communications respectively) from Southern University A&M College in Baton Rouge, La. Honore has worked for more than 25 years on the college level as faculty member and chair of mass media at various colleges and universities. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities selected Honore, along with ten other scholars from the U.S., to travel/study in Beijing, Shanghai and X'ian China via the China Study Initiative in 2018. She was recently appointed to the Board of Directors of the National Association of African American Studies and Affiliates (NAAAS). This past summer, she was recognized as an outstanding editorial contributor to the Society of Environmental Journalism. Honore has served in the capacity of editor/writer/social media consultant and federal peer grant reviewer for many years and works as marketing/PR coordinator for nonprofit organizations.

Mikhala Iversen, Afropean (African American/ Danish origin), founded All Bout Dat Tours LLC in 2013. Mikhala decided to create what she could not find: An African American tour of Black life in New Orleans Louisiana. “Slavery in Louisiana really wasn't that bad!” This is the narrative I was told when I took City tours of New Orleans and even on some of the Sugar Cane Plantations. They would sugar coat the biggest atrocity of our time: African slave trade, Cattle slavery-sharecropping, and the Jim crow era... I was so desperate for the truth I found: the elders of Treme', Freedom Riders, Black media journalists and radio personalities, evolutionaries, storytellers, Civil Rights leaders, Spiritual voodoo Priestesses, Black Indian Big Chief, Baby Dolls, master educators, and activists. I sat at their feet listening, taking notes, and learning everything I could about Black life In New Orleans,” says Iversen. “Passion for the culture, deep respect for the neighborhoods, and giving back to the communities, is who we are, the goal is to authentically represent Black history and the treasures of the birth of African American music - Jazz.”

Mayor Kamal Johnson. I am the former 1st Ward Alderman on the Hudson Common Council. I chaired the Police Committee and the Youth, Education, Seniors & Recreation Committee. As chair, I have successfully facilitated difficult community conversations and pushed for better and more effective services for Hudson residents. I am the youngest and 1st African American to hold the office of Mayor of the city of Hudson. I grew up in Hudson. I graduated from Columbia Greene Community College in 2005 and from SUNY New Paltz in 2007 with degrees in History and Early Childhood Education. I am the former Co-Director of the [Greater Hudson Promise Neighborhood](#), a nonprofit organization that supports children growing up in the Hudson City School District. I'm the Coordinator of [POPS](#), a community fatherhood initiative. And I'm a co-host of the Drive Time Radio Show on WGXC: 90.7-FM.

Dr. Frances Jones-Sneed is an emeritus professor of history (Ph.D., University of Missouri) and former Director of Women Studies at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in North Adams, Mass. She has

co-directed three National Endowment for the Humanities grants entitled “The Shaping Role of Place in African American Biography” in 2006 and “Of Migrations and Renaissances: Harlem/NY & South Side/Chicago, 1915–75” in 2008, “African American Biography,” in 2011 all “We the People” projects. She spearheaded a national conference on African American Biography in September 2006, is co-director of the Upper Housatonic Valley African American Heritage Trail, a former board member of MassHumanities, and is presently a member of the Samuel Harrison Society and Clinton Church Restoration. She was a 2008 NEH Summer Fellow at the W. E. B. Du Bois Institute at Harvard University and is currently working on a monograph about Du Bois and editing the autobiography of the Rev. Samuel Harrison.

