



# DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

FY21 REPORT



# COMMITTED TO CHANGE AND IMPACT

[ucan-chicago.org](http://ucan-chicago.org)

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# A DEI VIEW FROM THE TOP

The history and strength of UCAN's multifaceted diversity, equity and inclusion program was tested during the start and height of the COVID-19 pandemic, but by all measures our DEI efforts not only withstood the unprecedented impact of the pandemic but created new opportunities, forged new partnerships and generated new accomplishments.

UCAN's nine-tiered internal-external DEI model is a robust cornerstone in how we serve our participants; how we support our dedicated staff; and how we engage our funders, suppliers, community and nonprofit peers. That fact served as a base during the ongoing pandemic as we pivoted into the virtual world to continue connecting with the communities we are committed to serving as a pillar and partner.

In the face of the social injustice and continued economic instability that has disproportionately harmed underserved communities during the pandemic, our DEI lens remains a critical component in UCAN's operational DNA and culture. Despite the political unrest that also roiled Chicago and the nation during the pandemic and dating back to early 2020, we remained committed to expanding our DEI footprint in new and novel ways.

We are proud of and motivated by the DEI accomplishments highlighted in this report and encourage you to join us on a journey to level the playing field, eliminate barriers, create new and different opportunities and engage your staff, customers and participants in respectful, culturally relevant ways that uplift individuals and communities to see and unlock the power of their potential.

Markell Bridges  
Chair, Governing Board

Christa Hamilton  
President & CEO



# SPOTLIGHTING EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

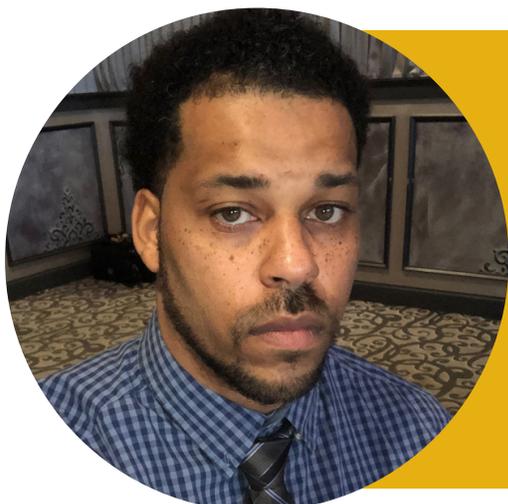
As one of nine tiers of our Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion strategy dating back to 2005, Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) at UCAN are 100% employee-inspired, led, and implemented. Our ERGs have evolved to develop the next wave of diversity and program leaders at UCAN.

As a mechanism for employee engagement, ERGs create the platform for employee leadership development, interdepartmental collaboration, and behavior change. They are voluntary, employee-led groups who join together in the workplace based on shared characteristics and demographic factors such as gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age or life experiences. As a result of these efforts, 95% of respondents who attended ERG events attested DEI was relevant to their work and 98% of attendees agreed events improve DEI competence.

Our 11 ERGs continue to lead and navigate challenges in the midst of a continuing pandemic and its indelible impact. For example, over 12 months, they facilitated nearly 15 virtual and in-person Lunch and Learn meetings that captivated internal and external audiences with courageous conversations.

“Sisterhood 180 is an opportunity for women to unite in a non-judgmental zone, unapologetically being themselves. This ERG has proven to be a positive support to all involved. Sisterhood 180 thrives on identifying ways to reach out to, engage and educate the masses on topics of the here and now. If you allow yourself to connect to all the gifts in this group, you grow and enhance skills.”

Chermeeka Meeks, Sisterhood 180 Member



“Being a part of AIC has led me to grow. We have a family support environment, and we hold each other accountable and advocate for others within the group. I have a sense of pride and honor to be a part of this group. Without the support of AIC, I would not have had the courage to advocate for myself the way I have done recently. Having a place to come and be authentic and not be judged is a rare thing to happen in the workplace.”

Jason Daniels, Alumni Involvement Council Member

# ...PROFILES IN INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Each ERG is supported by an Executive Sponsor, who is a member of UCAN's Senior Leadership Team. The sponsor is not an honorary figurehead, but plays a critical role in the success of the ERG and should be prepared to take an active role in the ERG.

## EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUP LEADERS



**Prestina Singleton**  
Chair, Alumni Involvement Council



**Chase Larkin**  
Co-Chair, Black Man 360



**James Diggs**  
Co-Chair, Co-Chair, Black Man 360



**Leticia Cruz**  
Co-Chair, La Voz



**Zhandra De Lira**  
Co-Chair, La Voz



**Gwendalyn Carver**  
Co-Chair, Pride Alliance



**Alison Wagner**  
Co-Chair, Pride Alliance



**Jennifer Goodrich**  
Co-Chair, Women & Co.



**Jemmerio Davis**  
Co-Chair, EMERGE



**Yaniz Rayo**  
Co-Chair, EMERGE



**Adreiona Jennings**  
Co-Chair, Multiethnic (ME)



**Ruben Johnson**  
Co-Chair, Multiethnic (ME)



**Camilla Johnson**  
Co-Chair, Sisterhood 180



**Jordan Sayers**  
Chair, VFF



**Chaplain Will Hall**  
Chair, SP1RIT

## EXECUTIVE SPONSORS



**Laura Angelucci**  
Pride Alliance



**Claude Robinson**  
VFF



**Nicolas Liakopoulos**  
Black Men 360 & La Voz



**Melissa Jenkins**  
EMERGE



**Stephanie Franklin**  
SP1RIT & Multiethnic (ME)



**Fred Long**  
Sisterhood 180



**Derrick K. Baker**  
Black Men 360 & Sisterhood 180

# UCAN EARNS ACAF ACCREDITATION



Achieving Safety, Permanency and Well-Being by  
Improving Practice with LGBTQ Youth and Families



For the first time in UCAN's 152-year history, the agency proudly earned the Building Foundation for Inclusion Tier of Recognition for 2021 as a part of pursuing accreditation from the Human Rights Campaign's All Children – All Families (ACAF) initiative. This important achievement supports the agency's organizational change.

UCAN has been recognized nationally and included in ACAF's 2021 Change-Makers, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's third annual report highlighting 119 child welfare agencies across the country. Those agencies have worked with the HRC Foundation's All Children – All Families program to improve the services they provide to the LGBTQ+ community, including children in foster care, 1 in 3 of whom are LGBTQ+, and prospective foster and adoptive parents. The agencies serve more than one million clients annually in 35 states and employ more than 24,000 employees.

UCAN conducted an internal self-assessment, provided professional development to staff, and implemented ACAF's "Benchmarks of LGBTQ Inclusion," which track policy and practice changes within agencies. The 2021 Change-Makers report features three "Tiers of Recognition," which celebrate the progress agencies have made toward becoming fully welcoming to their LGBTQ+ clients.

"Achieving the All Children-All Families accreditation was an organization-wide effort to roll out the welcome mat for the LGBTQ+ youth and families we serve. Raising awareness about ACAF internally, developing ACAF ambassadors, and strategic planning led us to achieving this accreditation for the first time in UCAN's history. To lead with enthusiasm, compassion and strategy, coupled with support from leadership and staff, we made history."

Bianca Cotton, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator



"I am incredibly proud of the work our program leaders, Pride Alliance employee resource group, and direct service staff have done to achieve this recognition. We have worked to update our procedures and practices to reflect best practices in supporting LGBTQ+ youth and families in the child welfare system. Our staff supporting these youth and families in the child welfare system have the training they need to help youth and caregivers within the LGBTQ+ community feel welcomed and supported at UCAN."

Alison Wagner, Director of Quality Improvement

# UCAN TALK ABOUT RACISM

## Brunch! Lunch & Learn

Friday, August 27, 2021 | 11am - 1pm  
Nichols Training Room

11:00am - Brunch (in-person)

11:30am - Discussion (in-person and virtual)

Register in Relias. Keyword: Brunch

Join UCAN Talk About Racism, a group of UCAN staff who identify or present as white, to discuss the journey they took this past year reading and working through the book *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla Saad.



"This book is a one-of-a-kind personal antiracism tool structured to help people with white privilege understand and take ownership of their participation in the oppressive system of white supremacy. It is designed to help them take responsibility for dismantling the way that this system manifests, both within themselves and within their communities."

