

THE LEADERSHIP  
CONSORTIUM AZ DELEGATION  
TO  
THE 2024 CONGRESSIONAL  
BLACK CAUCUS



SEPTEMBER 11-15, 2024  
WASHINGTON, DC



**THE  
LEADERSHIP**  
CONSORTIUM

**CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP**



**THE  
LEADERSHIP  
CONSORTIUM**

# Welcome to the

10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of TLC AZ Delegation  
to the 2024



## CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

SEPTEMBER 11-15, 2024

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CONSORTIUM**

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THE 2024 CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS**

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# WELCOME FROM CO-HOSTS

## 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of TLC AZ Delegation to the Congressional Black Caucus 2024



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Thank you for your support in making the 2024 Arizona Delegation to the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) is the most successful in our history. From its modest beginnings, this year's delegation now boasts over 137 registered participants, 23 speakers, and 18 sponsors—a true reflection of Arizona's best and brightest.

As Co-Chairs of this important initiative, we are honored to lead discussions on critical issues like workforce development, supplier diversity, and access to capital—key areas essential to economic empowerment and community sustainability, particularly for underrepresented groups. Throughout our careers, we have dedicated ourselves to advocating for the underserved, addressing inequalities, and building bridges across communities.

This year's delegation brought together a diverse group of leaders from every sector, including State Legislators, Mayors and City Council Members, Corporate Executives, Medical Professionals, Judges, Attorneys, Educators, Clergy, and Community Leaders—along with students from community colleges and major universities. We would be remiss if we did not recognize Tempe Mayor Corey Woods's outstanding contributions. He led the Arizona Delegation for several years and has been a vital advisor to The Leadership Consortium. His leadership has been instrumental in shaping this delegation, and we are grateful for his guidance as he passed the torch to us.



**Tempe Mayor Corey Woods**

The 53rd Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference held in September 11-15, 2024, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, is the nation's leading policy conference addressing issues impacting African Americans and the global Black community. This platform brings together thought leaders, legislators, influencers, and concerned citizens to discuss pressing matters, forge partnerships, and promote the political, economic, and social advancement of Black communities. Key highlights include engaging panels, networking opportunities, exhibits, and signature events celebrating Black culture.

This year, more than 16,000 changemakers united to amplify Black voices, inspire transformation, and celebrate collective progress toward the CBC theme "Vision to Victory". With over 160 impactful sessions, 830+ dynamic speakers, and countless meaningful connections, ALC53 has truly set the stage for lasting change.

Additionally, 2024 marked the launch of The Leadership Consortium Student Leadership Institute (TLC-SLI), led by Drs. Corinice Wilson, Sonya Pearson, and Vernon Morris. This initiative empowered 21 students from institutions such as Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, South Mountain Community College, and Tulsa Community College, allowing them to attend the CBC and gain invaluable experiences in Washington, D.C.

TLC's work in shaping leaders, providing opportunities for students, and fostering collaboration with key partners is a testament to its lasting impact on the African American community and beyond. As we continue to grow, we remain committed to cultivating the future leaders who will drive meaningful change in Arizona and across the nation.

Thank you for being part of this important journey.

Sincerely,

Phoenix City Councilmembers  
Kevin Robinson and Kesha Hodge Washington  
Co-Chairs, Arizona Delegation to the CBC

# ARIZONA DELEGATION TO THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

## STEERING COMMITTEE



Phoenix City Councilmembers  
Kevin Robinson & Keshia Hodge Washington  
Co-Chairs, AZ Delegation to the CBC

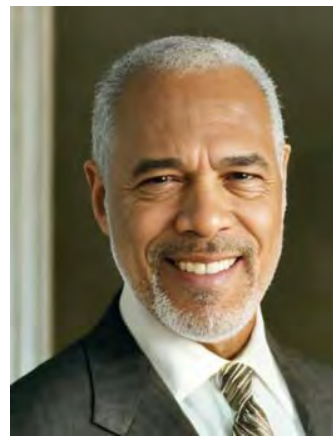
Tempe Mayor Corey Woods,  
Chair Emeritus, AZ  
Delegation to the CBC



Karl Gentles  
Congressional Delegation  
Sub-Committee



Victoria Williams & Michael Kelly  
Logistics/Accommodations Sub-Committee



Drs. Sonya Pearson, Corinice Wilson, James Morris  
Student Leadership Institute Sub-Committee



## STEERING COMMITTEE (CONT.)



**State Representative,** Quanta Crews, Amber Starr, Cynthia Ford  
Volunteers Sub-Committee



**Ashlee Atkins**  
Volunteers  
Sub-Committee



**Jerry McPhearson**  
Audit Sub-Committee



**MEETING WITH SENATOR MARK KELLY – SEPTEMBER 11, 2024**







Thank You Senator Mark Kelly



**THE  
LEADERSHIP  
CONSORTIUM**

**CBCF WEEK KICK-OFF  
BREAKFAST**

**THURSDAY  
SEPTEMBER 12, 2024  
8:00 AM - 9:30 AM**



101 CONSTITUTIONAL AVENUE NW  
2ND FLOOR  
WASHINGTON, DC

Sponsored by:



Delivering water and power®

## **MASTER OF CEREMONIES KARL GENTLES**

# **POLICY FRAMEWORK: KEY POLICY INITIATIVES AFFECTING PEOPLE OF COLOR IN ARIZONA**

### **INTRODUCTION**

**Today**, I will provide an overview of several key policy issues that are having significant impacts on the lives of people of color in Arizona. These efforts range from promoting health equity and addressing homelessness to fostering economic empowerment through collaborative partnerships. These issues form the foundational framework of our advocacy and policy agenda as we spend the next few days here in Washington, DC, attending the Congressional Black Caucus and meeting with legislative and congressional representatives.



### **1. HEALTH EQUITY EFFORTS**

Arizona is making strides in health equity by identifying and improving 21 organizational and 17 workforce capacities. The Arizona Department of Health Services is driving systemic changes in programs and professional development to embed racial equity as a core value.

Investing more funding targeting community health clinics and initiatives targeting the African American population, prioritizing culturally appropriate outreach strategies, improving data collection and analysis, creating more vibrant and trusted communication networks, and increasing funding to small businesses and advocacy groups will improve health policies and outcomes.

### **2. ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING AFFORDABILITY**

The City of Phoenix's Housing Phoenix Plan aims to create or preserve 50,000 homes by 2030, targeting housing shortages and homelessness. With over \$21 million in federal HOME-ARP funds and the approval of a \$65 million bond led by Councilwoman Hodge Washington for affordable housing, the city is leading efforts in both affordable housing development and neighborhood revitalization.

We also applaud the City of Tempe under the leadership of Mayor Corey Woods, and other cities across Maricopa County for their effort to create more affordable and attainable housing. To that end, we advocate for increased funding for first-time homebuyer assistance with down payment assistance, rate buy down, and closing cost programs.

### **3. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ENTREPRENEURS**

Financial empowerment programs like the BIPOC Community Managed Loan Fund have provided over \$400,000 in no-interest loans to entrepreneurs of color. Partnerships with organizations like Wells Fargo and Growth Partners Arizona extend support through grants, mentorship, and financial literacy. In addition, we advocate for training programs targeting high demand areas in our economy including the energy and technology sectors.

The Black Philanthropy Initiative's SEE ME Program offers direct support to African American businesses, shaping a robust support system for black-owned enterprises to thrive. These collaborative partnerships will help build out an ecosystem that supports and helps African American businesses grow and thrive in Arizona.

#### **4. ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

This year, Phoenix will break its record of consecutive days of temperatures over 100 degrees. Extreme heat should be included in the same category of other weather-related emergencies with appropriate FEMA and other federal government resources applied accordingly. We advocate for increased funding and policy actions to address the financial burdens, shelter, and health-related impacts of our rising temperatures.

Energy affordability remains challenging for all communities in a rising rate and cost environment. Therefore, increased funding to support programs like the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program and other federal and state initiatives are critical for those in need of financial assistance, especially during our Arizona summers when our energy bills double and sometimes triple.

Water resources must also be managed carefully with appropriate oversights to ensure our communities, cities, and towns are effectively managing their usage and conservation. This resource must be allocated equitably as the Greater Phoenix population continues to grow.

#### **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT**

Community engagement is essential to building lasting relationships with underserved populations. Organizations focused on and led by African Americans are well underfunded when compared to others and this must change. These organizations need real investments, dare I say “transformational” investments, not small local grants, to make consequential positive changes in the communities and populations they serve.

