19TH ANNUAL DIVERSITY ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCE

IT TAKES S.T.E.A.M. TO FUEL THE FUTURE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

FRI DAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2019

BASF North America Headquarters
100 Park Ave
Florham Park, NJ 07932
The American Conference on Diversity, established in 1948 as the National Conference of Christians and Jews, continues to build on a remarkable legacy and mission to create programs and activities relevant and vital to our society. We are proud to partner with NJ’s great institutions of higher learning delivering this annual conference for the 19th year. For the first time, we are bringing the discussion into the corporate sector. We are thrilled to host this year’s conference at BASF Corporation North American Headquarters, one of New Jersey’s largest sustainable buildings. The BASF North America Headquarters raises the bar for water efficiency, indoor air quality and lighting, energy consumption, and construction materials.

Today, the American Conference on Diversity touches the lives of thousands of youth who become influential leaders in New Jersey’s top corporations, schools, government, and communities. The American Conference on Diversity, its Board of Trustees, staff, and volunteers fully understand that rise in incidents of hate and the growing disparities across cultural divides have implications on our work. Diversity influences all aspects of our society and is essential to our ability to become more inclusive and just state.

These are critical times for the organization, and our mission has a higher demand to become a reality. Our ultimate goal is to make sure that individuals who participate in our programs serve as ambassadors for diversity, equity, and inclusion and are present at every decision-making table.

Your support and participation in this year’s conference help us continue this vital work of building more inclusive schools, workplaces, and communities. We thank you for your support, and we hope you continue to join us in our efforts.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Williams-Riley
President & CEO
WELCOME MESSAGE
FROM BASF

BASF is proud to host the 19th Annual Diversity Issues in Higher Education Conference, and welcome you to our North American headquarters. BASF is all about creating chemistry, and today we are honored to have the opportunity to create some great chemistry with dedicated individuals from across academia and the corporate sector.

It truly does take S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) to fuel the future of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We all share in making that future a reality. At BASF, we value the differences in our workforce as key to our success as a business, as well as our shared success as individuals and members of dynamic and inclusive teams. Our ability to solve our customers’ challenges requires people with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences in the S.T.E.A.M fields to anticipate and meet market needs in new ways, to bring great minds together, and to listen to each other with even greater purpose.

This is the important work we come together to do today, and we are more than up to the challenge! Welcome to a day of discovery, learning, and building up S.T.E.A.M to meet our shared opportunities for personal and professional growth. We are glad to have you with us.

Best,

Patricia Rossman
Chief Diversity Officer and HR Communications
CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

8:00 - 8:45 am
Exhibitor Set-Up

8:45 – 9:15 am
Check-in and Breakfast

9:20 – 9:40 am
Welcome and Opening Remarks

Elizabeth Williams-Riley, President & CEO
American Conference on Diversity

BASF Corporation
Alexander (Alec) Neumann-Loreck, SVP Human Resources North America
BASF

9:45 - 10:10 am
Keynote Address
Patricia Rossman, Chief Diversity Officer and HR Communications, BASF

10:15 - 11:25 am
Keynote Response Panel
Moderated by James E. Harris, President, New Jersey Association of Black Educators
- Tammy L. Bormann, Principal, TLB Collective
- Susan Koblin Scheir, Founder, ARTISIN, LLC
- David Mannai, Senior Director- Regulatory Operations and Nuclear Oversight, PSEG Nuclear
- Wesley Palmer Curl, VP Program Management & Business Ethics Officer, Prudential Financial
- Patricia Rossman, Chief Diversity Officer and HR Communications, BASF
- Daniela C. Velez, Founder and V.P. of Marketing & Development, Innovated Lab Designs Inc.

11:30 am – 12:50 pm
Concurrent Workshops

Unrecognized Racism and Permission to Ignore: The World of Whiteness and Illusion of RACE
How does a fish know it’s out of water? Research tells us that while individual acts of racism take their toll on society, the most significant social and economic inequalities have risen from institutional structures that have given benefits and advantages to one race at the expense of others. In this session, we will dive into the terrain of The World of Whiteness concerning racism and individual responses to it. Concepts to be explored include White privilege, the responsibility of one’s self, and the illusion of race.
Moderated by **Dallas Reed**, Vice President of Student Development and Campus Life, Berkeley College

- **Tammy L. Bormann**, Principal, TLB Collective
- **H. Roy Kaplan**, Adjunct Professor in Africana Studies, University of South Florida- Tampa
- **Lenny Washington**, Teacher of Psychology, Jackson Liberty High School
- **Dr. Byron K. Hargrove**, Professor of Psychology, Berkeley College

**Unpacking Encounters with Micro/Macro Aggressions**

While many can recognize and even disavow blatant expressions of bigotry, we are often quick to overlook, laugh at, or even justify less obvious denigrating messaging surrounding race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and other identities, also though they are just as damaging. Join our panel session for a discussion on how macro/micro aggressions show up in our communities, among our colleagues, on our campuses, and how we can challenge them.

Moderated by **Dr. Tyree Oredin**, Adjunct Professor, Montclair State University

- **Shrouk A. Allam**, Professional in Human Resources, New Jersey City University
- **Thomas Cruz**, Special Projects Coordinator, SAE & Associates
- **William Ryals**, Public Safety Officer, New Jersey City University
- **Daniela C. Velez**, Founder and Vice President of Marketing & Development, Innovated Lab Designs Inc.
- **Louis Wells**, Director of the Center for Applied Improvisation and Theater, NJIT

**Pathways to STEAM careers for Under-Represented Student Populations**

The panel will focus on strategies, organizations, and stakeholders that can mobilize support and pave the pathways to success for those who have been historically underrepresented in STEAM fields.