-Layla Saad, *Me and White Supremacy*, pg. 3

Learn How You Can Join The Journey

## Speakers



**Bianca Cotton**  
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion  
Coordinator



**Laura Angelucci**  
Chief of Staff



**Christopher Rapisarda**  
Director of VIPS



**Rebecca Sandoval**  
Development  
Manager



**Sam Budyszewick**  
Director-Clinical  
Services

A group of white UCAN employees read and discussed the book "Me and White Supremacy" by Layla Saad, which educates readers on all facets of white supremacy and how people with white privilege benefit from the pain and suffering of Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC).

The book serves as a guide with a format for group discussion and daily journal prompts. The first cohort, which supported one another through this self-reflective experience, met weekly from May 2020 - March 2021 and discussed a topic indicated in the book.

The study group will help UCAN's white leaders learn how to talk about race among their peers and with their teams to formulate plans for eradicating racism and racist practices. The group helps individuals and the organization develop insight and skills for dismantling white supremacy by addressing such important topics as white privilege, white fragility, tone policing, white silence, color blindness, anti-blackness, racist stereotypes and cultural appropriation. Other topics include white apathy, tokenism, optical allyship and white feminism.



# ALLIES IN ACTION



“This group held me accountable so I could do the work required by the book “Me and White Supremacy.” Layla Saad held a mirror up to me so I could face my role in white supremacy. I keep returning to the challenges she poses in the book and try to incorporate them in my professional and personal life.”

Deanna Pacelli, Therapist

“The hope was for this to be an in-person event but due to the Delta variant, we shifted virtually. Engagement is different remotely, those who attended appeared really interested with a lot of activity in the chat and questions that followed the session. I know I had multiple staff members – some who I had not met otherwise – who wanted to talk more with me about the event and the intention behind the UCAN Talk About Racism group. There is never enough time and there is always more work to do, and so I appreciate UCAN providing an opportunity to reflect on our learning and also holding us accountable to see it continue.”

Christopher Rapisarda, Director of Violence Intervention and Prevention Services



“I enjoyed my time spent learning and growing with other UCAN employees. I will admit at first I was skeptical as to what this group could accomplish but understood over time the value that the group was bringing to me both personally and professionally. Issues of race and inequalities in this country are deep and can also be very divisive. It was great to have some difficult conversations with the confidence that my opinion mattered and would be respected.”