African American organizations trail in the amount of money invested to support their long-term sustainability. These are organizations people depend on to help educate, clothe, feed, develop, and build our communities. It is imperative that funding is directed to our community in the similar manner that funding is directed to other communities.

To that end, I applaud SRP and Rob Taylor specifically, for your efforts to address the needs of our community. Under his leadership, he has increased the attention on these and other issues including SRPs work in the Randolph community. While still a work in progress, this is an example of how transformational investments can change the direction and future of a community. I encourage SRPs continued investments and partnerships where your presence can have a material impact and change people’s lives for the better.

#### **IN CONCLUSION**

While many additional issues impact our community, including improving education access and outcomes, addressing social justice issues, childcare, elder care, and business ownership, and combating inflation to lower the cost of living for us all, these are some of the foundational ones we will discuss here this week.

These discussions will open further opportunities to engage with lawmakers and stakeholders effectively and lay the groundwork for long-term positive change for people of color in Arizona.

*The views expressed are solely the author's and don't reflect the opinions or beliefs of SRP.*









# Congressional Black Caucus, Annual Legislative Conference

## ASU Welcome Reception Barrett & O'Connor Center, Washington, D.C.

Sept. 12, 2024; 4:30–6:30 p.m.  
1800 I Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20006  
Complimentary refreshments will be served.

Join us to hear from  
**Dorothy Jean Tillman,**  
who graduated with the  
Class of 2024 from Arizona  
State University with a  
doctorate in integrated  
behavioral health management  
at age 17.

Dorothy will discuss the vision  
and goals of her Dorothy  
Jeanius STEAM Leadership  
Camp and much more!

RSVP to [shawna.tibbett@asu.edu](mailto:shawna.tibbett@asu.edu)  
by Sept. 6



**ASU** Arizona State  
University

[washingtondc.asu.edu](http://washingtondc.asu.edu)

## ASU RECEPTION













## MICHAEL KELLY'S ASU WRAP UP COMMENTS



What a truly inspiring afternoon we had at this event! We heard from the extraordinary child prodigy, Dr. Dorothy Jean Tillman II, affectionately known as "DJ" or "Dorothy Jeanius." At such a young age, Dorothy has shattered expectations by becoming the youngest woman in America to receive a Ph.D. (17 years of age) She stands as a shining example of what is possible when brilliance meets determination and an unyielding support system.

Dorothy Jean's accomplishments didn't happen in isolation. She credits her incredible journey to her grandmother, Dorothy Jean the

First, a former Chicago Alderwoman, and her mother, Jimalita Tillman, whose unwavering love and guidance nurtured her gifts. Jimalita's recognition of her daughter's abilities at a young age set Dorothy on a remarkable academic trajectory that defies stereotypes about single parenthood and home-schooling. Through their combined efforts, Dorothy Jean has not only achieved academically but has also made a lasting commitment to her community by promoting STEAM education. Dorothy Jeanius truly embodies the power of family, resilience, and vision. Thank you, Dorothy Jean and Jimalita, for your incredible inspiration.



This event reminds me of another experience more than two decades ago when I was invited to the San Carlos Indian Reservation in Northern Arizona for the beautiful Sunrise Dance ceremony by my dear friend, Mary Kim Titla, the only Native American and Apache newscaster in Arizona at that time. This four-day coming-of-age ritual marked the transition of young girls into womanhood, a celebration of heritage, strength, and community. It was at this ceremony that I first met Dr. Kenja Hassan, a young and promising staff member at ASU who would soon prove to be a trailblazer.

Kenja's warmth, intelligence, and engagement were apparent even then, but little did I know the extraordinary impact she would have on Arizona. A graduate of Princeton University and Arizona State University, with expertise in American Indian traditions, Kenja has since earned her Ph.D. and is now the Assistant Vice President of Government and Community Engagement at ASU. Her list of accolades is long, but her true greatness lies in her unwavering dedication to serving Arizona's Black community and beyond. Dr. Hassan's story is a testament to the heights that can be reached through hard work, compassion, and service.

As we reflect on this symposium, we are reminded of the extraordinary women who are redefining possibilities and leading the way for future generations. Dr. Dorothy Jean Tillman II and Dr. Kenja Hassan exemplify the highest levels of achievement and community dedication. To the students and stakeholders who attended this event, I urge you to take their stories as fuel to propel your journey forward. Aspire to embody their selflessness, perseverance, and commitment to creating positive change.

## **SPOTLIGHT ATTENDEE, DR. KENJA HASSAN**



As Assistant Vice President for Cultural Relations, Kenja Hassan serves as a liaison between ASU and diverse communities throughout the Valley. Throughout her time at ASU, Kenja Hassan has worked to forge relationships with diverse communities throughout the state of Arizona. Kenja has brought college preparation programs to American Indian youth on reservations, orchestrated national dialogs on pressing issues in the Nation's capital, guided student service projects across Arizona, and launched a series of reports on the status of Arizona's diverse communities.

Kenja serves on the City of Phoenix Fast Track Cities Committee, working to end the HIV epidemic. She is a member of the Advocacy Committee of the Metro Phoenix YWCA and the African American Women's Giving and Empowerment Circle at the Arizona Community Foundation. She has served on boards including Trellis, which addresses affordable housing, Arizona Saves, which provides financial education training, and Asian Pacific Community in Action, which offers healthcare support to Arizonans in need.

She is a Valley Leadership's Class 35 member and was recognized by the Phoenix Business Journal as a Forty under 40 leader and Diversity Champion. For her work to build bridges and strengthen Arizona communities, Kenja has been recognized by the City of Phoenix Human Relations Commission, the Arizona Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Committee, Asian Corporate and Entrepreneur Leaders, the Black Board of Directors Project, the NAACP, the Phoenix Suns and PetSmart. She received a prestigious Rosa Parks award in from the Association for Access Equity and Diversity.

Kenja was a Rotary ambassador to Japan which resulted in ASU being the focus of a global study on how Japanese universities can be more strategically engaged in their local communities.

Ms. Hassan holds a B.A. in Religion from Princeton University and an M.A. in Religious Studies from Arizona State University, emphasizing American Indian traditions. Her writings on American Indian religious land claims have been presented before Congress and published in a compilation of oral histories.



**Hugh Joseph "Rusty" Hassan**, a prominent jazz journalist and radio presenter, has been a key figure in the Washington D.C. jazz scene for over 50 years. Born in 1945 in Bound Brook, NJ, and raised in Greenwich, CT, Hassan's love for jazz began early, attending the Newport Jazz Festival at age 17. After moving to D.C. for college at Georgetown University, he became deeply immersed in the local jazz scene, frequenting iconic venues like Bohemian Caverns and witnessing performances by legends such as John Coltrane and the Ramsey Lewis Trio. Over the years, Hassan has built a rich career interviewing renowned artists like

Dexter Gordon, Art Blakey, and Mary Lou Williams, and has played an influential role in broadcasting jazz through his long-running show on WPFW 89.3 FM.

In addition to his contributions to jazz journalism, Hassan was involved in the redevelopment of Washington, D.C., during the aftermath of the U Street riots and the city's urban renewal projects, helping to rehouse displaced residents through his work with a redevelopment aid agency. His passion for both jazz and community work has made him a respected figure, not only in music circles but also in D.C.'s broader cultural and social landscape.

**Sondra "Sandy" Barrett Hassan**, a native Washingtonian, began quilting in the 1970s, creating crib quilts for her daughters and gifts for loved ones. In 1984, she joined the Daughters of Dorcas, a DC chapter of the National Quilting Association, and later became a member of Uhuru Quilters. Her vibrant and bold fiber art has been featured in prominent galleries and museums, including the Smithsonian and the Corcoran Art Gallery. Sandy's quilts are also highlighted in two books—\*Communion of the Spirits\* by Roland Freeman and \*Spirits of the Cloth\* by Carolyn Mazloomi. She was commissioned to create quilt blocks commemorating historic sites for D.C.'s bicentennial and has been featured on the national television show \*B. Smith with Style\*.

Sandy's quilting process is deeply personal, focusing on color and emotion, drawing inspiration from bold African prints, batiks, and designer fabrics. She is driven by the joy of creating, often viewing each finished quilt as a stepping stone to her next project. Paste this into your browser to see Sandy's quilts. Some of which are for sale in the National Museum of African American History and Culture <https://sondrahassan.com>

Beyond quilting, Sandy enjoys gardening, singing, and dancing. A former member of the African Heritage Dancers and Drummers, she also performed with the acapella group In Process. Sandy is married to jazz educator Rusty Hassan, with whom she has two daughters and two grandchildren, and she works full-time for the D.C. government.