Malia Lazu is a powerful culture creator and strategist whose instinct and clarity have changed cities, institutions, and organizations throughout the US and abroad. Malia has been using strategy and the connective tissue of community networks to build diversity in authentic ways and creating consistent impact. With over two decades of experience building diverse culture in the political and civic space, Malia felt private sector diversity and inclusion efforts were in need of disruption. While at MIT, Malia launched The Urban Labs, a space for diversity research and development. The Urban Labs has emerged as a boutique multi-cultural agency helping corporations and institutions to increase the effectiveness in their diversity and inclusion efforts. The passion and success of Malia’s work have earned her a reputation as one of the most insightful and critical culture creators of her generation and caught the attention of MTV, Showtime, ABC-TV, Fox News, and print publications such as Newsweek, The Boston Globe, Boston Business Journal, and Boston Magazine. She has been named as one of the 50 founders to watch in Essence Magazine 2017. Over the last few years, Malia has experimented in attacking ongoing diversity problems, in the city of Boston in the startup space creating Accelerate Boston, a startup accelerator. Now on its sixth year, Accelerate Boston has helped 20+ minority businesses open and thrive and has led to 30+ minority entrepreneurs receiving investment capital. In addition to her extensive work building bridges and bringing people together, Malia has created campaigns for numerous tastemakers including Grammy Award-winner and famed Civil-Rights Activist Harry Belafonte, businessmen and philanthropists, George Soros and Peter Lewis. Malia currently sits on The Nation Magazine Editorial Board, Boston Society of Architects, and the Black Economic Council of MA.

Paloma McGregor (b. 1974) is a Caribbean-born, New York-based choreographer and arts leader. As co-founder and Artistic Director of Angela’s Pulse, McGregor has spent more than a decade centering Black voices through collaborative, “community-specific” performance projects. A former newspaper editor, McGregor brings a choreographer’s craft, a journalist’s urgency, and a community organizer’s framework in the service of big visions. The daughter of a fisherman and public school art teacher, McGregor amplifies and remixes the quotidian choreographies of Black folks, reactivating them in often-embattled public spaces. McGregor’s work situates performers and witnesses at the embodied intersection of the ancestral past and an envisioned future; for her, tradition transcends time. Paloma also facilitates technique, creative process and community engagement workshops around the world. She toured internationally for six years with Urban Bush Women and two years with Liz Lerman/Dance Exchange, and continues to perform in project-based work, including Skeleton Architecture, an acclaimed collective of Black women(+) improvisers with whom she received a coveted New York Dance and Performance Bessie Award for performance in 2017. Alongside her choreographic work, McGregor founded Dancing While Black (DWB), a platform for community-building, intergenerational exchange and visibility among Black dance artists whose work, like hers, doesn’t fit neatly into boxes. Since 2012, DWB has produced more than two dozen public dialogues and performances, supported the development of 22 Black artists through the DWB Fellowship, and published the country’s first digital journal by and for Black experimental dance artists.

Kimesha C. Morris, LCSW is a psychiatric clinician with a private practice in Connecticut as well as a PhD candidate at Smith college school for social work. Ms. Morris research and clinical interest includes but is not limited to, racial microaggression within the therapeutic encounter with Black clients. She is also one the Co-founders and coordinators of the Institute of Living's Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) council and sits on the steering committee of the Hartford Healthcare Behavioral Health Network DEI initiative.

Dr. Nadine Naber is an award winning author, public speaker, and activist on the topics of racial and gender justice, women of color, Arab and Muslim feminisms, and Arab and Muslim Americans. She has authored/co-edited five books: Arab America: Gender, Cultural Politics, and Activism; Race and Arab Americans; Arab and Arab American Feminisms (winner of the Arab American Book Award 2012); The Color of Violence; and Towards the Sun. Naber co-founded the Arab Women's Solidarity Association North America in 1994. Since then, she has served on the boards of the Women of Color Resource Center, INCITE!, the Arab American Action Network, and the Social Justice Initiative. As a Professor of Gender and Women's Studies and Global Asian Studies at UIC, she is the faculty founder of the first center on a college campus serving the needs of Arab American students in the US, The Arab American Cultural Center. In 2019, she co-founded Mamas Activating Movements for Abolition and Solidarity, a collective that amplifies the voices of people who do the labor of mothering in resistance to war, prisons, immigration injustices, and colonization. She is currently Professor of Gender and Women's Studies and Global Asian Studies and director of the Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Dr. Naber is a TEDX Speaker, an expert author for the United Nations, and founder of "Liberated Research" where she teaches people how to liberate their research from the constraints of the academic industrial complex through individual coaching and virtual workshops.