Moderated by **Eileen Poiani**, Special Assistant to the President and Professor of Mathematics, St. Peter’s University

- **Ngozi Claire Emenyeonu**, Area Development Director, New Jersey UNCF
- **Teresa Ganguly**, Corporate Mergers & Acquisitions Manager, BASF
- **Brian Mauro, Ph.D.**, Campus Executive, Fairleigh Dickinson University
- **Sally J. Nadler**, Director- Douglas Project for Rutgers Women in STEM, Rutgers University
- **Angela Parrinello**, Senior HR Specialist-Campus Relations, PSEG
Lunch *(Served Inside Breakout Rooms)*

**Student Panel**

**Under-Represented Students: The Struggles Within**

Moderated by **Rev. Forrest Pritchett, Ph.D.**, Director of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Program, Seton Hall University

There is power in the narrative of students that struggle with the impact of oppression and privilege on a college campus. Narratives develop a foundation for insight. Narrative power analysis is based on the recognition of the value of a story, its' truth, and, more significantly its' meaning. That is, what makes a story powerful is not only facts but how the story creates meaning in the hearts and minds of the listeners. A narrative power analysis seeks to understand the hidden building blocks of these narratives so that a narrative of liberation can better challenge them.

- **Deyna Aquino**, Saint Peter’s University
- **Tomas Alejandro Gonzalez**, Seton Hall University
- **Osei Poku Lindsay**, Seton Hall University
- **Caroly Patino**, College of Saint Elizabeth

**Door Prizes & Closing**
CONFERENCE WELCOME

Elizabeth Williams-Riley
President and CEO, American Conference on Diversity

Elizabeth Williams-Riley has more than two decades of experience in the field of diversity, equity, and inclusion nationally. Elizabeth is an award-winning diversity and inclusion expert. She was named Girls Scouts of America Jersey Shore 2015 Woman of Distinction, Diversity Journal’s 2013 Woman Worth Watching. Mrs. Williams-Riley is the 2016 NAACP New Brunswick Corporate Community Service Award Winner.

She is a sought after speaker and trainer to work with companies from the public and private sectors to implement inclusive leadership, healthcare disparities, conflict management, cross-cultural communication, advocacy, and social justice initiatives. She is featured in national publications, Diversity Best Practices, InSight Diversity, and Diversity Journal. Ms. Williams-Riley was a panelist at LinkedIn “DayIN” Trailblazers in Diversity forum and featured workshop presenter L’Oreal’s Executive Women’s Leadership Conference in New York, NY. Ms. Williams-Riley presented at the 2019 National Convention for the Young Democrats of America. Ms. Williams-Riley presented at 2018 Saint Thomas University Forum on Workplace Inclusion. Elizabeth specializes in customized diversity, equity, and inclusion training, strategic planning, and experiential learning. Elizabeth is a graduate of the University of Central FL with a BA in Advertising and Public Relations. She is a member of the Capital Region Minority Chamber of Commerce Board, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., National Association of Professional Women, and a 2014 Edward J. Bloustein School of Public Policy at Rutgers the State University Lead New Jersey Fellow, the and Former President of the NAACP Perth Amboy Area Branch.

Alexander (Alec) Neumann-Loreck
SVP Human Resources North America, BASF

Alexander Neumann-Loreck is the Senior Vice President of Human Resources for BASF North America with $17.9 billion in sales and over 18,000 employees in the U.S., Canada, Mexico and Central America.

He developed a comprehensive North American human resources strategy including Diversity/Inclusion, Talent Acquisition, Employee and Leadership Development, Workforce Analytics and Planning.

Alec is responsible for the Employee/Manager Call Center, Payroll, the Leave of Absence team, Labor and Union Relations, Executive HR as well as Compensation and Benefits Alec led, designed and implemented a major HR transformation to increase HR effectiveness and align HR with business strategy including an expansion of the Employee Call Center and creation of a Management Call Center.

Alec has been with BASF for 26 years serving in various roles. He worked in logistics and controlling in the Plastic Materials Group, and was the regional controller for Asia, based in Hong Kong.
After moving back to New Jersey he was the assistant to the BASF Board member responsible for North America, focusing on restructuring and strategy projects. He then joined the Chemical Intermediates marketing team as a business manager with responsibilities for BDO and derivatives and Polyalcohols and subsequently Core Specialties and Amines.

Alec was the Director of Business Controlling for the Performance Materials Group before becoming Vice President of Corporate HR Services in 2014. He has served in his current position since 2017.

Prior to joining BASF, Alec worked as a Senior Trust Officer in the Financial Institutions Group of Citibank in New York, with account responsibility for a number of pension funds and insurance companies.

Alec graduated from St. Mary's International School in Japan with an International Baccalaureate diploma. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Tufts University in History as well as International Relations. Alec earned his MBA in finance from the Wharton School.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

**Patricia Rossman**

*Chief Diversity Officer and HR Communications, BASF*

Patricia Rossman was appointed to her current position in August, 2010. As Chief Diversity + Inclusion Officer, she is responsible for providing strategic leadership to help BASF Corporation achieve its goals of creating a more diverse and inclusive work environment, and being known internally and externally as a top company for Diversity + Inclusion. This includes leadership of the Diversity + Inclusion Council, and oversight of its critical recruitment, retention, and diversity education activities. Pat is also responsible for providing strategic leadership in all aspects of Human Resources Communications. She is a member of the BASF Global Diversity + Inclusion team, the BASF North American Leadership Team, Human Resources Council, Diversity + Inclusion Council, and the Corporate Communications Leadership Team. Under her leadership, BASF has been named by DiversityInc. As one of the Top 50 Companies for Diversity, ranking #26 in 2014. She also serves as a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Conference on Diversity.