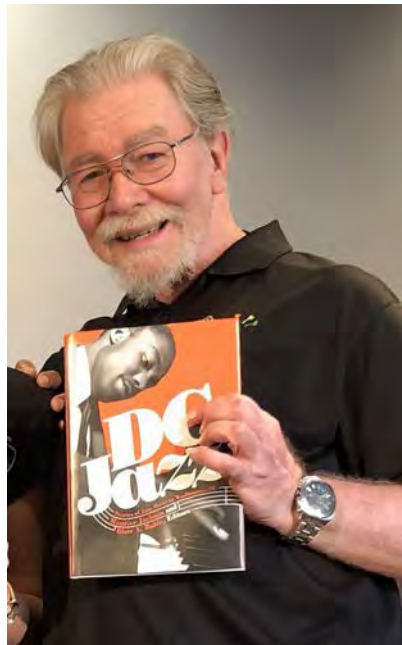
Left Picture  
Rusty (dad), Sandy  
(mom) Aisha (sister)  
and Kenja  
Hassan



Rusty and Sandy with the late Congressman John Conyers



Sandy at the Smithsonian



Rusty Hassan

## **SPOTLIGHT ATTENDEE KATHRYN (CHE”) COLLINS**



**Kathryn (Che’) Collins**, Program Director, Construction in Training (CTP) Education Center is an ASU Graduate with a bachelor’s degree in communication studies, with an emphasis in Organizational Communication and Marketing. She also completed 18 hours toward her master’s degree in educational leadership.

Before coming to Habitat, Che’ had a 20-year career history with the Job Corps administration, a program administered by the United States Department of Labor that offers education and vocational training to underserved men and women ages 16 to 24.

During her tenure with Job Corps, she served as the Center Director for the Sacramento, Mississippi, and Roswell New Mexico Job Corps Centers.

During her tenure with the Phoenix Job Corps Center as the Project Director, she was responsible for the Career Transition service sub-contract, which under her leadership ranked number 3 in the nation out of 124 Job Corps contracts for a year and ranked in the top 10% for the remainder of the contract. She also served as the Deputy Director of Programs and the Area Director for the Phoenix Job Corps Center. The Department of Labor San Francisco Region recognized her outstanding performance in business and political development relationships as the Business and Community Liaison.

Che’ was an active member of the board of directors for the Sacramento and Mississippi Workforce Develop Board of Directors, and Youth Council. Che’ currently serves as a Board member and committee member for the Maricopa County Workforce Development Board Directors. She also sits on the Arouet Foundation Board of Directors, a Second Chance organization that serves women transitioning out of the prison system, and serves on the City of Surprise Mayor’s Veteran Round Table committee.

## KATHRYN (CHE”) COLLINS (CONT.)



Paul Collins, born in Muskegon, Michigan, and raised in Grand Rapids, is a celebrated artist whose journey began with a deep passion for art and a determination to overcome societal doubts about its practicality. Despite early discouragement, Collins found inspiration in Randy Brown, a Southern-born artist and poet, who encouraged him to pursue his dreams. This early mentorship and Collins' experiences growing up in a predominantly Black neighborhood profoundly influenced his artistic perspective and career. He later became known for designing prestigious awards such as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Non-Violent Peace Prize Medal, commissioned by Coretta Scott King, and the Challenger 7 Space Shuttle logo and many others.

Collins' work has been exhibited globally, from the Pushkin Museum in Moscow to the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., and can be seen in schools, libraries, and community centers across the U.S. He is passionate about teaching, often using his art to educate children on different cultures. Throughout his career, Collins has received numerous awards, including the People's Choice Award in Paris and the Golden Centaur of Italy. He has also served on prominent boards such as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Board in Atlanta and the Kennedy Center, solidifying his legacy as one of America's top twenty painters.



**Paul and his daughter Che Collins**

Copy this into your browser to witness some of the incredible art of Paul Collins.  
<https://www.collinsart.org/>

# CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF **JEAN FAIRFAX LUNCHEON**

SPONSORED BY:



**Friday | September 13, 2024 | 11:30 am - 1:00 pm**

**801 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 2004**

## LET'S RENAME THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH ACT!

Sending Office: Honorable Bonnie Watson Coleman

Sent By: [Raina.Hackett@mail.house.gov](mailto:Raina.Hackett@mail.house.gov)

### **Rename the National School Lunch Program Act!**

**Co-lead: Rep. Al Green**

Current Cosponsors (30): Reps. Al Green, Jasmine Crockett, Jennifer McClellan, Joyce Beatty, Alma Adams, Shontel M. Brown, Gregory W. Meeks, Barbara Lee, Marc Veasey, Yvette D. Clarke, James E. Clyburn, Jonathan L. Jackson, Stacey E. Plaskett, Ilhan Omar, Donald Payne, Jr., Dwight Evans, Adam Smith, Joe Neguse, Andre

Carson, Bennie Thompson, Nanette Diaz Barragan, Eleanor Holmes Norton, Sydney Kamlager-Dove, Nikema Williams, Shri Thanedar, Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick, Jill Tokuda, Steve Cohen, Greg Stanton, Sara Jacobs

Dear Colleague,

With Hunger Awareness Month approaching, we invite you to cosponsor our bill to rename the National School Lunch Act (79 P.L. 396, 60 Stat.230) from the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to the Jean E. Fairfax National School Lunch Act.

The National School Lunch Act is the federal law that created the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to provide free or low-cost school meals to eligible students through subsidies to schools. NSLP is one of the most successful food assistance programs in the country, where over 13 million children participate in school meals at no charge.

Richard B. Russell, Jr, who the law is currently named after, was an ardent supporter of white supremacy and segregation, and infamously filibustered civil rights legislation and co-authored the Southern Manifesto. These harmful beliefs inevitably seeped into the architecture of the National School Lunch Act, where he was the lead sponsor of the bill. It is even evidenced that he dismissed concerns of child-welfare advocates, civil rights activists, and women-led organizations during debate over the implementation of the National School Lunch Program. When there were obvious inequities of the NLSP after its roll-out, Jean E. Fairfax was committed to addressing them.

Jean E. Fairfax created and led The Committee on School Lunch Participation—a coalition of 5 national organizations whose combined constituencies totaled over 30 million women. The Committee studied the operations of NSLP in 40 school districts nationwide and conducted over 1,500 interviews among officials in the Department of Agriculture and state, school, and community stakeholders. The results from this study were compiled in the 1968 report, titled *Their Daily Bread*. Testifying before Congress on multiple occasions to present the findings of their report, Fairfax and other committee members were instrumental in making NSLP more inclusive. The report helped prompt Congress to establish the Special Food Service Program for Children, which became the Child Care Food Service Program and the Summer Food Service Program. The Committee's work also persuaded President Nixon to increase funding for the National School Lunch Program serving children in areas of concentrated poverty.

It is time we recognized the unsung heroes of food and nutrition assistance in this country. Join me in this effort to rename the National School Lunch Program Act (NSLA) after Jean E. Fairfax.

For more information or if you would like to be included as a cosponsor, please fill out the cosponsor form here, or contact Raina Hackett with Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman's office ([raina.hackett@mail.house.gov](mailto:raina.hackett@mail.house.gov)). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN  
Member of Congress

AL GREEN  
Member of Congress



## CAREER AND CIVIL RIGHTS WORK



Jean Emily Fairfax had an extensive career in education and civil rights activism:

- Served as Dean of Women at Kentucky State College (1942-1944) and Tuskegee Institute (1944-1946).
- Worked with the American Friends Service Committee, including as a postwar relief worker in Austria and director of civil rights programs.
- Joined the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF) in 1965, becoming the founding director of its legal information and community services division until 1984.
- Played a crucial role in shaping LDF's direction on issues like black college integration and employment discrimination cases.

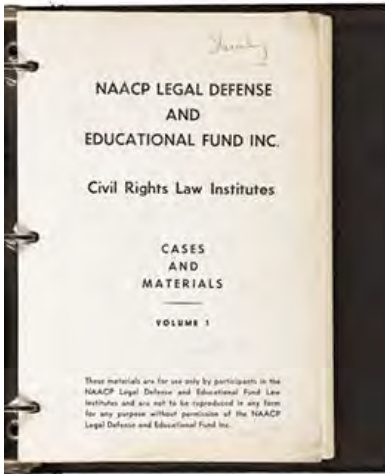
### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Helped facilitate the relocation of black students to continue their education when Prince Edward County, Virginia closed its public schools in 1959 to resist integration.
- Instrumental in the landmark case *Adams v. Richardson* (1972), which compelled 10 states to desegregate their public schools.
- Conducted research that led to increased federal funding for high-poverty schools and expansion of the National School Lunch Program.
- Assisted black workers in submitting over 1,800 discrimination complaints to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

### PHILANTHROPY

After retiring from the LDF in 1985, Fairfax moved to Phoenix, Arizona, and focused on philanthropy with her sister Betty:

- Established endowments worth over \$1 million for social justice programs and scholarships.
- Created the Dan and Betty Inez Fairfax Memorial Fund to expand educational opportunities for African American and Latinx students.
- Founded the Black Legacy Endowed Fund.
- Established the Jean Fairfax Scholarship at the University of Michigan.