Dr. BioDun J. Ogundayo is Director of the Africana Studies Program at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Ogundayo has taught graduate and undergraduate courses in Caribbean Studies and Francophone literature at the University of The West Indies in Barbados. He has also taught at SUNY Buffalo; the University of Alberta, Canada; Queen's University, Canada; Ogun State University, Nigeria; and at Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington. He has been teaching at Pitt-Bradford since January 2001.

Dr. Charmayne E. Patterson is an Associate Professor of History in the Department of African American Studies, Africana Women's Studies and History at Clark Atlanta University in Atlanta, Georgia. As a trained historian and sociologist, Dr. Patterson employs an interdisciplinary approach to both research and teaching. Dr. Patterson's research focuses on the history and contributions of Black Institutions, including the Black Church, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and social and fraternization organizations. Her doctoral dissertation examined the relationship between Prosperity Theology and African American Megachurches; other publications address diverse efforts to empower Black communities. She is currently developing a book manuscript exploring STEM programs at HBCUs. Dr. Patterson has held fellowships with the Robert W. Woodruff Library, UNCF/ Mellon Programs, and the Higher Education Resource Service (HERS).

Jonathan Andrew Pérez, Esq. is a racial justice advocate, a professor at Wesleyan, and a critical scholar of structural inequity. Previously Jonathan was a Senior Assistant District Attorney in New York where he worked on many Social Justice policy initiatives. Jonathan was promoted to Senior Assistant District Attorney after starting the first ever research manual of Brooklyn history of structural racism and systemic inequity from slavery to the New Deal. He trained young prosecutors on the communities they serve and ensure justice prosecution and fairness for all. He recently gave a 2-day seminar at the NYC Bar on criminal justice reform. Jonathan has been involved in law, policy, and critical race theory for nearly a decade. Early in his career Jonathan served as an adjunct instructor at Hunter College in New

York, and most recently, an Instructor at Wesleyan University in Structural Inequity and Critical Race Theory. Jonathan has taught NYC private schools such as Lycee Francais de New York, and Prep-for-Prep, a leadership development program that offers promising students from communities of color access to private school education. He won prestigious civil rights fellowships, including a Sparer Fellowship supporting his work at a leading Latino Rights organization, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund in Washington, D.C. where he also served on the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

Jonathan is the founder of a racial justice and equity training program, Justiceology-By-Design (justiceology.com), which focuses traditional equity, inclusion, and diversity program that localizes participants with anti-racist readings and workshops and the U.S. history of laws and policy that produced structural inequity to the present in the wake of the murder of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter protest. He is also a trained Equity By Design professional, leading anti-racist initiatives at his office and for the New York City Bar through the Criminal Courts Committee. Jonathan has given talks at a number of venues including the Hispanic Heritage Month Lecture at the Hotchkiss School boarding school, the keynote lecture on Critical Race Theory and Law Today at Indiana Maurer Law School, a 2-day Seminar on Systemic Inequity and the Future of Justice at the N.Y.C. Bar, and academic conferences at: Harvard University, the William Jefferson Clinton Institute in American Studies, Dartmouth College, the inter-American cultures conference in Mexico, and NYU Law's Center on Race, Inequality and the Law. Jonathan received his B.A. at Bowdoin and M.A. at the University of Virginia and completed PhD-level work at Rutgers University in the Institute on Race, Ethnicity, and American Culture, and received a J.D. at American University Washington College of Law.

Jonathan has published articles, poems, and law review articles; most recently, he has two forthcoming law review articles, *Black Lives Don't Seem To Matter, Justice After George Floyd, a Critical Race Theory Shift to Systemic Inequity*, Indiana Maurer School of Law Journal of Law and Social Equity, Fall Issue (2020); and *Rioting by a Different Name: Hearing The Voices of the Unheard and Injustice in the Age of George Floyd a New Vision of Legal History*, Iowa School of Law The Journal of Gender, Race, & Justice (2020). He is also a published poet, and his book is titled, "The Cartographer of Crumpled Maps" a history of racial injustice in poems.