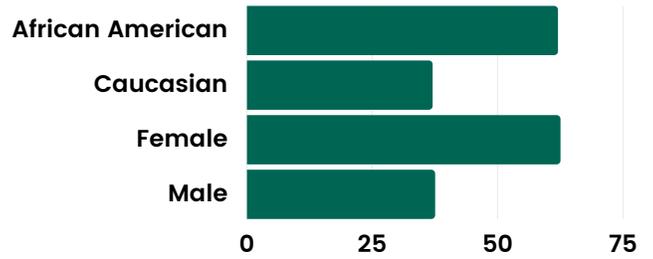
Laura Angelucci, Chief of Staff



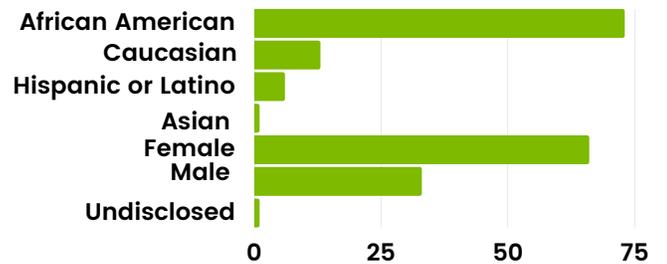
# UCAN DEMOGRAPHICS AT A GLANCE



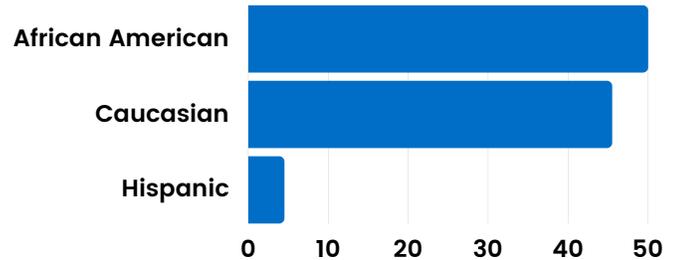
## Executive Team



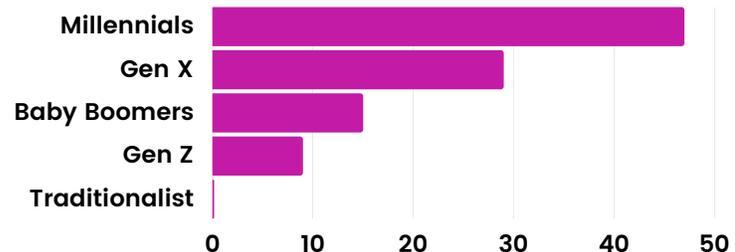
## UCAN Staff



## UCAN Governing Board



## Generation by Generation

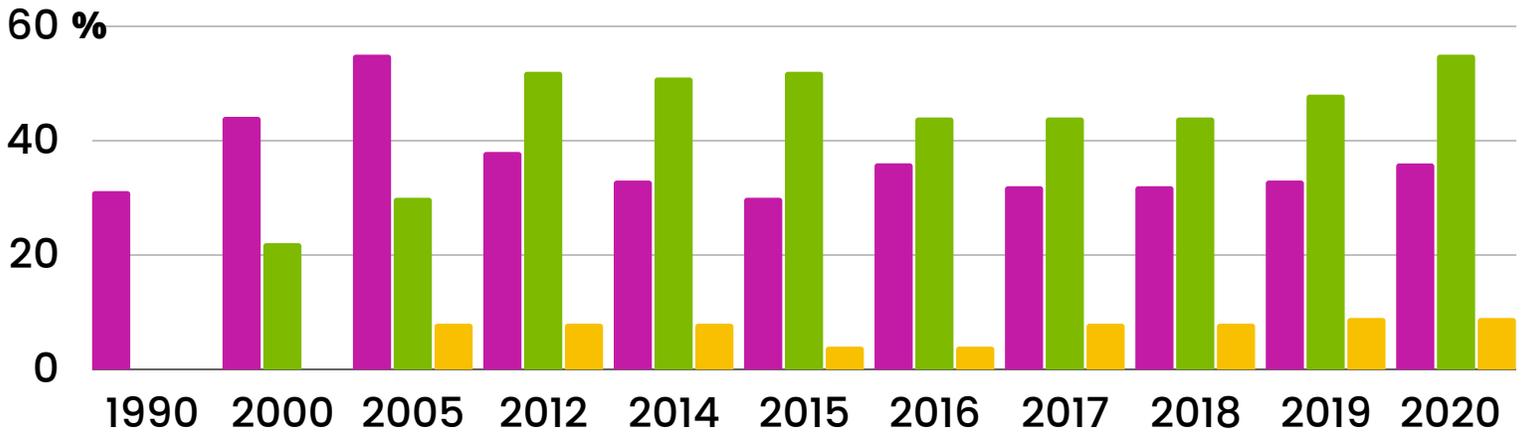


\*All graphs expressed in percentages.

# GOVERNING BOARD ENGAGEMENT

UCAN's Diversity Advisory Board provides counsel to the agency's Governing Board and its subsidiary committees to fulfill UCAN's DEI initiatives; advocates for institutional diversity and equity; challenges practices that hinder the fulfillment of our DEI goals; and supports innovations that stimulate and advance the fulfillment of UCAN's DEI strategies.

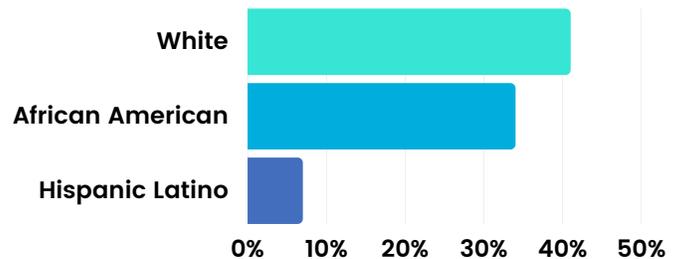
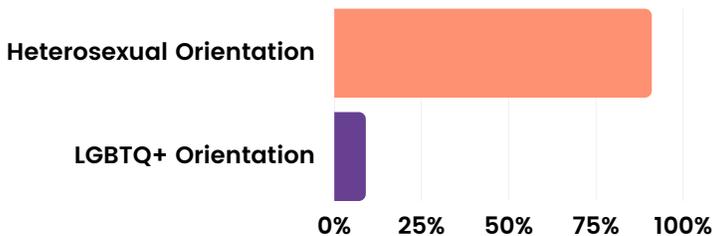
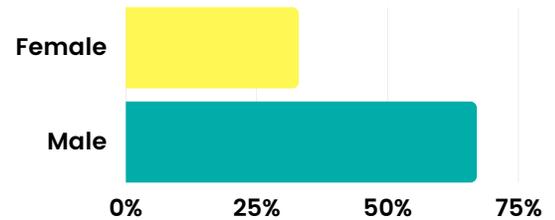
## DIVERSE AND PROGRESSIVE GOVERNING BOARD