Jean Fairfax passed away on February 12, 2019, in Phoenix, Arizona, at the age of 98. She left behind a powerful legacy of civil rights advocacy, educational equity, and community service that continues to inspire and impact lives today.

Jean Fairfax had a profound and lasting impact on educational equity for African Americans through her tireless work as a civil rights activist, educator, and philanthropist. Her contributions were multifaceted and far-reaching:

## LEGAL ADVOCACY

As the founding director of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund's (LDF) legal information and community services division from 1965 to 1984, Fairfax played a crucial role in shaping the organization's direction on issues of educational equity. Her most significant achievement in this area was her involvement in the landmark case *Adams v. Richardson* (1972), which compelled 10 states to desegregate their public schools or risk losing federal funding.

## SCHOOL INTEGRATION EFFORTS

Fairfax was directly involved in grassroots efforts to integrate schools in the South. In 1964, she courageously worked to integrate Carthage Elementary School in Mississippi, facing threats and resistance but ultimately succeeding in enrolling the first black student, Debra Lewis.

## SUPPORT FOR DISPLACED STUDENTS

When Prince Edward County, Virginia closed its public schools in 1959 to resist integration, Fairfax acted. She facilitated the relocation of black students to other states so they could continue their education.



## RESEARCH AND POLICY INFLUENCE

Fairfax's strategic research shed light on issues affecting black communities, leading to significant policy changes:

1. Her work resulted in increased federal funding for high-poverty schools.
2. She contributed to the expansion of the National School Lunch Program.
3. She assisted black workers in submitting over 1,800 discrimination complaints to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

## PHILANTHROPY AND SCHOLARSHIPS



After retiring from the LDF, Fairfax, along with her sister Betty, focused on philanthropy to continue their impact on educational equity:

- They established endowments worth over \$1 million for social justice programs and scholarships.
  - In 1987, they "adopted" an entire eighth-grade class in Phoenix, providing \$1,000 scholarships to those who graduated high school and enrolled in a four-year college.
- They created the Dan and Betty Inez Fairfax Memorial Fund to expand educational opportunities for African American and Latinx students.
  - Fairfax established the Jean Fairfax Scholarship at the University of Michigan.

Through these varied efforts, Jean Fairfax made significant strides in advancing educational equity for African Americans, from fighting legal battles for desegregation to providing direct financial support for students. Her work has had a lasting impact on the American education system and continues to benefit students today.

Jean Fairfax's work at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF) was a pivotal and defining period in her career as a civil rights activist and advocate for educational equity. Her tenure at LDF from 1965 to 1984 shaped her career in several significant ways:

## LEADERSHIP ROLE

Fairfax served as the founding director of LDF's legal information and community services division. This leadership position allowed her to have a substantial impact on the organization's direction and priorities.

## STRATEGIC INFLUENCE

**Jack Greenberg**, LDF's longtime director-counsel, described Fairfax as the most influential staff member in shaping the direction of LDF on critical issues such as black college integration and employment discrimination cases. This highlights her strategic importance within the organization



## **LANDMARK LEGAL CASES**

Fairfax played a crucial role in significant legal efforts, including the landmark case *Adams v. Richardson* (1972), which compelled 10 states to desegregate their public schools or risk losing federal funding. Her involvement in such high-profile cases enhanced her reputation and expertise in civil rights law.

## **GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING**

At LDF, Fairfax continued her hands-on approach to civil rights work. She personally drove LDF attorneys through rural Mississippi to meet with parents about school desegregation decisions. This direct engagement with communities strengthened her understanding of the challenges faced by African Americans in the South.

## **RESEARCH AND POLICY IMPACT**

Fairfax's research reports at LDF meticulously detailed the struggles of impoverished black families and the failure of states to integrate their higher education systems. Her work led to increased federal funding for high-poverty schools and education programs, as well as the expansion of the National School Lunch Program.

## **ADVOCACY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**



At LDF, Fairfax fought for historically black colleges to prevent their downgrading or closure in the face of funding and program cutbacks. This work solidified her commitment to educational equity at all levels.

## **REPUTATION BUILDING**

**Sherrilyn Ifill**, LDF's former president, and director-counsel, described Fairfax as a "master strategist" and "an absolute legend at LDF". Her work at LDF significantly enhanced her reputation in the civil rights community.

Jean Fairfax's time at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund was transformative, allowing her to make lasting contributions to civil rights and educational equity while establishing herself as a respected leader in these fields. Her experiences at LDF informed and shaped her subsequent philanthropic work, creating a legacy that continues to impact lives today.



The Adams v. Richardson case was a landmark legal victory that played a significant role in Jean Fairfax's career at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF). Here are the key points about its importance:

1. Fairfax was instrumental in bringing this case forward during her tenure as founding director of LDF's legal information and community services division from 1965 to 1984.
2. The case, decided in 1972, compelled 10 states to desegregate their public schools or risk losing federal funding. This was a major achievement in advancing educational equity for African Americans.
3. As part of the ruling, the court ordered the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) to begin enforcement proceedings against school districts and higher education systems that were still segregated despite receiving federal funds.
4. The case addressed the dismantling of dual systems of public higher education that persisted after the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This aligned with Fairfax's focus on higher education equity throughout her career.
5. It demonstrated Fairfax's strategic approach to civil rights advocacy, using legal action to force government agencies to fulfill their mandates in enforcing desegregation.
6. The success of Adams v. Richardson enhanced Fairfax's reputation as a "master strategist" within the LDF and the broader civil rights community.
7. This case was part of Fairfax's broader efforts at LDF, which included shaping the organization's direction on issues such as black college integration and employment discrimination cases.

In essence, Adams v. Richardson was a crowning achievement in Fairfax's career, exemplifying her effective approach to using legal means to advance civil rights and educational equity. It solidified her status as a key figure in the civil rights movement and demonstrated the impact of her work at the LDF.

As Fairfax said in an interview with the Christian Science Monitor: someone had to break the pattern, and very often the civil rights revolution was initiated by the most vulnerable Black persons. Many of them were women and many of them were children — tough, resilient, hopeful, beautiful children. The greatest experience of my life was standing with them as they took the risks.”











**JEAN E. AND BETTY H FAIRFAX  
MEMORIAL FUND  
ARIZONA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**



## **THE LEADERSHIP CONSORTIUM STUDENT LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE (TLC-SLI)**

**The Leadership Consortium (TLC)**, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1999 and incorporated in 2002, has a vision to promote leadership development within African American, Hispanic, and other communities of color. With a history of impactful programs and initiatives, TLC seeks to enhance the skills and capacities of individuals through professional training, career development, and instruction aimed at fostering leadership and community involvement.

Michael Kelly, one of the driving forces behind TLC, was pivotal in establishing the Community Alliance for Black Student Support, which later evolved into the Sankofa Leadership Institute in collaboration with Arizona State University. This program focused on recruitment and retention of African American students, underscoring Kelly's long-standing commitment to Black empowerment in Arizona. He also contributed to key community initiatives like the Arizona Black Film Showcase, the Arizona Black Expo, and the Linking Sports and the Community project. Additionally, Kelly co-founded the Black Philanthropy Initiative at the Arizona Community Foundation, promoting greater charitable engagement within the African American community.

In 2018, TLC, led by Kelly, launched the Black Brown and College Bound Program, in collaboration with Phoenix College Depot and the AKA Sorority, which significantly increased scholarship opportunities for African American and Hispanic students.

TLC's flagship initiative, the Arizona Delegation to the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), first organized in 2014 with support from then-Councilwoman (now Mayor) Kate Gallego, has grown into a vital program for leadership development. Today, the 2024 Arizona Delegation boasted 137 participants, including leaders from various sectors—legislators, corporate executives, medical professionals, educators, and students from local colleges and universities. This event showcases the collective strength and future leadership potential of Arizona's African American community.