Pops Peterson. In 2015, Berkshire-based artist and writer Pops Peterson debuted Reinventing Rockwell, a series of artworks reimagining mid-century illustrations by Norman Rockwell in a manner reflective of today's times. Celebrating America's rich diversity and embracing Rockwell's sense of humanity, Peterson has created images that envision social change and express his desire for a positive, inclusive, and just world. These works are a major feature in the current "imagining Freedom" exhibition at The Norman Rockwell Museum. Launched at the High School of Music and Art in New York, Peterson's artistic education also includes Pratt Institute and Columbia University. His writings have been published in Andy Warhol's *Interview*, *Essence*, *The Village Voice*, and *The New York Times*, and he has authored stage plays and screenplays for television and film. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination named Peterson its first Artist in Residence for which he lectures annually at the Fair Housing and Civil Rights Conference. His painting, "Freedom from Shame," inspired the Massachusetts Office on Disability's statewide art competition, "Breaking Barriers," which was presented in the Massachusetts State House in 2017. Pops Peterson is also known for his multimedia presentations on his own artistic journey with Norman Rockwell, the arts and civil rights. He has been presented at high schools and colleges as well as such community arts institutions as The Spencertown Academy, The Foundry, and The Norman Rockwell Museum. His latest presentation, "The Making of a Protest Artist," explores the nature of protest art through history. Peterson is the owner and general manager of SEVEN salon.spa in Stockbridge, Mass., a business established with his husband, Mark Johnson, that is situated

directly across the street from Rockwell's former home. *Freedom from What? (I Can't Breathe)* has travelled across the nation in *Norman Rockwell: Reimagining Freedom*. It can be seen currently at the Rockwell Museum with a dozen more works from the *Reinventing Rockwell* series, presented in tandem with his featured works in the "Solidarity" show at Sohn Fine Art.

Brianna Pope is the Three Point Strategies Operations Manager. She is the chief air traffic controller for Three Point and has been vital to the expansion and growth of major events, campaigns, and the financial operation. Brianna has coordinated the Movement for Black Lives Fellowship program, the major volunteer effort for the She the People Presidential Forum, and even served as the Interim Campaign Manager for Lesley McSpadden for Ferguson City Council Campaign. Brianna is a playwright, fiction writer, and avid reader. She is a graduate of Bard College and was born and raised in San Diego. Brianna is made up of California sunshine, sarcasm and abundance, naps, text love letters with her sister, and cooking the perfect steak.

Dennis Powell is the President of the Berkshire County Branch of the NAACP. A retired culinary educator, Executive in the Food Service & Hospitality Industry, and Food Service Director at Berkshire Farm Center and Services for Youth, today he is the proud father of five and grandfather of four, a Food Service & Hospitality consultant, and community activist. He is on the Steering Committee of the W. E. B. Du Bois Lecture Series, Vice Chair of the Clinton Church Restoration Project, and a Board Member of the Railroad Street Youth Project (RSYP). Powell is also a member of the Pittsfield Licensing Board and Pittsfield School Committee. He has served on the boards of Berkshire Museum, Pittsfield Economic Revitalization, Berkshire County Regional Employment, and Berkshire Center For Families and Children. He is the former Chair of MCAD's Advisory Council, a past member of the Police Citizen Advisory Committee and Alumni Board Pittsfield Boys Club. Powell is MAPP Certified (Mass. Approach To Partnerships In Parenting).

Aseante Renee is a therapist and communications strategist with over 13 years experience in social-cause marketing, facilitation, and culturally inclusive community engagement work across the nation. Much of her work engages the intersections of social justice, healing, wellness, therapy, and entrepreneurship. Currently Aseante is the Director of Communications for Common Justice, a nonprofit developing and advancing solutions to violence that transform the lives of those harmed and foster racial equity without relying on incarceration. Prior to joining Common Justice, Aseante was a policy advisor with the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice where she led the operationalizing of reconciliation work between communities of color and local law enforcement in six pilot cities.

heidi andrea restrepo rhodes is a queer, second-generation Colombian immigrant, poet, artist, scholar, and activist. She is the author of the poetry collection *The Inheritance of Haunting* (2019), which won the 2018 Andrés Montoya Poetry Prize.