	1990	2000	2005	2012	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Female	31%	44%	55%	38%	33%	30%	36%	32%	32%	33%	36%
Ethnic Minority	0%	22%	30%	52%	51%	52%	44%	44%	44%	48%	55%
LGBTQ+	-	-	8%	8%	8%	4%	4%	8%	8%	9%	9%

### Diversity, equity, and inclusion at the forefront of strategic initiatives

- Visible agenda items for boards and committees
- 17-member Diversity Advisory Board



# MEET THE DIVERSITY ADVISORY BOARD

UCAN's Diversity Advisory Board provides counsel to the agency's Governing Board and its subsidiary committees to fulfill UCAN's DEI initiatives; advocates for institutional diversity and equity; challenges practices that hinder the fulfillment of our DEI goals; and supports innovations that stimulate and advance the fulfillment of UCAN's DEI strategies.

## Diversity Advisory Board



Joan Archie  
University of  
Chicago Medical  
Center

Marquis Miller  
City of Chicago

Luz Canino-Baker  
LNC Consulting

Jennifer Ballard-Croft  
INTREN, LLC

Cedric Thurman  
Federal Home Loan  
Bank of Chicago

Lashana Jackson  
R1 RCM

Melissa Donaldson  
Wintrust

Jeff Carlson  
St. Pauls UCC

Kathy April-Rush  
abbVie



Darryl Farrow  
Mars Inc.

Kim Hunt  
Pride Action  
Tank

James Williams Jr.  
University of  
Chicago Hospitals

Laura Girona  
Heidrick & Struggles

James Norman  
Archdiocese of  
Chicago

Troy McIntosh  
IDEX Corporation

Piers Rogers  
North Park  
Axelson Center

Jane Saks  
Project&

LEADERSHIP THAT MATTERS!



# TESTIMONIALS FROM THE HEART OF LEADERS



“As soon as I learned of UCAN’s DEI approach, I was impressed with its breadth – not only seeking to diversify staff (which is usually the first effort), the board (the second usual effort), but also to consider the vendors/suppliers, and overall culture of the organization. UCAN demonstrated commitment for the long haul, not just a ‘check off the box’ effort that might be slowly phased out with changes in leadership or when any challenges arose. UCAN continues on that journey and the staff, board, young people who are served as well as the larger community are all better off as a result.”

Pier Camille Rogers, Ph.D., Director,  
Axelson Center for Nonprofit Management

“As a non-profit serving underserved communities, one could argue UCAN is already addressing the issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. But at UCAN we think differently. We recognize in order to best serve the community, we need to ensure the diversity, equity and inclusion are embedded into all that we do from selecting Board members to the design of our service offerings.”

Cedric D. Thurman Vice Chair, UCAN Governing Board



“After over nine years of working for UCAN, they supported my decision to leave and start my own business! Not only did UCAN support my decision, but they allowed me to do contract work with them. So after nine years of working for UCAN and 17 years of servicing the cleaning of UCAN buildings, MAAM Cleaning Service is truly grateful for all UCAN does!”

Mario Brown, Owner MAAM Cleaning Service & UCAN Contractor

# A GROUNDSWELL OF COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In FY21, UCAN continued to model a consistent, compassionate and comprehensive approach to community engagement. The perils of the pandemic continued to limit the number of large gatherings but UCAN managed safely to host more than 19 community outreach events that positively impacted various sectors of stakeholders.