As Councilmembers, Kevin Robinson and Kesha Hodge Washington mentioned, In 2024, TLC expanded its outreach by launching the Leadership Consortium Student Leadership Institute, (TLC-SLI) aimed at empowering students from diverse institutions, including Arizona State University, South Mountain Community College, the University of Arizona, and Tulsa Community College. TLC-SLI provided comprehensive support for 18 students, one alumni and their chaperones to attend the CBC in Washington, D.C. Over the past three years, 24 students attended the CBC sponsored by TLC. We are making progress.

This year students engaged in a wide array of activities, including meeting with Arizona Senator Mark Kelly, attending the Kickoff Breakfast sponsored by SRP, Collegiate networking lunch sponsored by APS to honor Jean Fairfax, ASU CBC Reception at the O'Connor, Barrett Center in Washington, DC, a tour of Howard University, and other culturally enriching experiences such as visits to, the Capitol, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

As TLC continues to evolve, its efforts to revamp its website and implement succession planning reflect a forward-thinking approach to sustainability and future leadership development. The organization's ongoing mission remains focused on cultivating the next generation of leaders, ensuring that hundreds of individuals—regardless of background—can engage meaningfully with the CBC and other platforms for political, social, and economic advancement.

TLC's role in shaping leaders, fostering opportunities for students, and its ongoing collaboration with key partners demonstrates its vital contribution to the African American community and beyond. As the organization continues to grow, its impact will undoubtedly resonate across generations, ensuring the continued development of future leaders in Arizona and nationwide.

The TLC-SLI will become the foundation for our CBC experience. Because it provides numerous opportunities for students to engage in leadership development, policy analysis, and advocacy through their internship and scholarship programs. These initiatives fit well with our mission to empower the next generation of leaders, particularly those committed to serving their communities.

#### Scholarship Programs:

CBCF offers over 300 scholarships annually, with awards ranging from \$3,000 to \$70,000. Scholarships are awarded to students who demonstrate leadership through community service and academic achievement.

#### Internship and Leadership Programs:

While specific program names vary, CBCF internships prepare college students and young professionals for leadership roles in policy analysis, public service, and advocacy. These internships offer hands-on experience in shaping policies that impact African American and global Black communities.

#### Annual Legislative Conference (ALC) Opportunities:

Students attending the ALC can benefit from:

**Engaging with Policy Issues:** Participate in workshops and panels on critical topics like healthcare, education, and social justice, while connecting with lawmakers and experts. These experiences also demonstrate to the students firsthand how their emerging expertise can play a role in shaping the future of the US.

**Professional Development:** Gain insights and skills to effectively advocate for change in their communities. Students also take advantage of broadening their professional networks in the unique environment of the ALC. The ALC is the largest convening of Black and African American elected officials, policymakers, and activists. In this environment, students are encouraged to build relationships with peers and mentors beyond their academic environments. The intentional inclusion of scholars from various stages of their professional journeys 2- and 4-year undergraduate programs,

various stages of their professional journeys 2- and 4-year undergraduate programs, graduate programs, post-baccalaureates, postdocs, and faculty) enables peer, near-peer, and seasoned peer mentoring to occur both during and beyond the ALC.

Cultural Celebration and Engagement: Student participants experience and celebrate the richness of Black culture through events, performances, and storytelling. Visits to HBCUs and to the National Museum of African American History and Culture represent just two of the numerous activities that are available to them during this experience.

Visibility and Involvement: Opportunities to volunteer or engage with both local and national organizations, sponsors, and/or exhibitors for future conferences.

These programs and events provide a platform for students to not only further their education but also to gain experiential training and to directly influence and contribute to the advancement of policies impacting Black communities globally.

Warm Regards,

Drs. Vernon Morris, Sonya Pearson, and Corinice Wilson  
Founders of the TLC-SLI

**Dr. Vernon Morris**



**Dr. Sonya Pearson**



**Dr. Corinice Wilson**



**Tri-Chairs of The Leadership Consortium Student Leadership Institute**

**19 College Students Attended the 2024 CBC, sponsored by TLC**

STUDENT NAME	COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
Ronald Holden	Tulsa Community College
Nehemiah Lapsley	Tulsa Community College
Veronica Johnson	Tulsa Community College
Aakayla Hill	Tulsa Community College
Michael Singleton	Tulsa Community College
Racquel Armstrong	Arizona State University
Cayden Perry	Arizona State University
Sahanah Porter	Arizona State University
Jason Amoaka-Agyei	Arizona State University Alumni
Matthew Jones	Arizona State University
Ishmael Miller	Arizona State University
Symone Griffith	Arizona State University
Austin Blackmon	Arizona State University
Kiara Lyons	Arizona State University
Alexandra Smith	Arizona State University
Patience Akpan-Obong	Arizona State University
Natalia Austin Collins	University of Arizona
Jason Trammell	South Mountain Comm. College
Shantia Estes	South Mountain Comm. College

## SPOTLIGHT ATTENDEE

### DR. MICHELE Y. HALYARD (STUDENT SPONSOR AND CHAPERONE)



Dr. Michele Y. Halyard is Professor Emeritus of Radiation Oncology in the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Sciences and the Emeritus founding Dean of Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine, having retired from Mayo Clinic in June 2023. She currently holds the rank of Professor of Radiation Oncology and is a recognized expert in the treatment of breast cancer.

Dr. Halyard became a member of the Department of Radiation Oncology, Mayo Clinic in Arizona, in 1989 and went on to chair the department. She served eight years on the board of governors of Mayo Clinic in Arizona, including serving as vice chair, and served eight years as a member of the Mayo Clinic Executive Committee and Board of Trustees. In addition, Dr. Halyard served as the first cancer center director of Mayo Clinic in Arizona as the center became a part of the National Cancer Center (NCI) designated comprehensive cancer center encompassing all three Mayo Clinic locations.

Dr. Halyard's primary research area of expertise is the use of patient-reported outcomes in cancer clinical practice. Additional research areas of expertise involve the treatment of breast cancer with radiation therapy.

Dr. Halyard is the President of Halyard Coaching & Consulting LLC, focused on leadership coaching both within and outside of healthcare. She is a professional and executive coach for leaders within and outside of healthcare. Her clients include Division and Department Chairs, section heads, as well as leaders in the nonprofit sector outside of healthcare. Dr. Halyard is a graduate of the College of Executive Coaching. In addition to extensive coaching experience, Dr. Halyard has served as faculty for the Mayo Clinic Accelerate Leadership Development Program.

She is the co-founder and president of The Coalition of Blacks Against Cancer. She is an active member of the Phoenix community and is considered a leader in health disparities in the Black community.



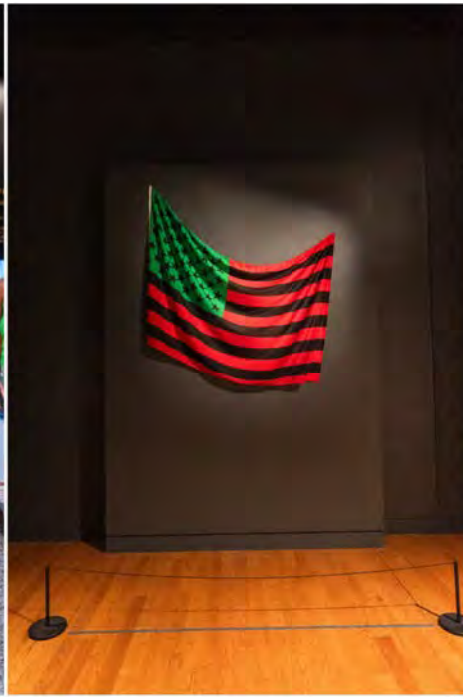


**National Museum of African American History and Culture  
1400 Constitution Ave NW, Washington, DC 20560**

# NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE TOUR







# CAPITOL TOUR





## HOWARD UNIVERSITY TOUR



## TLC-SLI RECEPTION AT BUSBOYS & POETS







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Arizona State Representative  
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**Corey Woods**  
Mayor  
City of Tempe



**O.D. Harris**  
Vice Mayor  
City of Chandler



MASTER OF CEREMONIES

**Cloves C. Campbell Jr.**  
Executive Director  
Arizona Commission of  
African American Affairs



**Kesha Hodge Washington**  
Councilwoman  
City of Phoenix, District 8



**Berdetta Hodge**  
Councilwoman  
City of Tempe

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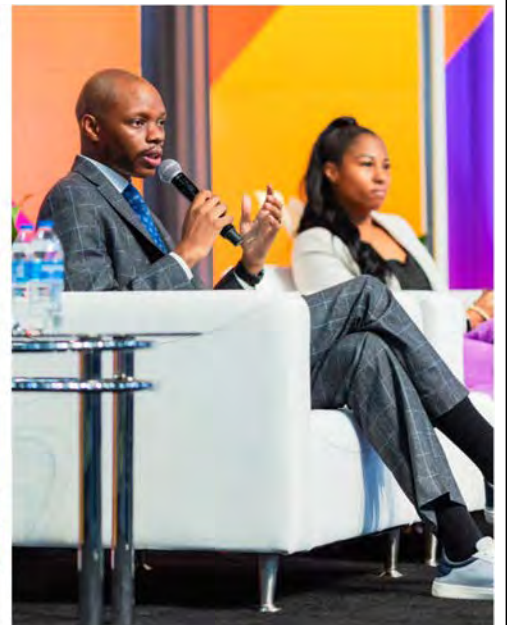
## NON TLC SPONSORED EVENT NONPARTISAN BRUNCH







## NON SPONSORED TLC - BUILDING BLACK WEALTH Dr. Reginald and Cymone Bolding



## BUILDING BLACK WEALTH



**Dr. Reginald and Cymone Bolding** are a power couple whose impact spans across politics, education, finance, and civic leadership.

