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CONNECTING LEADERS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM 2022-2023



NOMZANA AUGUSTIN

Senior Manager,
Partnerships & Strategic Initiatives
World Education Services –
Mariam Assefa Fund

Nomzana is the Senior Manager for Partnerships & Strategic Initiatives at World Education Services' Mariam Assefa Fund focusing her energies on leading the Fund's first racial equity and intersectional immigrant justice investment initiatives.

Prior to the Fund, Nomzana led community engagement efforts at MLT; facilitating connections and economic opportunities for 8,000 Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous professionals. She began her career at the USAID-supported Save the Children and FHI360 where she was a global economic development program officer supporting grantmaking in 13 countries.

In DC, Nomzana received her public policy master's from Johns Hopkins University. She is a mentor at StreetWise Partners; supports State Department's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI); led GoingVC's venture capital diversity & admissions functions; is a former job connections platform founder; and remains passionate about paying it forward. Nomzana enjoys quality time & brunch with friends and family, DJing, traveling, food, and wellness.

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TEMI F. BENNETT, ESQ.

Director of Policy,
if, a Foundation for
Radical Possibility

Chicago native Temi F. Bennett is the Director of Policy at if, A Foundation for Radical Possibility (formerly Consumer Health Foundation).

Temi leads several bodies of work within if's systems change and reparations strategies. She is responsible for engaging local governments in the D.C. metropolitan area as they develop and implement racially equitable and just policies that enable Black communities and other communities of color to thrive. In addition, Temi chairs Resourcing Radical Justice (RRJ), a funders collective that centers Black liberation as the path to a thriving greater Washington region.

Temi received her J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center (2009), where she served as Editor-in-Chief of the Georgetown Journal of Law & Modern Critical Race Perspectives. She graduated magna cum laude from Virginia State University with a B.A. in English (2005). Temi has a passion for art, critical race theory, sci-fi fantasy novels, and Japanese manga and anime.

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MONIQUE CARSWELL

Director,
Center for Racial Equity
Walmart.org

Monique Carswell is currently Director, Center for Racial Equity, Walmart.org. Her professional background includes marketing, business development, communications and philanthropy. Monique previously led corporate social responsibility at Comcast NBCUniversal, cause marketing and diversity outreach at Teach For America, and prior posts include CosmoGirl! (Hearst Corporation) and Black Enterprise magazines.

As a life-long learner and educator, she also taught for many years as an adjunct professor at both New York University and Fordham University. And as a former entrepreneur, Monique served as principal of her own agency, Myles Ahead Consulting, supporting clients such as Emma Bowen Foundation, Kaplan, and a host of small businesses.

In her spare time, Monique enjoys serving on the board of directors for the Symphony Orchestra of Northwest Arkansas (SoNA) and EarthShare, a national environmental nonprofit. Monique is a proud native of the westside of Chicago and member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

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CHRIS ELLIS

Program Officer,
Healthy Children and Adults
The Pittsburgh Foundation

Chris Ellis is the Program Officer for Healthy Children and Adults at The Pittsburgh Foundation. In this role, he manages a grantmaking portfolio to ensure that individuals and families have the resources they need to address their basic needs with a focus on promoting child care through improved access and quality. Chris also co-directs the Single Women Raising Children initiative and Small and Mighty grants program at the Foundation.

Through his grantmaking, Chris seeks to respond to the inequitable access to resources for Black-led organizations. He drives institutional change to advance racial justice and is passionate about building the power of Black communities.

Chris is also the Board Chair of New Sun Rising, an organization committed to building vibrant communities through culture, sustainability and opportunity. He is originally from Colorado and graduated from Colorado College with a degree in Economics. He lives in Pittsburgh with his wife and their son.

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TENAJA JORDAN, MPA

Research &
Communications Director,
CHANGE Philanthropy

Tenaja Jordan is a career nonprofit professional with over 10 years of experience in program and organizational development. She brings to the work an intersectional perspective informed by her lived experience as a black queer woman who navigated systems of support as a runaway youth. She has spoken and written about her experiences in such venues as New York magazine, Colorlines magazine, Blavity, and Huffington Post. In 2017 Tenaja was awarded one of 6 Voqal Fellowships for early-stage social entrepreneurs and founded her firm, My Seed of Change LLC, to provide organizational development consulting to small, community-led nonprofits working in the social justice space.

Prior to joining CHANGE Philanthropy, Tenaja served as Social Sector Outreach Manager at Foundation Center. Earlier in her career, she held program management roles at several other NY nonprofits. Tenaja served on the Board of Directors of the Hetrick Martin Institute: New York, was a founding board member of the Hetrick Martin Institute: New Jersey, and chaired the Advisory Board of the Peter Cicchino Youth Project. She holds an Interdisciplinary Studies BA from CUNY York College and earned her Master of Public Administration degree (MPA) from the CUNY Baruch College School of Public Affairs' Executive Program.