Gibrán Rivera is an internationally renowned master facilitator. He helps the transformation of leaders, networks and organizations. He develops our capacity to work with complexity. And he pays very close attention to dynamics of power, equity and inclusion. Gibrán invites us into what he calls a forward facing remembering. He understands that our next evolutionary leap depends on trust and the currency of love. And he has devoted his life to defining better ways of being together in this world.

Gabrielle Senza is a transdisciplinary artist who exhibits, lectures, and performs internationally. Her creative practice investigates the phenomenon of invisibility and examines what – and who – is seen, hidden, acknowledged, or ignored in social, political, scientific and environmental realms. Committed to building a culture of compassion and a world where everyone can walk unafraid, she choreographs

interactions that invite viewers and participants to question the world around them. Audience members become creative researchers actively engaged in the cross-cultural study of the unseen forces that currently influence the world around us. Gabrielle started her professional career as an artist in 1987 and had her first solo show at OK Harris Gallery in SoHo in 1991 at the age of 23. Her work is included in the Whitney Museum, MoMA New York, Sackner Archive of Concrete and Visual Poetry, as well as many other public and private international collections. Her socially engaged art initiatives, including Invisibility Lab, Walk Unafraid, Seeing Red, and The Collaborative Scroll have toured through cities in the US, Cuba, and Europe, earning her awards from Transart Institute for Creative Research, the Puffin Foundation, Assets for Artists, and MASS MoCA. In addition, she has presented her work in collaboration with V-Day, For Freedoms, Open Engagement, and the International Human Rights Art Festival. Gabrielle is also a Fellow of ZK/U Berlin (The Center for Art & Urbanistics) where she formally launched the Invisibility Lab in 2017. As an occasional guest artist / adjunct professor, Gabrielle has taught courses at Cooper Union, Bard College at Simon's Rock, IS 183, Flying Cloud Institute, Norman Rockwell Museum, and the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, among others. She has curated several exhibitions nationally and internationally as a guest curator and published critic. Gabrielle currently divides her time between the Berkshire mountains of western Mass. and a converted silo in Berlin.

Deepika Bains Shukla is the Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Massachusetts in Springfield. She prosecutes federal criminal cases involving fraud, public corruption, gun and drug crimes, terrorism, and civil rights crimes. Before starting at the U.S. Attorney's Office in 2014, Deepika was a staff attorney at the Connecticut Fair Housing Center, a litigator at a small civil rights firm, and an associate at a large law firm in New York. Deepika earned her J.D. at the University of California, Berkeley.

Dawn Simmons is the Executive Director of Stage Source, an arts service organization focusing on work force development and sector improvement in theatre across New England. Dawn is originally from Buffalo, New York, where she received a B.A. in English Literature from the University of Buffalo. She went on to study playwriting at Boston University. She has since gone on to direct for regional theatres such as The Front Porch Arts Collective, WAM Theatre, The Nora Theatre, Greater Boston Stage Company, SpeakEasy Stage Company, Bad Habit Productions, Fresh Ink Theatre and Lyric Stage Company. She is the co-founder and artistic director of the Front Porch Arts Collective, a black theater company committed to advancing racial equity in Boston through theatre. She also founded New Exhibition Room in 2008 to produce provocative, political, and affordable theater events. Before taking on the role of Executive Director of Stage Source, Dawn served on the Board of Directors and as the Director of Programs for nine years. More recently, she served as the Director of Performing Arts at the Boston Center for the Arts.