Patricia joined BASF through the Ciba integration. She had served as Ciba’s Vice President, Corporate Communications & Public Affairs for the Americas Region. Her responsibilities included advancing Ciba’s corporate reputation and brand, with responsibility for employee communications, government relations, issues management, marketing communications, and site/community relations. She served as a member of Ciba’s North American Leadership Team, South American Business Leadership Team, and Global Communications Leadership Team. She also served as the Executive Director of the Ciba Foundation, a $6 million philanthropic foundation creating science education and workforce development partnerships in communities surrounding Ciba’s major site locations.

Pat has more than 20 years of Communications and HR experience working in the chemical, technology, and service industries.
CONFERENCE MODERATORS

James E. Harris
President, New Jersey Association of Black Educators

James E. Harris earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Studies with an NJ Secondary School Certification from Montclair State University. He holds a Master of Arts Degree in Student Personnel Services from Montclair State University and another Master of Arts Degree in Public Administration from New York University. He received a certificate in Counseling from Harvard University. He is a retired Major from the New Jersey Army National Guard.

Mr. Harris recently retired from the position of Associate Dean of Students and University Ombudsman at Montclair State University. For many years, Mr. Harris has been an active member of the Trustee Board of Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church.

He is President of the New Jersey Association of Black Educators (NJABE). Harris also currently serves as First VP and Education Chair of Montclair Branch NAACP. Mr. Harris is Past President of the NJ State Conference of Branches. He is active on several Boards, including the New Jersey Amistad Commission. Harris has testified before the State Legislature for policies to improve the quality of life for people. He has appeared on television and radio and is a frequent guest speaker at workshops and conferences.

Numerous awards have been bestowed on Mr. Harris, some of which include the New Jersey Association of Black Educators, New Jersey Black United Fund, New Jersey Alliance of Black School Educators; and he has been cited several times in Who’s Who Among American Educators.

Tyree Oredein, DrPH
Adjunct Professor, Montclair State University

Dr. Tyree Oredein (she/her/hers) has dedicated her career to serving the LGBTQ+ community and other marginalized groups. Dr. Oredein has been developing and delivering LGBTQ+ related Professional Development training and also facilitates LGBTQ+ inclusive workshops in schools and community groups surrounding sexuality, HIV/AIDS & sexual health, self-esteem, healthy relationships, consent, media literacy, and social justice and has worked extensively with QTPOC youth.

Dr. Oredein received her Bachelor’s Degree from Wellesley College, her Masters of Public Health (MPH) from Hunter College, and her Doctorate of Public Health (DrPH) from Rutgers University. In addition to her posts with Hudson Pride Center and Garden State Equality, she also held positions with the Marion Bolden Student Center, Select Media, Inc, and most recently with American Conference on Diversity. Currently, she serves on the Board of Directors for Say Ah!, a non-profit agency dedicated to increasing health literacy, is an adjunct professor at Montclair State University in the Department of Public Health, serves as a Special State Officer on the Healthy New Jersey 2030 Advisory Council under the auspices of the NJ Department of Health, and sits on the Wellesley Racial Justice Initiative Leadership Collective.
Eileen Poiani

*Special Assistant to the President and Professor of Mathematics, Saint Peter’s University*

As Chair of the Sustainability Council, she oversees the sustainable practices of the University which is a 2008 signatory of the Climate Leadership Network. For 12 years she was Vice President for Student Affairs and was Assistant to four previous presidents of Saint Peter’s with responsibilities including trustee matters, accreditation, strategic planning, and institutional research. Graduate of Douglass College, Dr. Poiani earned her doctorate in Mathematics from Rutgers University.

Among her honors are recognition as a NJ Woman of Achievement; induction into the Nutley Hall of Fame and the Italian American National Hall of Fame; Sr. Rose Thering Award from the NJ Commission on Holocaust/Genocide Education; Hudson County Humanitarian Award from the American Conference on Diversity; Honorary Alumna of Saint Peter’s University. Dr. Poiani served as a Charter Trustee of Rutgers University, a trustee of Saint Peter’s Preparatory School and of the Nutley Public Library, and a member of the National Seminar on Jesuit Higher Education. She is currently a member of the Douglass Residential College Advisory Board and the Hoboken Catholic Academy Advisory Board, and a public member of the NJ State Board of Accountancy. She was the first woman elected president of Pi Mu Epsilon, the national honorary mathematics society, in its 75-year history.

Prof. Poiani chaired the U.S. Commission on Mathematical Instruction for the National Academy of Sciences; served as Governor of the NJ Section; and was the founding director of the Mathematical Association of America’s Women and Mathematics lectureship program. A recipient of the MAA NJ Section Award for Distinguished College Teaching, she has long been engaged in encouraging underrepresented groups to pursue their study of mathematics. She has published articles and made presentations on mathematics intervention programs, mathematics, strategic planning, and higher education.

Rev. Forrest M. Pritchett Ph. D.

*Director of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Program, Seton Hall University*

Rev. Dr. Pritchett is currently Director of Special Projects and an Adjunct Professor in Africana, Religious, the University Core, and Interdisciplinary Studies at Seton Hall University. He is also the Program Director for the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Program and the SHU Gospel Choir. He currently serves as an advisor to numerous student cultural organizations including the MLK Scholars. He was awarded Seton Hall University’s Highest Honor, the 2003 McQuaid Medal.

He worked at numerous universities during his fifty-year career, including short term assignments at Fairleigh Dickinson and Princeton. At Rider, William Patterson, and Seton Hall Universities, he is known as a social justice ambassador. At each institution, he helped to develop courses that reflected the experiences of those who were impacted negatively impacted by race, class, sex, or ability.