Dr. Reginald Bolding, a seasoned leader in Arizona politics, served nearly a decade in public office, most notably as House Minority Leader in the 55th Legislature. During his tenure, he led the largest Democratic Caucus since 1966, brokered historic investments in Arizona's water infrastructure, secured millions in nonprofit funding, and helped pass the first bipartisan state budget in over a decade. As the founder of two influential Black-led civic engagement organizations in the Southwest, Dr. Bolding has been instrumental in securing over \$300 million for school districts, electing two U.S. Senators, and leading Arizona's largest Black voter outreach program. His expertise extends beyond politics, as he is also an educator, investor, and national consultant addressing critical social and economic issues.

Cymone Bolding, the Chief Operating Officer at the National Association of Black Accredited Investors (NABAI), is dedicated to fostering inclusivity within the financial sector. By rethinking traditional equity structures, she creates opportunities for communities to thrive through purposeful, sustainable investments. Additionally, Cymone serves as a Teaching Fellow at Harvard, where she supports students in developing their leadership and storytelling skills in the "Public Narrative: Leadership, Storytelling, and Action" course, empowering them to lead with purpose.

Together, the Boldings are dedicated to driving equity and innovation in their respective fields. They reside in Phoenix, Arizona, with their three daughters, Faith, Grace, and Honor.



## GALLERY OF PICTURES













## **Historically, The Leadership Consortium (TLC) has launched the following key programs.**

- Community Alliance for Black Student Support (CABSS): Established in 1999, this program, in partnership with Arizona State University, evolved into the San-ko-fa Leadership Institute, enhancing African American student recruitment and retention.
- Arizona Black Film Showcase: Founded in 2001 by Joanna DeShay, this event celebrated Black filmmakers and educated youth on filmmaking until 2011.
- Linking Sports and the Community: Launched in 2004 by Denise Meredith, this annual event highlighted career opportunities in sports-related fields for teens.
- Arizona Black Expo: Peaking in 2006, it provided networking opportunities for African American businesses, attracting over 10,000 attendees.

Black Brown and College Bound Program: Initiated in 2018, this program aims to increase scholarship opportunities for African American and Hispanic students through a partnership with College Depot and the Greater Phoenix Area Delta Beta Omega Chapter.

### **History of the Community Alliance for Black Student Support**

In 1999, with a focus on fostering a diverse workforce essential for economic growth, the Future Leaders Program was established for graduate students by Denise Meredith, the retired State Director of the Bureau of Land Management, in collaboration with Dr. Bianca Bernstein of the Arizona State University (ASU) Graduate College. This initiative aimed to attract, retain, and develop leaders among graduate students. In 2000, in response to concerns about the graduation rates of Black students, the late Dr. Elva Coor, wife of former ASU President Lattie Coor, initiated the African American Support and Retention Committee with a coalition of community leaders, ASU students, staff, and faculty.

In August 2001, these two programs merged to form the Community Alliance for Black Student Support (CABSS), formally organized to counter the social isolation that often affected African American students at ASU. CABSS provided critical early intervention and leadership development, laying a foundation for student success at the university and, more importantly, in the workplace. Bank of America supported this mission with grants totaling \$130,000 across 2001 and 2002, funding an Executive Director for CABSS.

CABSS established several objectives, including 1) growing the population of Black students, faculty, and staff to foster a visible community on campus; 2) increasing scholarships and fellowships; 3) building a strong mentoring network; 4) expanding internship opportunities; 5) providing leadership training; 6) enhancing job opportunities; 7) increasing social engagement for Black students; 8) making personal and financial resources more accessible; 9) identifying and supporting at-risk students; and 10) developing tracking mechanisms to measure progress.

### **Among its notable accomplishments:**

- ◇ Sankofa Summer Leadership Institute: A four-day annual residential program was created to help incoming freshmen and transfer students connect, access university support services, and engage with African culture, positively influencing retention rates.

- ◇ Collaborations with the Multicultural Student Center: This partnership introduced new programs for Black students.
- ◇ Community Engagement: CABSS worked closely with ASU faculty, staff, students, businesses, and community leaders to address student needs and enrich their ASU experience.
- ◇ Pilot Program with Maricopa Community Colleges: In alliance with South Mountain Community College, CABSS developed a model for future expansion.
- ◇ Internship Program with Fry's Marketplace: In 2003, CABSS offered five management internships.

Through the Sankofa Leadership Institute, students participated in workshops highlighting prominent figures of African descent throughout history and explored the role of African American college students. Students were introduced to key ASU organizations, including the Black and African Coalition, S.T.A.R.S. Association, Pan Hellenic Organizations, and events like the African American Welcome Back BBQ, African American Convocation, ASU Homecoming Festival, and the Black History Month Vendor Fair.

The ASU Multicultural Student Services office coordinated CABSS's outreach efforts. In 2006, postcards were mailed to all 850 African American students admitted to ASU, and a team of volunteers called 251 admitted and registered African/African American students. The program was also promoted through the Community newsletter and website, ultimately resulting in 75 applications, with 40 students accepted and 36 attending the Institute.

With support from SRP (Salt River Project) and various fundraising efforts, CABSS awarded between four and six \$1,000 scholarships to ASU graduate and undergraduate students and two \$250 book scholarships to high school students in the South Mountain Community College ACE (Achieving a College Education) program, which allowed them to earn college credits. Scholarship selection considered academic standing, community engagement, financial need, and personal or family hardships. CABSS contributed to increased African American student enrollment at ASU, building a legacy of support and community for Black students.

### **Testimonial from Brandy Ervin**

In the summer of 2003, I participated in the CABBS (Community Alliance for Black Student Support) Summer Bridge Program at Arizona State University. This transformative program was designed to support African American students transitioning from high school to university life, providing a unique opportunity to acclimate to the academic, social, and cultural environment of ASU before the start of the fall semester. The CABBS program was instrumental in preparing me for university life. Through workshops and seminars, I gained valuable insights into time management, study strategies, and how to access resources on campus, such as academic advising and tutoring centers. These foundational skills proved essential when I officially started my journey at ASU, allowing me to navigate the university's challenges with resilience and confidence.

The CABBS program was a space for building community and forming lifelong connections. The program brought together a cohort of like-minded, ambitious African American students who supported and encouraged each other throughout the summer and beyond. I forged deep bonds with many of the attendees, forming a support network that provided encouragement, mentorship, and friendship throughout my time at ASU. Many of these relationships have endured over the years, blossoming into professional networks and lifelong friendships.

The shared experience of navigating the program and then transitioning to university life created a sense of camaraderie and connection that remains strong to this day. CABBS also provided cultural enrichment, helping my peers and I explore our identities and histories within the context of higher education. This emphasis on cultural awareness and pride not only fortified my resolve to succeed academically but also ignited my passion for social justice—a passion that has guided my career ever since.

It was at the 2024 CBC ALC (Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference) that I learned that Mr. Michael Kelly had been the driving force behind the creation of the CABBS program. Mr. Kelly’s dedication to empowering young African American students continues to leave a lasting impact, with his efforts still resonating throughout the community today. The discovery that Michael Kelly, the very person who spearheaded the CABBS program, remains an active force in the community underscores the legacy of his vision. His ongoing efforts to empower and uplift young people are a testament to the impact that early guidance and community can have on individual lives. For me, CABBS was more than a summer program; it was the beginning of a lifelong commitment to making a difference.



**Brandy Ervin** is a dedicated social change strategist and social worker with over 18 years of experience in child safety, mental health, and social justice. She holds a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Arizona State University and a Master’s degree in Social Work from California State University, Dominguez Hills. These academic achievements have provided a strong foundation for her impactful work and advocacy.