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CHRISTOPHER LEFLORE

Special Assistant to the President,
The Kresge Foundation

Christopher LeFlore is special assistant to the president at The Kresge Foundation. He joined the foundation in 2021. Previously, Chris worked as a policy analyst for the City of Detroit in the office of Council Member Ayers. Chris was also chosen as a fellow for the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation in summer 2017, and most recently worked at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago in their Community Development and Policy Studies division.

Chris holds a Master of Public Policy and Urban Planning from the University of Michigan, where he was a Dow Sustainability Fellow, studying how to leverage public private partnership to provide transportation to job seekers. Chris is the cofounder of two nonprofits, BankBlackUSA and M-Years. BankBlackUSA is a nationwide grassroots organization that works to promote financial inclusion and wealth building through research and advocacy. M-YEARS is an education enrichment program that teaches STEM, social studies and urban planning to middle school students in northeast Detroit.

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CAMARRAH MORGAN

Program Partner/Network Partner,
Max M. & Marjorie S.
Fisher Foundation

Camarrah is currently serving as Program Partner for early childhood education and impact investing at the Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation.

Camarrah has spent over 20 years supporting efforts to improve the early childhood system for children, parents, caregivers, and childcare providers. While operating a consulting business, Camarrah facilitated co-design of childcare quality improvement supports, co-led engagement of 12,000+ Detroiters to inform Detroit's Hope Starts Here early childhood framework and co-led a community derived parent/caregiver advocacy network. She worked with Mathematica, School Readiness Consulting, IFF, Global Health and Education Strategies and others. She was previously Child Care Network's Executive Director and Business Development Specialist at First Children's Finance.

Camarrah is a Global Leader in Early Childhood Development through the World Forum Foundation. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in accounting from Western Michigan University and a Master of Science in organizational leadership and administration from Concordia University.

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KENT OLDEN, MS

Communications Content Manager,
The Health Foundation for
Western & Central New York

Kent Olden is the Communications Content Manager for the Health Foundation for Western & Central New York, where he manages the creation of relevant communications and digital content. He also serves as Editor-At-Large for Bleu Magazine.

Kent's organizational memberships and participation include, but are not limited to: the Buffalo-Niagara Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America; the Buffalo Urban League Young Professionals; Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo's Emerging Philanthropists of Color and charitySTRONG; Buffalo Association of Black Journalists; Buffalo-Niagara Chapter of the National Action Network; Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, and more.

Kent is a graduate of Morehouse College and holds a Master of Science in Public Relations Management from Buffalo State College. He is receiving a certificate in Media Writing from The New School in partnership with Rolling Stone Magazine and has been accepted into the doctoral program in Business Administration at Northcentral University. He is the proud father of Kendall and Khloe Olden.

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TYRELL SMITH

Board Treasurer/
Community Engagement,
Smith Family Foundation

Tyrell is currently the acting Treasurer for the Smith Family Foundation of New Jersey, where he works in the capacity of Events Coordinator for the Community Engagement Department. Tyrell is also a Co-Founder and board chair of the South Ward Neighborhood Association, and a board member for Vonzella's Crown where he has a leadership role on the development committee.

He has been a board member of the Robert Wood Johnson Barnabas Hospital, Hamilton Campus, Young Professionals since 2017, with a leadership role on the nominating committee. It is his goal, once he ages off the Young Professionals board to become a member of the Hospital Board or the Foundation Board. Tyrell also sits on the Community Impact Alliance group for Robert Wood Johnson Hamilton Hospital.

Tyrell is currently attending Mercer County Community College for Business Management and the Lily Family School of Philanthropy. It is Tyrell's goal to receive his Doctorate in philanthropic studies with the hopes of running his own foundation one day.

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LASINDRA WEBB, MPA

Grant Manager,
Blue Cross NC Foundation

Lasindra is a Grants Manager with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation. Lasindra has worked at the Blue Cross NC Foundation since 2016. Prior to the Foundation, Lasindra worked with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of NC and with several nonprofits including the Emily Krzyzewski Center, Public Allies North Carolina, West End Community Center as well as served as an AmeriCorps VISTA.

Lasindra graduated from Elizabeth City State University in 2002 with an undergraduate degree in political science, and earned a MPA from North Carolina Central University in 2009.

Lasindra is native to North Carolina and actively involved in her community and volunteers in the following capacities: Chair of The West End - Juanita McNeil Scholarship Advisory Committee; Member of the Triangle Community Foundation, Community Economic Resilience Committee; Local Organizer for GirlTrek, and the founder of The SOAR Collective, an African American giving circle.

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