He is affiliated with numerous advocacy organizations throughout the African diaspora, including the nation’s oldest civil rights organization, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and is a frequent speaker/instructor in the state prison system. He and his wife are actively involved in providing ministry to the families of the incarcerated and reentry prisoners.
Dr. Dallas Reed

Vice President of Student Development and Campus Life, Berkeley College

Dallas Reed was named Vice President, Student Development and Campus Life, in 2013. In this role, she provides vision and leadership for all student success programs, including student development, student activities, athletics, residence life, and counseling.

Dr. Reed previously served as Berkeley College Associate Vice President, Student Development and Campus Life, and Dean, Student Development and Campus Life, New York. Before coming to Berkeley College in 2011, she served as Associate Vice President for Student Life at Mississippi Valley State University in Itta Bena, MS.

In 2015, Dr. Reed was recognized by the YWCA at the 42nd Annual Academy of Women Leaders Salute Luncheon. Dr. Reed participated in the HERS Bryn Mawr Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration in 2013. She was the recipient of the Berkeley College Associate of the Year award in Leadership in 2012.

Dr. Reed holds a Ph.D. in Urban Higher Education from Jackson State University in Jackson, MS; an M.S.O.L. (Masters of Science in Organizational Leadership) from Pfeiffer University in Charlotte, NC; and a B.A. in General Arts and Sciences with an emphasis in Public Relations and Management from Pennsylvania State University in University Park, PA.

She is a dedicated, results-oriented, and goal-driven professional, with proven leadership skills in operations management, process improvement, and program development; complemented with a strong background in teaching and motivating students. Dr. Reed is recognized as a relationship builder and motivational team leader, with keen expertise in leading and coordinating multicultural teams. She is adept at conceptualizing and implementing student-oriented services and co-curricular programs to build a stable and ingenious learning environment, foster educational enrichment, and positively motivate students to reach their maximum potentials.

CONFERENCE PANELISTS

Shrouk A. Allam

Professional in Human Resources, New Jersey City University

Shrouk Allam, attained her certification as a Professional in Human Resources through the Society for Human Resource Management and HRCI, USA, in 2010, recertified until 2022.

Shrouk enjoys an extensive HR experience, gained from working with various organizations such as the New Jersey City University, and previously Raya Holding, Fingerprint Consultancy, HF-Fire international, AlMadina with Advanced technology, and worked as a Sr. HR consultant with HR Invest Consultancy before her relocation to USA.

She has over Sixteen years of HR experience in different fields of Human Resources.

After attaining BA in Accounting from the Faculty of Commerce- English Section- Cairo University, Shrouk pursued a Human Resources professional Certificate program through the Institute of Management Development at the American University in Cairo (AUC), followed by an international certificate from the International of Human Resources Management Education (IHRME) - USA in Compensation Management, then the PHR in 2010 and currently attaining her master degree in Organizational Leadership and Management from the New Jersey City University.
Shrouk is a member of several professional associations such as the Society for Human Resource Management, (SHRM), and the Egyptian Human Resource Management Association, EHRMA. Shrouk is a founding member of SHRM Member Forum Cairo, Now Called (EHRD).

Since her relocation to USA she had an increased interest to work toward discrimination and minority issues in the community and has shown a great passion in bridging the gap for race, ethnicity and religion.

Deyna Aquino

Student, Saint Peter’s University

DEYNA AQUINO is a junior majoring in Biology and minoring in Psychology. “People with great passion can make the impossible happen” Just as the quote explains Deyna has found herself to be greatly passionate about many things, thus she has found herself to be really busy as well. She plays many roles on campus, so if you see her around she might be giving a tour of the campus because she is a Pavo Ambassador, or you might see her late at night walking the halls of the residence halls because she is a Resident Assistant. Her dream is to be a surgeon and give back to unrepresentative communities and make a change in someone’s world.

Tammy L. Bormann

Principal, The TLB Collective

Since 1996, Tammy Bormann and the TLB Collective have researched, designed and facilitated dialogue-based organizational change processes that gather and analyze the insights and experiences of those who work in the organization; provide targeted learning experiences to disseminate knowledge about historic and contemporary systems of inequity and discrimination; build the capacity of leaders and staff at all levels to recognize and analyze how systems of inequity and exclusion show up in their own organizations; and enable organizational visioning and planning to replace inequitable and exclusive policies, practices, behaviors and norms with strategies that increase diversity, embody inclusion and dismantle inequity.

Tammy has chaired the Board of Directors of the dance company Urban Bush Women (UBW) since 2006. In this capacity, she has prepared UBW dancers to employ dialogue processes in their performance work and social justice community engagement programs, as they pursue the UBW vision to use “movement to build a movement.” She has twice served as a mentor with the Dance/USA Institute for Leadership Training and facilitated a National Voices panel on Race in Dance for the annual Dance/NYC symposium in 2015.

Tammy is one of four women on the Design and Facilitation Team for THE EQUITY PROJECT: Increasing the Presence of Blacks in Ballet, a three-year initiative sponsored by Dance Theatre of Harlem, The International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD), and Dance/USA and funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Launched in 2018, THE EQUITY PROJECT seeks to create a learning community that ignites field-wide change among artistic and executive leaders from 21 professional ballet organizations. We provide education, coaching and strategies for increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion, particularly for Black professionals, across the ballet industry.
In 2016-2017, she served as the dialogue consultant for the Coalition’s national initiative, Brown v. Board to Ferguson: Fostering Dialogue on Education, Incarceration and Civil Rights. In 2017, she designed and facilitated a Coalition conference in Entebbe, Uganda to prepare South Sudanese civil society leaders to facilitate community-based dialogue for transitional justice across South Sudan.