Currently, Brandy serves at CenCal Health, where she is focused on improving the well-being of children and families through comprehensive care. Her role as Chief Strategy Officer at Kolyde, Inc., showcases her strategic leadership, driving innovation and organizational development. Additionally, her management work with Civic Cipher underscores her passion for social justice and her commitment to empowering marginalized communities.

As a proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Brandy leverages her leadership skills and passion for service to impact her community positively, upholding the sorority’s legacy of scholarship, sisterhood, and social action. Her dedication to child welfare policy and social justice drives her ongoing mission to create a fair, more inclusive society where every person in every community has the opportunity to thrive.



**Jerry J. McPherson** is an economic activist, community leader, and passionate advocate for underrepresented communities. Known for his commitment to social equity, Jerry's career spans entrepreneurship, corporate, and non-profit sectors, where he has consistently championed empowerment and economic advancement.

As the Executive Director of the Arizona Commission of African-American Affairs (AZCAAA), Jerry leads statewide initiatives aimed at promoting social, economic, and cultural growth for African Americans in Arizona. In this role, he oversees the implementation of strategic plans, collaborating with state agencies, community leaders, and policymakers to drive meaningful change across the state.

Alongside his role at AZCAAA, Jerry is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and serves as the Managing Partner of The Mathias Group, a boutique public accounting firm. The Mathias Group specializes in nonprofit accounting, business acquisition consulting, and tax debt resolution, providing crucial financial guidance to both individuals and businesses.

Jerry's impact in the nonprofit sector is substantial. Previously, he served as Managing Director of Per Scholas Phoenix, where he forged strategic partnerships to support the mission of preparing underrepresented individuals for technology careers. As Director of Economic Empowerment for the Greater Phoenix Urban League, Jerry oversaw workforce development programs and the Entrepreneurship Center, equipping small businesses with vital resources for growth.

An active community leader, Jerry has served on numerous boards, including the Greater Phoenix Urban League, Better Ballot Arizona, and the Pacific Southwest Minority Supplier Development Council. He is also a member of Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego's African-American Advisory Council. A strong proponent of mentorship, Jerry co-founded YP CoNEXT @ ASU, which partners Arizona State University students with young professionals to foster leadership, life skills, and community engagement, supporting the transition from college to professional life.

Jerry's leadership has earned him accolades such as "40 Under 40" by both the *Phoenix Business Journal* and *CPA Practice Advisor*. He was recently honored with the 2025 MLK Living The Dream Award by the City of Phoenix.

A U.S. Army National Guard veteran, Jerry holds a Bachelor's in Accounting from Virginia State University, an HBCU, and a Certificate in Executive Leadership from Cornell University. He is also a graduate of the Flinn-Brown Fellowship and the National Urban League's Emerging Leaders program through Duke University.

For 2024, Jerry McPherson managed the app and created a video tutorial which greatly enhanced the delegation experience. (see the screenshot) This is another example about how our team listens to your feedback to continuously improve services to our delegates.

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## Arizona Delegation to the Congressional Black Caucus - 2024

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Smartphone screenshot showing the app interface with the title 'Arizona Delegation to the Congressional Black Caucus - 2024', dates '11 Sep 2024 - 15 Sep 2024', and a 'Start Networking' button.





## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### Sunday-Monday 8-9, 2024

DATE	EVENT	HOSTED BY	LOCATION
9/8/2024	National BPIA Week: CBC Week Kick-Off All-White Attire Jazz Brunch	Black Professionals in International Affairs	Kennedy Center 2700 F Street NW
9/9/2024	Black Thriving in America: 2024 Report Release	Dr. N. Joyce Payne Research Center and GALLUP Center on Black Voices	The Great Hall 901 F Street NW
9/9/2024	The Tobacco Harm Reduction Community Welcome Back Reception	The Tobacco Harm Reduction Community	Rayburn House 45 Independence Ave SW
9/9/2024	Meta + Black Gov Tech   Welcome to DC Tech Pre CBC ALC @ Meta Rooftop Mixer	Meta + Black Gov Tech	Facebook DC Headquarters 575 7th St. NW
9/9/2024	BMH ALC Week Kick-Off Reception	Microsoft Innovation & Policy Center	Microsoft 901 K St. NW 11th Floor
9/9/2024	Monday Night Football Kickoff Reception	NFL, Disney, ESPN, NCTA, Madden, The Congressional Football Game & ESA	NCTA 25 Massachusetts Ave. Suite 100 NW

### Tuesday 10, 2024

DATE	EVENT	HOSTED BY	LOCATION
9/10/2024	2024 Speechwriters of Color Conference	Robert Wood Johnson Foundation	21 D St SE
9/10/2024	Social Golf Association Scramble Tournament	Social Golf Association Scramble Tournament	Langston Golf Course 2600 Benning Rd
9/10/2024	Money Moves: A Real Talk On Investing & Financial Literacy For Black Entrepreneurs	Bob Technologies, Invesco, Invesco QQQ, and Black With No Chaser.	HQ House 600 F Street NW
9/10/2024	The Connect DC x NBPNA	The Connect DC and the National Black Professional Networking Association	The Gathering Spot 1720 I St NW
9/10/2024	National Black Professional Networking Mixer	National Black Professional Networking Association	The Gathering Spot 1720 I St NW
9/10/2024	Celebration of Black Congressional Staff	Home Depot	The Home Depot DC Office 1155 F Street, NW Suite 400

**Tuesday 10, 2024 (cont.)**

DATE	EVENT	HOSTED BY	LOCATION
9/10/2024	Diminished Returns Film Screening and Reception	iF, Bread for the City, Humanity United, and the Greater Washington Community Foundation	The Gathering Spot DC 1720 I St NW
9/10/2024	Kitchen + Kocktails Speed Dating Mix & Mingle	Kendra G	Kitchen + Kocktails 1300 I St. NW
9/10/2024	3rd Annual BPFA Awards Reception	Black Professionals in Food and Agriculture	USDA Whitten Building Patio 1400 Independence Ave SW
9/10/2024	PDA Networking Reception - Capital Area Chapter - Whiskey Business	Parenteral Drug Association	627 H St NW
9/10/2024	CBC Kick Off : Cigar & Networking Mixer	TOXXIC DECIBELS	Casa de Montecristo Cigar Lounge & Bar 1132 19th Street NW
9/10/2024	The STOGIE SOCIAL: CBC KickOff	Alexandria-Fairfax (VA) Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.	Barcode 1101 17th Street NW
9/10/2024	Debate Night Watch Party & Fundraiser	DC Young Dems	Hook Hall 3400 Georgia Ave.
9/10/2024	Blue Drinks Harris-Trump Debate Watch Party!	Network For Progress	Royal Sands Social Club 26 N Street SE
9/10/2024	CBC Week Welcome Party	Coalition Properties Group	Perch SW Rooftop Lounge 69 Q Street SW
9/10/2024	Politicking Presidential Debate Watch Party	By Powered by Politicking	Mr. Braxton Bar & Kitchen 3632 Georgia Ave NW
9/10/2024	US Presidential Debate Watch Party	Busboys & Poets	Busboys and Poets 2021 14th St NW

**Wednesday 11, 2024**

DATE	EVENT	HOSTED BY	LOCATION
9/11/2024	The Hip Hop Caucus 20th Anniversary Celebration	Hip Hop Caucus	Blackburn Center 2397 6th St NW
9/11/2024	Pathways to R1: Empowering HBCUs to Achieve Research Excellence		901 K St NW 11th flr
9/11/2024	ALC Welcome Reception hosted by the AIC & NAIC, featuring Earn Your Leisure	The American Investment Council (AIC) and the National Association of Investment Companies (NAIC)	Walter E. Washington Convention Center Room - 146-AB 801 Mount Vernon Pl. NW
9/11/2024	Accelerating U.S. Energy Infrastructure: The Urgency of Permitting Reform	Bipartisan Policy Center	Bipartisan Policy Center 1225 I Street NW
9/11/2024	Taste of Florida Welcome Reception	Representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz	The Penthouse at the Wharf 1000 Maine Ave SW
9/11/2024	The Single Mingle CBC Mixer A discussion on local politics, relationships and more	The Single Mingle DMV	Lima Twist 1411 K St. NW
9/11/2024	NRF Salutes the CBC Rooftop Reception	National Retail Federation   Sponsored by: Albertson's Compa- nies, Lowe's, Macy's Inc., McDonald's, Tractor Supply Co. & Walmart	NRF Office 1101 New York Ave NW, Suite 1200
9/11/2024	Black Economic Agenda Reception	Black Futures Lab and Black to the Future	The Gathering Spot 1720 I St NW
9/11/2024	CBC Networking Reception	African American Real Estate Professionals (AAREP)	MOI Penthouse 1901 L St NW
9/11/2024	The Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. OLA Chapter CBC Reception 2024	By Alpha Phi Alpha - Omicron Lambda Alpha Chapter	The Park at 14th 920 14th Street NW
9/11/2024	Black Gov Tech   The CBC Tech Mixer - Come Join Us!!	Black Gov Tech	12 Stories 75 District Square SW
9/11/2024	CBC WEEK 2024: Celebrating Champions of Mobility, Energy & Environment	EVNoire & The Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition (GWRCCC)	Longview Gallery 1234 9th St NW
9/11/2024	On Track for the Future	CSX	CSX