Jane G. Tillman, PhD, ABPP is the Evelyn Stefansson Nef Director of the Erikson Institute for Education and Research of the Austen Riggs Center in Stockbridge, Mass. A board-certified clinical psychologist and a psychoanalyst, she is an Assistant Clinical Professor at the Yale Child Study Center and a Teaching Associate in the Department of Psychiatry at the Harvard Medical School. Dr. Tillman's primary research interest is in the area of suicide assessment, intervention, and postvention, and she has completed several externally funded studies in this area. Her most recent research is a longterm project "States of Mind Preceding a Near Lethal Suicide Attempt."

Dr. Keeley W. Verrett is a holistic optometrist and self healing coach for people with brown eyes. Her passion is helping women break the cycle of self neglect, chronic illness, exhaustion and overwhelm so that they can lead their families, communities and colleagues at a greater capacity and create generational health. Her approach is revolutionary in that she fills the gap of symptom based healthcare by helping women bring a strategic, self-healing system into their everyday lives through working with the

root cause and underlying imbalances that are unique to each person, as revealed in their eyes. She earned her Doctorate Degree at the University of Houston College of Optometry, her Bachelor's Degree at Xavier University of Louisiana and her Holistic Health and Iridology Certifications from Pure Health in Boulder, Integrative Nutrition in Manhattan and Natural Approach to Health in Ohio. Most of her career has been in private practice in New Orleans, Miami, and Jamaica, WI. She is a loving mom and wife who is super passionate about helping women love and lead their families to greater health.

Greg Watson is the Director of Policy and Systems Design at the Schumacher Center for a New Economics. His work currently focuses on community food systems and an initiative to improve global systems literacy. Greg has spent over 40 years learning to understand systems thinking as inspired by Buckminster Fuller and to apply that understanding to achieve a just and sustainable world. In 1978 he organized a network of urban farmers' markets in the Greater Boston Metropolitan Area. He served as the 19th Commissioner of Agriculture in Massachusetts under Governors Michael Dukakis and William Weld from 1990 to 1993 and under Governor Deval Patrick from 2012 to 2014. During the Patrick administration he launched a statewide urban agriculture grants program and chaired the Commonwealth's Public Market Commission, which oversaw the planning and construction of the Boston Public Market. From 1984 to 1990 Watson served as Assistant Secretary in the Mass. Executive Office of Economic Affairs, where he established and chaired the Mass. Office of Science and Technology. In 1988 he presented a paper entitled "Preparing Policymakers To Address the Problem of Climate Change" at the Second North American Conference on Preparing for Climate Change in Washington, D.C. Greg was featured in Leonardo DiCaprio's 2007 documentary The 11th Hour.

Jackson Whalan is a lyricist and producer from The Berkshires creating uplifting hip-hop to reveal new ways of being to listeners around the world.

Eva Michelle Wheeler is a sociocultural linguist whose work frames language as a lens for interdisciplinary inquiry. Dr. Wheeler's research questions have explored the role of language in the construction of ideas about race, beauty, and meaning in Spanish-speaking settings in the U.S., Latin America, Europe, and Central Africa. Through her methodology-driven research, Dr. Wheeler seeks to examine social phenomena in new ways and to give a voice in academic literature to underrepresented groups. Dr. Wheeler currently serves as an Associate Professor of Spanish at Oakwood University.

Dr. Emily Allen Williams has worked in academia since 1990 in various capacities as professor, department chair, dean, and provost. She started her career as a professor at Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA, where she taught and conducted research for 13 years. She later spent time at the University of the West Indies (Mona Campus, Kingston) on a Fulbright Fellowship where she completed research on a book publication while lecturing on West Indian Poetry. Her most recent appointments were at the University of the Virgin Islands, Texas Southern University, and Ramapo College of New Jersey. Prior to her work in the academy, Williams worked for a decade in the arts as a grants director and arts program manager for the City of Atlanta Bureau of Cultural Affairs and the State of Georgia Council for the Arts. Williams holds a Ph.D. in Humanities (Caribbean and British Cultural Studies and Literature) from Clark Atlanta University and a Master of Arts degree in Linguistics and Literature from Virginia Commonwealth University. She received a Certificate in Management and Leadership in Education (MLE) from Harvard University. Williams has published six books with two additional works currently under contract. She has written numerous articles and reviews for peer-reviewed scholarly journals. She is now the Vice President of Academic Affairs at University Of Pittsburgh.