UCAN's approach to community is to engage, educate and empower key stakeholders in the spirit of community vitality. Our North Lawndale campus has been a key part of UCAN showing up as a gracious and hospitable host to various groups, special events and activities.

For example, UCAN hosted a vibrant and festive Juneteenth event for residents in the greater Chicagoland area. More than 150 people attended and experienced an amazing display of cultural solidarity through the arts by Muntu Dance Company, Xyotchil Aztec Dance Troupe and Tatsu Teino Japanese drum corps. Ald. Michael Scott Jr. (24th) addressed the importance of healthy families and community revitalization. The day was closed out by a South Side-West Side youth basketball game to promote peace and well-being. Illinois Rep. Lakeshia Collins (9th Dist.) served as a celebrity judge for an exciting slam dunk contest. The warmth of the day was fed by the smiles and laughter of the youth who participated in a full day of events.

UCAN hosted other highly successful events, including at Gallery Guichard in the Bronzeville community, presented in partnership with the Jazz Institute of Chicago and where more than 75 attendees were entertained by live music and exquisite works of art.

In addition, special events at The Wood Shop in the Park Manor neighborhood and the Gerald Griffin Gallery in the Chatham neighborhood on the South Side allowed UCAN to bring the community to the forefront. This culmination of events attracted audiences that represented the corporate, philanthropic, government and nonprofit sectors.



# VISUALLY RESPONDING WITH A VIRTUAL PIVOT

## DEI Event Speaker Series

UCAN delivered another successful year of informative virtual offerings for internal and external audiences far and wide.

The drive to build out thought provoking and informative webinars has positioned UCAN as a tenured leader in the field of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Individually and collectively, our employee-led ERGs hosted training sessions and webinars on "The Color of Emotional Intelligence," "Transracial Adoption & Fostering," "I'm All Ears" and the inspirational "Where Are They Now?" webinars.

Through these efforts UCAN reached over 8,000 individuals with our virtual events and gained nearly 5,000 social media impressions.

## The Color of Emotional Intelligence

Thursday, February 11th 10:00 AM -11:30 AM



**PRESENTER**

Farah Harris, MA, LCPC  
Psychotherapist | CEO,  
WorkingWell Daily



Nadia Hill  
Youth Development Coach  
EMERGE Co-chair  
UCAN



Dejanae Byrd, LCPC, CPP  
Therapist II  
EMERGE Co-chair  
UCAN

**EMERGE LEADERS**

Join this fantastic conversation and learn how to define emotional intelligence, how Black individuals use EQ differently due to racial inequity, how code-switching negatively impacts one's well-being, how to redefine microaggressions, how Allies can elevate their EQ to help create more equitable and psychologically safe workplaces and more



## Transracial Adoption & Fostering

Wednesday, April 28th | 10am-11:30am CT



**MODERATOR**

Adreiona Jennings  
DFLN Manager  
UCAN  
Co-Chair of ME



Katie Cangemi  
Sr. Program Officer,  
Community Investment  
BCBSIL, MT, NM, OK & TX



Frances Cunningham  
Senior Consultant  
Optum



Zaek Schrantz  
Senior Advisor  
UCAN

**PANELISTS**

Join us for an informative discussion about the joys and challenges of transracial adoption and fostering. We will hear from adopted and foster parents as well as an adopted child.



**Moderator**  
Linal Harris

Sisterhood 180 & Black Men 360 Presents

## I'M ALL EARS (LET'S TALK ABOUT IT)

Effective Communication | Building Mutual Respect | Friendship

**Founder & President**  
Insights 4 Life Coaching



Gabrielle Ellison, M.S.  
Clinical Counseling,  
NCC Therapist I  
Sisterhood 180 Co-chair



Chase Larkin  
Youth Development Coach  
BM360 Co-chair



Nadia Hill  
Youth Development Coach  
EMERGE Co-chair  
UCAN



Camilla Johnson MPA,  
LSSGB, CSM  
Government Contracts  
and Grants Manager  
Sisterhood 180 Co-chair



Demetrius Lovejoy  
Residential Treatment  
Spec. III



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 26**

5:00 PM - 6:30 PM CT  
ZOOM WEBINAR ID: 886 7700 4846  
PASSWORD: UCAN

Members of UCAN's Alumni Association share their experiences since ascending from their respective programs! Join them as they take us on a journey of their most recent personal and professional achievements.