Tammy earned her BA in French and Communication Studies from Muhlenberg College and an Ed.M. from Harvard University. She chairs the boards of Urban Bush Women and Arts Horizons, an arts-in-education organization, and serves as Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of Muhlenberg College. She is a former chair of the Myhelan Cultural Art Center, a community center dedicated to using the visual and performing arts to build cross-cultural understanding nationally and internationally. Tammy is a member of the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation and a recipient of the Woman of Distinction Award from the New Jersey Boy Scouts of America.

**Thomas Cruz**

*Special Projects Coordinator, SAE & Associates*

Thomas Cruz (known on the podcast as TAJ) created The Breaking the Barrier Podcast to address social barriers that hinder society’s progression toward equality. During the podcast, Thomas and William Ryals (known on the podcast as Will) tackle some of the pressing social issues (ranging from racism to gender bias) that are influencing current events, whether in pop culture, across the globe, or somewhere in between. Thomas and William grew up in Jersey City, a city often recognized as the most diverse in the United States. As firm believers in the notion that people are products of their environment, the podcast provides an avenue for them to pay homage to diversity.

Thomas Cruz currently works at SAE & Associates (SAE), a consulting firm that develops solution tools for provider agencies to improve overall impact on their target populations. As Special Projects Coordinator, Thomas coordinates and manages internal and external projects involving various client organizations (nonprofits, hospitals, health plans, etc., ranging from startups to high-level), SAE staff, and SAE’s senior consultants. Outside of SAE’s office, he shifts focus to his passion for promoting diversity and empowering the youth.

Thomas is the Creator, the Producer, a Co-Host, and a Content Developer of The Breaking the Barrier Podcast. As one of his high school’s delegates chosen to participate in the American Conference on Diversity’s Lead for Diversity program in 2007, he was introduced to the concept of breaking barriers of social bias and bigotry. Since then, he knew he wanted to wear this concept as a mission. Fast forward to December 2018: the first episode of The Breaking the Barrier Podcast was released. Thomas wants the podcast to encourage young people to be open-minded, engage in healthy dialogue with their peers, and become positive leaders for the future. Mr. Cruz is also a graduate of the ACOD Lead for Diversity Institute.
Wesley Palmer Curl  
*VP Program Management & Business Ethics Officer, Prudential Financial*

Wesley Palmer Curl is Vice President, Program Management in the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) at Prudential. In this role, he is responsible for leading and facilitating employee communications, recognition and engagement within the Global Business & Technology Solutions department and across the company’s global technology community.

He also serves as the department's Business Ethics Officer where he is responsible for promoting Prudential's Code of Conduct, Reporting Concerns and Non-Retaliation policy, and advancing the company’s ethics awareness strategy.

Prior to Prudential, Palmer Curl was an Attorney Advisor to the General Counsel at the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in Washington, D.C. He also worked in the Solicitor's Office of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) in Washington for several years.

He received his B.A. degree in History from Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia and his law degree from the George Washington University National Law Center in Washington, D.C. He is also a trained mediator and life coach.

Ngozi Claire Emenyeonu  
*Area Development Director, New Jersey UNCF*

Ngozi Emenyeonu (pronounced n-GOH-zee EH-me-N-yonu) is currently the Area Development Director for UNCF New Jersey area office. In this role, she is responsible for the operations of the UNCF NJ Area Office, securing fundraising support for over 200 NJ students receiving support annually from UNCF. Ngozi is a fundraising professional with a wide range of expertise in nonprofit management, fund development, program development and evaluation, board development and management, volunteer coordination and management, and event management and communication strategies.

Prior to joining UNCF, Ngozi served in leadership roles for several non-profit organizations, including Link Community School, a private middle school in Newark, Independence: A Family of Services, and Newark Emergency Services for Families.

Ngozi considers herself an advocate for causes that diminish inequalities for underserved groups; a major reason she has focused her career in these arenas. She earned a BA in Communication Studies from Montclair State University.

A current resident of West Orange, NJ, Ngozi comes from a family of educators: both parents were teachers; her siblings (three brothers), and twin sister are professors in universities. Growing up in a household focused on concern for others, has made her professional trajectory in the public service sector a natural fit.

Outside of work, Ngozi spends time with her two nieces--Ugo and Ada, reads widely, enjoys watching cultural documentaries, and travels occasionally.
Teresa Ganguly
*Corporate Mergers & Acquisitions Manager, BASF*

Tomas Alejandro Gonzalez
*Student, Seton Hall University*

Tomas Alejandro Gonzalez is a current freshman at Seton Hall University. He is in the five year B.S./M.B.A Program at the Stillman School of Business with a minor in Music, with aspirations to work in the music industry. He is a member of the Adelante Latino Student Organization and the Joseph A. Unanue Latino Institute.

Dr. Byron K. Hargrove
*Professor, Berkeley College*

Dr. Hargrove is a counseling psychologist who teaches, inspires, and mentors students. In his 25 years of higher education, Dr. Hargrove has worked as an educator, director, dean of students, counseling center staff psychologist, and research mentor for graduate/doctoral students at eight diverse institutions (i.e., private, urban, Catholic, Jesuit, and research universities) in North Carolina, Maryland, Washington, D.C., New Jersey, and New York. He has passionately mentored and taught numerous students ranging in age (17-to-74 years) and course level (i.e., from undergraduate to master’s, and doctoral students).

Currently, Dr. Hargrove is a full-time Psychology Professor and Honors Program Director at Berkeley College in New Jersey/New York. Dr. Hargrove enjoys teaching onsite and online undergraduate courses in social psychology, psychology, and human relations and presenting on best practices in teaching and learning. He has also taught graduate and doctoral courses in counseling and career development, diversity, research methods, and counseling psychology.