Gwendolyn VanSant is an experienced organizational change consultant and coach who works at the intersection of diversity leadership, equity and inclusion, and strategic planning. She is the CEO and

Founding Director of BRIDGE and the Equity and Inclusion Team Lead at Changemaker Strategies. A skilled community organizer, Gwendolyn is also a well-recognized thought leader on racial justice and reparations. Gwendolyn serves as the Vice Chair of the Town of Great Barrington W. E. B. Du Bois Legacy Committee. She is on the Advisory Board of Greylock Federal Credit Union's Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) program, and a board member of the Women's Fund of Western Mass, UU Mass Action Network, Shakespeare & Company, and Women's Fund Of Western Mass. A longtime activist, Gwendolyn has founded several initiatives based on the principles of equity and justice, the inherent dignity and worth of individuals, and our interconnected web of humanity.

Gwendolyn's leadership is rooted in extensive positive psychology training and anti-racism work, and she brings a poverty and gender equity analysis to all of her work. New programs she's developed include Workplace Spanish for Law Enforcement, the first Women of Color in the Workplace Retreat at Amherst College, and a staff and board leadership training program on equity and financial literacy. Gwendolyn has also served on the Great Barrington Citizen's Panel for Police Officer and Sergeant Selection. Gwendolyn spoke at the 38th Annual E. F. Schumacher Lectures celebrating the 150th anniversary of the birth of W. E. B. Du Bois at the Schumacher Center for New Economics, the 2019 Western Mass Health Equity Summit, and PolicyLink's Equity Summit in Chicago (2018). In 2018, Gwendolyn co-curated the commissioned Town Of Great Barrington Du Bois 150th Festival with Randy Weinstein and BRIDGE. In 2017, she spearheaded the county-wide campaign and coalition "Not in the Berkshires" and helped craft and pass her town's Trust Policy, a step towards a statewide Safe Community Act. In 2016, Gwendolyn served as the Founding Director of Equity and Inclusion at Bard College at Simon's Rock. Gwendolyn holds a BA from Simon's Rock with concentrations in Languages and Literature, Art and Art History, and Women's Studies. She graduated with a certificate in Positive Psychology from the Wholebeing Institute at Kripalu and has completed the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond - Undoing Racism training and the Leadership Institute for Political and Public Impact (LIPPI) through the Women's Fund of Western Massachusetts. In 2019, she was named "Woman of the Year" by Berkshire Business and Professional Women. In 2018, she was selected by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women as one of the Commonwealth's "Unsung Heroines" and named a finalist in Executive Leadership in the 2018 Berkshire Nonprofit Awards. Governor Deval Patrick, who honored her with an African American of Distinction award in 2010, called her leadership a "treasure to Berkshire County and this Commonwealth."

Doris Wellington, Atlanta, GA. American University; Ordained Minister and Independent scholar; Native: Bullhead, Township, NC.; Author, publisher, poet, playwright, motivational speaker, community organizer; Her work is an interdependent partnership that draws on her educational, professional, spiritual, and creative abilities for the greatest impact as a change agent for a better world.; Founder Dwelling Places Worldwide; (A publisher of books and letters); Seven Sisters and a Microphone; (Art and Social Justice); University of Jesus Christ; Joint Schools of Ministry; (Christian Education Curriculum).

Dr. Aieyat Zalzala, PhD is a counseling psychologist at the Institute of Living at Hartford Hospital. Her clinical interests focus on providing insight-oriented therapy to individuals suffering from severe mental illness, with special emphasis on schizophrenia spectrum disorders. She is involved in training fellows, residents and interns across disciplines in the area of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Research interests are centered on improving treatment for those with SMI and the intersection of multiculturalism and social justice in mental health care.