Prestina Singleton



Alexander Mays



Angel Nash



Elisabet Orbitz



Aaron Love

**Moderator**  
Tytannie Harris  
TMH Behavioral  
Services P.C.

# DEI EVENT SPEAKER SERIES

UCAN hosted more than 20 DEI-focused webinars, trainings and workshops with local and national leaders, including Vanderbilt professor Tim Wise, Dr. Joy DeGruy and business icon Linda Johnson Rice. They addressed such topics as “Effective White Allyship,” the perils of systemic racism and women in leadership.

"DON'T EVER MAKE DECISIONS BASED ON FEAR. MAKE DECISIONS BASED ON HOPE AND POSSIBILITY." | MICHELLE OBAMA



**Black Women's Leadership Brunch: Refresh. Revive. Renew!**

TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 2021 | 11:00 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. CT  
ZOOM ID: 897 5441 7656 | PASSWORD: UCAN

**MODERATOR**  
Robin Robinson  
Chicago Journalist

Join us for an inspirational panel discussion about pertinent issues that pertain to today's Black women. Learn practical ways to refresh your spirit, revive your purpose and renew your commitment to excellence.

**PANELISTS**








**MUSICIAN**  
Alysha McElroy-Hodges

J'ai Brown

Kerron Norman

Dr. Lakeya Cherry

Farah Harris

Katrina Jackson

DEI Council Education and Engagement Series

## Building Power: Latinx & Black Collaboration

Wednesday, February 24, 12:00 p.m.

Join us for a “fireside chat” with a panel of community leaders and allies discussing questions like:

- What does it mean to build power and what does it mean for Black and Latinx folks to do so in solidarity?
- What strategies of division are in play and what works to dismantle them?
- What resources or pathways exist for individual and collective growth?
- What needs to be reconciled or healed?

### Featured Panelists



**Senator Celina Villanueva**  
State Senator from Illinois' 11th District



**Lavine Douglas**  
Director of Human Resources, Motorola Solutions & Erie House Board Member



**Claude A. Robinson Jr.**  
Executive VP External Affairs & Diversity, UCAN



**Nicolas Guzman**  
Partner, Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP & Erie House Board President

Moderated by Patty Oji of Alpha People Project and Solutions



## LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

The Language Code: What Are We Truly Saying?



### Tim Wise

Antiracist and Social Justice Educator and Author

## UCAN PRESENTS HERSTORY: A WOMAN'S LASTING LEGACY



**MODERATOR**

**Claude Robinson**  
EVP, External Affairs & Diversity, UCAN



**GUEST**

**Linda Johnson Rice**  
Chief Executive Officer, Johnson Publishing Company



## Can We Talk? The Intersectionality of Race in The LGBTQ+ Community

Join us for a riveting, robust and revealing conversation about the intersectionality of race in the LGBTQ+ community. Learn from an esteemed panel of experts on ways to build bridges of solidarity across racial divides in society.

Friday, June 4, 2021 | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM  
Zoom ID: 867 9642 0439 | Password: UCAN

### PANELISTS



**John Peller**  
President/CEO, AIDS Foundation of Chicago



**Channyn Lynne Parker**  
Director of Strategic Partnerships, Howard Brown Health



**Mark Ishaug**  
CEO, Thresholds



**Darrious Hinson**  
Executive Director, Chicago State Foundation



**Leslie Mendoza**  
Clinical Supervisor, UCAN



### MODERATOR

**Roderick Hawkins**  
Associate Dean of External Affairs and Chief of Staff, Northwestern University School of Communication



# DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

## GROWING LEADERSHIP FROM WITHIN

In 2003, UCAN operated with a relatively singular focus on how society and its systems impacted the organization's cultural diversity teaching and services for youth and communities. By and large, UCAN did not emphasize equity and inclusion but focused on helping clients navigate society's racial landscape. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee was born from this effort.

The DEI Committee contributed to a new emphasis on improving the collection, tracking and analysis of data. Currently, the committee advances the internal strategic direction of UCAN's DEI initiatives and assists in establishing direction for client programming with annual goals. The committee focuses on projects impacting employee engagement such as updating UCAN's New Employee Orientation and Culture of Inclusion training sessions, and advises on anti-racism best practices.