Dr. Hargrove has been the recipient of several honors over the last 16 years while at Berkeley College including the Liberal Arts Faculty of the Year Award in 2011 and the Master Teacher Distinction Award in 2017. He received several honorable-mention employee awards including Student-Centered Honorable Mention Awards (2007, 2012) and an Innovation Honorable Mention Award (2014). He was a graduate of the 2007 Leadership Westchester Program and the 2014 Leadership Berkeley Program. Dr. Hargrove has served as the Commencement Faculty Marshall numerous times and was the Faculty Speaker at the 2017 Commencement Ceremony.

His educational background is comprised of a Bachelors’ degree in Psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1992) and his M.A. (1995) and PhD (1997) in Counseling Psychology from the University of Maryland at College Park. He received the APA Minority Fellowship during his graduate education.
Dr. Hargrove has worked as a consultant at various organizations and continues to serve as a peer reviewer for the APA Professional Psychology: Research & Practice journal. In his spare time, Dr. Hargrove enjoys chairing advising dissertations for doctoral students enrolled in the St. John Fischer College Executive Leadership Ed.D. Program housed at the Iona College campus in New York.

Finally, Dr. Hargrove is a father of three sons (ranging from 1 to 21), a husband, son, and a brother. He has lived in four states – North Carolina, Maryland, New Jersey, and New York. His leisure interests include hiking, photography, sports, ping-pong, and watching movies.

H. Roy Kaplan
Adjunct Professor in Africana Studies, University of South Florida- Tampa

H. Roy Kaplan earned a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

His recent work experience includes his current role as Adjunct Professor, Dept. of Africana Studies, University of South Florida, Tampa. He has also served as Equity Officer for the Pasco County Florida School District for the U.S. Dept. of Education, 2013-2018 and Executive Director of The National Conference of Christians and Jews, Tampa Bay, 1989-2004.

His recent awards and honors include the Humanitarian Award presented by DayStar Human Relations organization, in April, 2019. He also received the Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by the Hillsborough County Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Interfaith Committee, in January of 2019. He was the Kennedy Family Scholar in Residence, Dept. of Art History, University of South Florida, Tampa, during the Spring of 2018. He has been recognized for his work in Race and Ethnic Relations, Legalized Gambling, Social Problems, Non-profit Management for more than 30 years.

In addition to television appearances on The Today Show (NBC), Sunday Today, CBS Morning Show, CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Good Morning America, Canada AM, CBN 700 Club, and Prime Time Live, H. Roy Kaplan has authored and edited the following books:


Osei Poku Lindsay
Student, Seton Hall University

Osei Poku Lindsay is from Newark, New Jersey and is a junior majoring in biochemistry at Seton Hall University. He is on the pre-medical track and will become a pediatrician. Due to growing up in Ghana, he wants to work in international medicine, primarily with Doctors Without Borders, and aspires to one day return to his home country of Ghana in order to establish more health clinics and hospitals. Currently, he is actively involved with different organizations on the Seton Hall campus, including the Martin Luther King Scholarship Association, Black Men of Standard, the African Student Association, and the Pre-Medical Pre-Dental Plus Program.
David Mannai
Senior Director - Regulatory Operations and Nuclear Oversight, PSEG

David Mannai joined PSEG Nuclear as Senior Director – Regulatory Operations and Nuclear Oversight in November 2016. His responsibilities include oversight of the Nuclear Security, Emergency Preparedness, Regulatory Assurance, Nuclear Licensing, and Nuclear Oversight, Employee Concerns Program, Environmental Compliance, Radiological Ground Water Protection Program, Radiological Environmental, and Effluents Monitoring Program, and Estuary Enhancement Project departments. He has more than 36 years of nuclear industry experience, including 20 years with Entergy. He spent five years as the Senior Manager of Fleet Regulatory Assurance for Entergy. In that position, he was responsible for all aspects of regulatory compliance and nuclear licensing for Entergy’s northern fleet – Pilgrim, Vermont Yankee, Indian Point, Fitzpatrick, and Palisades.

Mannai came to Entergy Vermont Yankee in May, 1997, and held various management positions of in Reactor Engineering and Fuels, Safety Analysis, Process Computer Engineering, Refueling Floor Oversight, and Licensing. He completed a Senior Reactor Operator Certification in 2001. He went into the Entergy Corporate position of Manager External Affairs in 2010. Dave also had 6 years of service with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission as a Resident Inspector at the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station and Seabrook Station.

His background includes 8 years of service as a nuclear test engineer for the Department of Navy in the Naval Nuclear Power Program where he held several positions at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard including Chief Test Engineer. Mannai graduated from Massachusetts Maritime Academy in 1983 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Engineering, a U.S. Coast Guard License as a Third Assistant Engineer, and a Commission as an Officer in the U.S. Naval Reserve. In 1998, he achieved the rank of Commander.

Brian Mauro, Ph.D.
Campus Executive, Fairleigh Dickinson University

Brian Mauro possesses more than 25 years of experience as a higher education administrator. For the past 12 years, he has worked at Fairleigh Dickinson University – Florham campus. Prior to joining FDU, Brian held student affairs positions at Muhlenberg College and Penn State University.

He first joined FDU in 2008 as Dean of Students. During his four years in that position, he helped improve campus life and made it a priority to put the well-being of FDU students first. In 2012 Brian was appointed Associate Campus Provost, and as such was involved in the overall management of the Florham Campus. He worked closely with faculty and others to enhance several areas, including the first-year seminar, the freshmen reading program, and service-learning. Brian’s love for service-learning has enabled him to lead more than 20 college student groups on service trips to places such as: New Orleans, Costa Rica, Navajo Nation, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic In 2017, Brian was appointed as the Florham Campus Executive. Over the past 10+ plus years with FDU, Brian has demonstrated a broad understanding of the Florham Campus and is committed to the continual improvement of the campus and the culture. This is best demonstrated by a more than 10 percent increase in student success – retention and graduation rates.

