

The Team

Matthew Freeman - Matthew's passion for racial equity and social justice has led him across the United States and overseas, helping people connect across differences and begin to address the challenges that divide them. Matthew has worked with members of Congress, the Federal Reserve system, as well as organizations of all sizes, from Fortune 500's to small non-profits. With degrees in biology with an environmental studies focus and in the humanities, Matthew appreciates the opportunities to bring that diverse educational background to bear on challenging community problems. He is the author of *Overcoming Bias: Building Authentic Relationships Across Differences*.

Ebony Walden - Ebony Walden is a consultant and facilitator with over a decade of experience working to transform communities. Ebony is the Founder and Principal Consultant at Ebony Walden Consulting (EWC), an urban strategy firm based in Richmond, Virginia. At EWC, she works with a wide range of organizations to design and facilitate meetings, workshops, strategic plans and community engagement processes that explore race, equity and the creation of more just and inclusive communities. Before founding EWC, Ebony worked in local government and for non-profit organizations dedicated to citywide and neighborhood level revitalization. Currently, Ebony is an adjunct professor at Virginia Commonwealth University where she teaches Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the City. She is also on the faculty of Initiative of Change's Community Trustbuilding Fellowship, a program that develops the capacity of community leaders to overcome divisions of race and politics.

Carolina Bautista-Velez - Carolina Bautista-Velez is a Certified Professional Coach, facilitator and trainer with over 15 years of professional experience. She helps individuals, groups, and organizations move into change and action by identifying the internal and external ideas, beliefs and systems that are keeping them away from reaching their full potential. In addition to coaching and organizational consulting, she facilitates, designs and delivers trainings on such topics as intersectionality, working from a social justice framework, inclusion, conflict resolution, cultural humility, systems of oppression, mindfulness practices and trauma informed services. Carolina holds a degree in clinical psychology with a specialization in social psychology. She is an immigrant, Latinx, social changer who believes in the power of individual and collective liberation.

Dr. David Campt - With more than 25 years of professional experience, Dr. David Campt is considered a national expert in the areas of inclusion and equity, cultural competence, intergroup dialogue, and civic engagement. His insights about the keys to more inclusive and effective institutions and communities have been sought by small executive boards of fewer than a dozen to large-scale summits involving thousands of people. A former senior policy advisor on race in the White House, David is the author of several books and articles, including *The Little Book of Dialogue for Difficult Subjects*, and the *White Ally Toolkit*.

Laura Bowser - Laura Bowser consults with business leaders and global humanitarian organizations on HR strategy and shifting behavior and performance of employees. Her career began in international relations, at a large multinational corporation in Beijing, China, where she worked in operations and procurement. Over the course of the next decade, Laura's project management skills and political savvy were honed through positions in the Virginia House of Delegates, as well as a manager for a regional non-profit. Having formerly been CEO of an award-winning diversity, equity and inclusion firm, she's acutely aware of issues as she leads content development teams and guides leaders on navigating through difficult times.

Lacette Cross - Lacette is a community faith leader, activist and speaker affectionately called Rev. L. She is committed to working with people to help make Richmond, VA a more just city. Lacette is an experienced facilitator, speaker, and presenter in areas such as racial equity, intersectionality, sexuality, spirituality, gender and justice. She wears many hats as the pastor of Restoration Fellowship RVA, co-founder of Us Giving Richmond Connections (UGRC)/Black Pride RVA and business owner of Will You Be Whole. A continual learner, Lacette is a former fellow through the Equity+Health Fellowship and also a current doctor of ministry student at the School of Theology at Virginia Union University. Lacette works as a state strategic advisor for a foundation. In the moments that are hers, she spends time with friends, watches sci-fi action movies and reads good books.