The DEI Committee shines a light on UCAN's responsibility to challenge and address inequities and discrimination of all types. Other areas of emphasis ensuring that clients and staff are provided with experiences to learn and participate in their cultural heritages, as well as other heritages, and creating an inclusive workplace.



Over the past fiscal year, the DEI Committee led the agency in achieving nearly 70% of our FY21 DEI goals, including:

- Facilitating CEO symposia
- Achieving All Children-All Families Accreditation
- Engaging at internal and external DEI and community-related events
- Supporting the UCAN Talk About Racism cohort, a group of UCAN's white leaders who are learning how to talk about race among their peers and with their teams
- Actively engaging in virtual DEI lunch-and-learn meetings

## DEI COMMITTEE MEMBER TESTIMONY

Even through the transitions that occur when working in the nonprofit arena, the need for DEI was always at the forefront. My personal journey with DEI has allowed me to question everything, which has included the origin of words that ... are harmful, belittling and lies toward people of color and other nondominant groups. The questioning has led to honest, in-depth conversations with family and friends. My yearning for actual facts and not the whitewashed versions has increased my knowledge through reading, listening and being more grounded in my innate truths."

Andrea Rochelle Taylor, Permanency Specialist



# DEI EVENT SPEAKERS



**Dr. Lakeya Cherry**



**Dr. Mary J. Wardell**



**Dr. Andrea Louie**



**Vincent Williams**



**Carmita Semaan**



**Rep. Marie Newman**



**J'ai Brown**



**Roxanne Martino**



**Melissa Donaldson**



**Charles A. Montorio-Archer**



**Yoly M. Valencia**



**Felicia Davis**



**Berto Aguayo**

# LEADERSHIP REFLECTIONS ON DEI'S



"I'm excited about the future advancement of DEI and racial equity throughout the nonprofit sector."

As I reflect on the FY21 program year I am heartened that UCAN facilitated another successful year of DEI initiatives.

Through a host of internal and external challenges, UCAN staff managed, leveraged, and led impactful programs to advance our nine-tier programming. Additionally, I'm encouraged to see our intentionality to center racial and business equity in the majority of what we say and do.

As the lead DEI practitioner, I'd be remiss to not mention the nuances, complexity, and difficulty of many aspects of DEI in the workplace. Fortunately, our DEI Coordinator Bianca Cotton has strategically ensured UCAN collaborates, coordinates, and communicates what DEI brings to our clientele and community.

I'm excited about the future advancement of DEI and racial equity throughout the nonprofit sector. UCAN will continue to convene, connect and challenge nonprofit leadership to be the equity focused leaders needed as the next normal manifests.

Claude Robinson  
Executive Vice President, External Affairs and Diversity,  
UCAN



# SCOPE AND IMPACT

"Two years after his passing, the legacy of Donald Stewart lives on. In March, The Chicago Community Trust and African American Legacy awarded their second Donald Stewart Fellowship to Claude Robinson, executive vice president of external affairs and diversity at UCAN."

The Chicago Community Trust



STORIES

## Continuing a Legacy: Claude Robinson Awarded Second Donald Stewart Fellowship

**CRAIN'S CHICAGO BUSINESS 2021**

# NOTABLE

**EXECUTIVES IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

**NEW!**

Directors of DEI are a new breed. They hail from the world of human resources, but many have been recruited from other disciplines. The importance of these 39 specialists grew last year following the growing stature of the Black Lives Matter movement, the murder of George Floyd and the recognition of systemic racism. A number of them report directly to their company's president or CEO.

Many DEI managers opened channels to hear the grievances of Black and Latino employees. They launched speaker series and added resource groups. They expanded inclusion initiatives or established more concrete goals in recruiting and advancing minority staff along with metrics to measure progress. In some cases, job descriptions were rewritten to mitigate bias, and interview processes were reviewed. Some managers launched training for senior management to spotlight unconscious bias. The next years will show whether Chicago companies are willing and able to reform long-established practices that have hindered diversity and inclusion.

*By Judith Crown and Lisa Bertagnoli*

**CRAIN'S CHICAGO**  
NEWS & DATA POLITICS & OPINION



**Claude Robinson**  
*Executive vice president,  
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**DIVERSITY, EQUITY  
& INCLUSION**

*FY21 REPORT*

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