Brian has been happily married for more than 23 years. Together, he and his wife (Marie) are proud parents of two rambunctious teenage boys.
Sally J. Nadler
Director - Douglas Project for Rutgers Women in STEM, Rutgers University

Sally is the Interim Assistant Dean / Director – Douglass Project for Rutgers Women in STEM – Rutgers University Chair – NJ Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education. She is a well-respected energy and workforce development professional within the state of NJ.

Before Sally’s retirement from PSEG last summer, she had over 30 years’ experience in a diverse range of operations, technical, and managerial positions for the company. As the Manager of Workforce Development, Sally was responsible for overseeing a cross-section of talent acquisition pipeline initiatives for PSEG, including the college relations and diversity outreach functions, which included the company’s recruitment initiatives for women, people of color, veterans and individuals with disabilities. During her tenure, Sally led the design and implementation of many award-winning, best practice, and industry-recognized outreach and recruiting programs.

Most recently, Sally worked with NJIT and the NJ Advanced Manufacturing Talent Network to implement and register the MechaFORCE™ – Registered Internship Manufacturing Program (M-RIM). In 2013, Sally was appointed by the governor to the NJ State Employment and Training Commission, SETC, and was named the chair of the NJ State Energy Sector Partnership Council, SESP, where she oversaw the allocation of grant funding for Renewable and Sustainable Energy Training Programs. Sally was also appointed to serve on the NJ State Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education, of which she now serves as chair.

She holds an AAS degree in Business Management from Middlesex County College, a BS in Management from Rutgers Business School, and a Master of Arts in Leadership from Bellevue University.

Angela Parrinello
University Relations Lead & Human Resources Business Partner, PSEG

Angela Parrinello is an experienced Senior Human Resources Leader with a demonstrated history of working in the utilities industry, electronics manufacturing, and financial services. Over the course of her career, Angela has focused on various Human resources functions including: Career Development, Human Resources Business Partner, Management with a focus on University Relations. Angela joined PSEG in 2014 as a Sr. Human Resources Specialist – University Relations. Today she is the University Relations Lead overseeing the operations for New Jersey and Long Island. During her time with the organization, Angela has had many developmental opportunities to better develop her Human Resources knowledge and leadership skills. She is actively involved in many of the PSEG Employee Resources Groups to stay immersed in the PSEG Organizational Culture of giving back to the community.

Carolay Patino
Student, College of Saint Elizabeth

Carolay Patino is a third-year student at the College of St. Elizabeth. She Patino lives in Paterson, NJ, and is originally from the Dominican Republic. She is a biology major. On campus, her roles vary; she is a Community Assistant and also the President of STAC (the Student Take Action Club). Her career goal is to become a Physician Assistant.
William Ryals
Public Safety Officer, New Jersey City University

William Ryals currently works as a Public Safety Officer at New Jersey City University (NJCU). He serves one of the most diverse universities in Jersey City. William holds a BS in Criminal Justice from NJCU and is a current graduate student at the same school.

When he is off-duty, William is a Co-Host and a Content Developer of The Breaking the Barrier Podcast, where he tackles pressing issues against diversity and brings awareness to the existing challenges that hinder progress toward equality among the human race. After attending the American Conference on Diversity’s Lead for Diversity program in 2007 just before his Junior year of high school, he learned the importance of discussing social injustices and bringing barriers of the disenfranchised to light. William believes that to create a more progressive and collaborative world, and there must continue to be open and honest dialogue among every walk of life. The podcast serves as an ideal platform for William to encourage people to have authentic, respectful, and informed discussions with each other about critical social issues. Mr. Ryals is also a graduate of the ACOD Lead for Diversity Institute.

Susan Koblin Schear
Founder, ARTISIN, LLC.

Susan Koblin Schear founded ARTISIN, LLC in 1995 to offer comprehensive business development services to the arts and cultural sectors, both public and private. Her values, steeped in the arts, business, and community, led her to launch the company and focus it on seeing the arts transform the lives of artists, arts organizations, and the communities they serve. She advocates that mutually beneficial outcomes are realized when encouraging collaboration between arts, business, and other sectors, and brings this passion to her work within diverse, continually evolving and changing communities. She is a passionate and unrelenting advocate for the arts ensuring the arts are always at the table and are a means to facilitate and further communication and expression; to welcome, value and respect all voices, and to directly address voids in diversity, equity, access, and inclusion.

Since its founding, Schear has maintained an academic thread in her work by serving for 14 years as a visiting assistant professor at Pratt Institute’s Graduate Arts and Cultural Management Program where she was also a thesis advisor. She previously taught business classes for creative entrepreneurs and artists at NYU and FIT. And, she coaches artists, creative entrepreneurs, and people with hybrid careers, further maintaining that academic thread in her work. Wanting to formalize this academic thread, even more, she has recently applied to be a certified coach in the arts whereby she would specifically focus on leading arts organizations to improve diversity, equity, access, and inclusion.

Schear is also well-versed in community cultural planning. In 2016 she was responsible for the planning, management, completion, and public announcement of Newark Creates, a 24-month, asset-based, cross-sector, inclusive, community cultural plan, conducted on behalf of the Mayor’s office by Newark Arts where she was the Deputy Director at the time. She ensured that advancing diversity, equity, access, and inclusion were inherent goals of not only that plan but all other community cultural plans that she has led. She thrives when leading community cultural planning where the arts are the underpinning, the foundation, and the “rebar,” the “A” of S.T.E.A.M, addressing and advancing diversity, equity, access, and inclusion.
A final academic aspect of Schear’s work involves the conducting of board retreats, focus groups, town hall meetings and workshops. These are all teaching opportunities wherein again she can advocate to advance diversity, equity, access, and inclusion to those in the arts.

Schear received an award from ArtPride NJ for her disaster relief efforts after Superstorm Sandy, where access, inclusion, and equity were tremendously compromised impacting diverse, disadvantaged communities. She is a fellow of Lead NJ and was honored as one of the Best Fifty Women in Business by NJBIZ. She was selected to participate in training as an Interim Executive Director with the Support Center; she recently was engaged to guide an organization that focuses on serving diverse, differently-abled students in the arts who would otherwise be compromised by a lack of equity, access, and inclusion.

She serves on the Board of Craft in America and is a former trustee of several arts-focused organizations that serve diverse, challenged communities and are threatened by a lack of equity, inclusion, and access. She also serves on the Program and Services Committee for ArtPride NJ, the SMU Data Arts committee, the Newark Museum Business and Community Council, and the WBGO Community Advisory Board.

**Daniela Carolina Velez**  
*Founder and Vice President of Marketing & Development, Innovated Lab Designs Inc.*

Venezuela native, undocumented, nonbinary, and a feminist, Daniela C. Velez is the Founder and Vice President of Marketing & Development of Innovated Lab Designs Inc. An all-female STEM company begun in September 2016. Innovated Lab Designs developed the Newton’s Bench Kit, which allows students to take an online physics lab course at Rowan College of Burlington County and the Galileo’s Kit, which will enable students to take astronomy courses online also with Rowan College at Burlington County.

Ms. Velez is currently also the Director of undocuJersey, an organization created to provide educational resources to undocumented and documented students with undocumented parents yearning to pursue higher education. As Director she works with the rest of her team to create partnerships with high schools, school districts, institutions of higher education, and other NJ based organizations, we have hosted numerous college fairs, professional development workshops, and either facilitated or presented at the conference. In the first year of undocuJersey formal existence, we have touched over 1,500 students, educators, and administrators in the state of New Jersey. As we move forward, this organization will continue to be the best support system for mixed-status and undocumented students. Ms. Velez has been involved in NJ Immigrant Rights movement since 2011 and has been part of different panels and events regarding the work of social justice for the immigrant community. Before that, she worked for New Jersey Business and Industry Association in the membership department. While working with NJ businesses she taught learn focused on getting them exposure to all the benefits as well as lobbying that NJBIA offers. Not only that Ms. Velez was also involved in the outreach of college readiness program for the Burlington County region and homeless prevention program as well, with a non-profit organization called Servicios Latinos.

In 2016 Ms. Velez earned two associate degrees from Rowan College at Burlington County, one in Engineering and one in Business Administration. Ms. Velez is currently finishing her bachelor’s as a student of Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, majoring in Public Policy and a minor in Women and Gender Studies both from Rutgers University-New Brunswick.
Lenny Washington
Teacher of Psychology, Jackson Liberty High School

Lenny Washington is a Military Veteran, a certified Teacher, Life Coach, and Motivational Speaker. Lenny currently works as a Psychology/Education Adjunct Professor for Rowan College at Burlington County and Temple University, and as a Teacher of Psychology for Jackson Liberty High School.

After a 6 year career as a Space Systems Operator in the US Air Force, Lenny pursued education to become an educator. Throughout the years, Lenny has been very fortunate to teach thousands of talented college students at various colleges and universities such as Monmouth University, Mercer County Community College, Rowan College at Burlington County, and Temple University. Lenny believes in fostering positive learning experiences and empowering students to their very best selves and grow into lifelong learners.

Lenny holds a Bachelor’s degree from Southern Illinois University- Carbondale in Psychology and a Masters of Education degree w/ honors from Strayer University.

Louis Wells
Director of the Center for Applied Improvisation and Theater, NJIT

Louis Wells is a storyteller. Originally from St. Louis, MO, Louis traveled to NYC and first discovered improvisation at the New Actors Workshop, founded by Paul Sills, which made such an impression that, upon return, Louis set on to kick off his college’s first 21mprove troupe (Rancid Paint Improv). Louis graduated with a BFA in Theatre from The University of Central Missouri and moved to Austin, TX. There, he became a founding member of The Heroes of Comedy at the Hideout, where he trained and performed for five years. Louis left Austin for New Jersey to pursue a Master of Fine Arts in directing from the Mason Gross School of the Arts. Louis divides his time between directing in the NYC/NJ area, being the Artistic Coordinator of the Rutgers-Newark/NJIT joint theater program, and advocating for improvisation as a tool for innovation and creativity. In this last capacity, he has developed several college 21mprove classes; he has also founded I.T. (Improv Technicians), the current 22mprove troupe at NJIT, which has been invited to several festivals; and curates the Newark Improv Festival, now in its fifth year.

Louis is also invested in the use of improvisation techniques for education and is working on tracking improvements on GMAT scores on students who participate in his 22mprove training. He regularly conducts sessions for high school students and has helped local high schools set up their programs.

Louis is the director of The Center for Applied Improvisation and Theater at NJIT. As part of this, Louis has led workshops with faculty, coaches, staff, and STEM students using improvisational techniques. In 2018, Louis co-authored, “The Freedom to be Heard: How the Language and Labor of Improv Can Transform the Writing Classroom,” at The Conference on College Composition and Communication. For his work bringing applied improvisation to the campus, he was given an Innovation in Teaching award.