**Wednesday 11, 2024 (cont.)**

DATE	EVENT	HOSTED BY	LOCATION
9/11/2024	Having Our Voices Heard Sixth Annual DC Black Lawyers Networking Reception	Cornell Black Lawyers Alumni Network	White & Case LLP 701 13th Street, NW #Suite 600
9/11/2024	Afrobeats Soireé	Ghana Diaspora Public Affairs Collective & One Voice Africa Network in Conjunction with CVS Health	The Continent DC 1110 Vermont Ave NW
9/11/2024	Mad About Real Estate Rooftop Reception	Mad About Real Estate (M.A.R.E.) & Silent Partners	Wharf Street SW
9/11/2024	Black in Health Policy CBC Award Reception	Black in Health Policy & FTI Consulting	District Center 555 12th St NW
9/11/2024	A Toast to the Legacy of Barbara Lee	National Women's Law Center	Yardbird Table & Bar 901 New York Ave NW
9/11/2024	We See You Awards International After-Party	International Black Women's Public Policy Institute	Bobby Van's Grill 1201 New York Ave NW
9/11/2024	NFBPA CBC Reception	DC Chapter of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA)	The Dignitary 901 Massachusetts Ave.
9/11/2024	Policymaker Perspectives: A Night with IWPR	Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR)	Vera Cocina 2002 Fenwick St. NE
9/11/2024	The 2nd Annual Power & Prestige Reception	The National Alliance for Equity in Energy & Infrastructure (NAEEI)	Conrad Hilton Hotel Rooftop 950 New York Ave NW
9/11/2024	The Link-Up: CBC Voter Registration Edition	Techsgiving, Brie G & Deirra Footman	TALEA 3228 Wisconsin Ave NW

**Thursday 12, 2024**

DATE	EVENT	HOSTED BY	LOCATION
2024-09-12	SRP AZ Delegation to the CBC "Kick Off" Networking Breakfast	Arizona Delegation	Location TBD
2024-09-12	Capitol Tour: TIME TBA	Arizona Delegation	1 Independence Ave SE, Washington, DC 20003
9/12/2024	"Punch Up" Activation	Punchbowl News & Chime	Unconventional Diner 1207 9th St NW
9/12/2024	Blackprint Policy Brunch	Google & Robinhood	Robinhood Offices 250 Massachusetts Ave. NW
9/12/2024	AEO Talks: CBC Small Business Luncheon	Association for Enterprise Opportunity (AEO)	The Hamilton 600 14th Street NW
9/12/2024	Women Leaders of Michigan: Empower HER CBC Reception ~ Run. Lead. Succeed	SMART   DRJ & Associates, LLC	Swahili Village The Consulate DC 1990 M Street NW
9/12/2024	Rhythms of Change Jazz Brunch	AstraZeneca	Eaton DC 1201 K St. NW
9/12/2024	Unbought Unbossed A CBC Reception	African American Leadership Institute, Supermajority & National Congress of Black Women	Rayburn House Office Building 45 Independence Ave SW
9/12/2024	Bridging the Gap: Affordable Homeownership and Anti-Displacement Strategies	NCRC	New America 740 15th St NW
2024-09-12	ASU Welcome Reception RSVP by Sept 6th	Arizona Delegation	1800 I St NW Washington, DC
9/12/2024	2024 Green Room Reception	Vestige Strategies	Bobby Van's Grill 1201 New York Ave NW
9/12/2024	Xceleader CBC HBCU Alumni Happy Hour	Xceleader	Prima DC 900 Florida Ave NW
9/12/2024	Welcome Reception! Highlighting our commitment to fostering an economy of equal opportunity	U.S. Department of Commerce	U.S. Department of Commerce 1401 Constitution Ave. NW

**Thursday 12, 2024 (cont.)**

DATE	EVENT	HOSTED BY	LOCATION
9/12/2024	The 3rd Annual Taste of Memphis Reception	Chairwoman Emeritus Miska Clay Bibbs and the Shelby County Commission Black Caucus	The Park at Fourteenth 920 14th St NW
9/12/2024	CBC Cocktail Party OLD TOWN, Alexandria!	The Concierge House	699 Prince St Alexandria, VA
9/12/2024	CBC ALC Week: Sunset Movies, Mimosas + Black Marketplace	kweliTV, Vital Voices & BLK+ GRN	Vital Voices Global Headquarters for Women Leadership 1509 16th St. NW
9/12/2024	2024 Official CBC Reception: "5th Annual Baton Rouge Meets DC"	Supreme Solutions & BROAD Innovative Marketing	The Gathering Spot 1720 I St NW
9/12/2024	Ideas Uncorked: Restoring Public Confidence in Our Elections	The Hoover Institution	Hoover Institution 1399 New York Ave NW #500
9/12/2024	CBC WEEKEND - 9TH ANNUAL CBC RECEPTION	Social Architects	The Park at 14th 920 14th Street NW Washington, DC 20005
9/12/2024	Marketing Mix & Mingle	Black Women Marketers	Parlour Victoria Rooftop 1011 K St. NW
9/12/2024	2024 Black Linkup CBCF Young Black Professionals Event	Black Caucus of the Young Democrats of America	Lost Society 2001 14th St NW
9/12/2024	ANOTHER GOOD YEAR 2024 ART SHOW & CASINO NIGHT	GOOD Projects	Penthouse at Pierce School Lofts 1375 Maryland Ave NE
9/12/2024	2024 Prosper Reception	Sacramento Black Chamber of Commerce	RPM Italian 650 K St NW
9/12/2024	The National Conference of African American Thought Leaders (NAATL) 11th Annual State Action Council Reception	Black Caucus Foundation of Michigan	InterContinental the Willard 1401 Pennsylvania Ave NW
9/12/2024	A Reception in Support of State's Attorney Aisha Braveboy	State's Attorney Aisha Braveboy	The Continent DC 1110 Vermont Ave NW
9/12/2024	Congressional Black Caucus Young, Gifted & Green 40 Under 40 Awards 2024	Young, Gifted & Green	Eighteenth Street Lounge 1230 9th Street NW
9/12/2024	Movement Mixer 2024	DC Justice Lab	The Point 2100 2nd St SW

**Thursday 12, 2024 (cont.)**

DATE	EVENT	HOSTED BY	LOCATION
9/12/2024	NABWIC 2024 Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Reception	National Association of Black Women in Construction (NABWIC)	The City Club of Washington, DC 555 13th Street NW
9/12/2024	New Jersey Reception Honoring Senator Cory Booker and Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman	STONO Public Affairs	Marriott Marquis DC Georgetown University Room 901 Massachusetts Ave NW
9/12/2024	The Pennsylvania Reception at CBC	Black Leadership Pennsylvania	Officina 1120 Maine Ave SW
9/12/2024	Welcome To DC - CBC Reception	The Great Energy Group	12 Stories 75 District Square SW
9/12/2024	2024 NNPA National Leadership Awards Reception	National Newspaper Publishers Association	Conrad Hilton Hotel, Grand Ballroom 950 New York Ave, NW
9/12/2024	Connections: Culture, Congress, Cabinet, Capital	Kairos	1807 Florida Ave. NW
9/12/2024	'A Night in Monte Carlo' - a CBC Soirée	Amazon's Black Employee Network (BEN) - DMV	TBA
9/12/2024	Honoring the Black Elected Officials of Florida	Congresswoman Frederica Wilson	Marriott Marquis 901 Massachusetts Ave NW
9/12/2024	2024 Virginia Party Ticket Request Form	Virginia Delegation	TBA
9/12/2024	Brothers Under the Dome Presents "Motown Live: 2024 CBC Reception"	Brothers Under the Dome feat. Michigan Speaker Joe Tate & Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist	Perch SW Rooftop 69 Q Street SW
9/12/2024	NBEC Urban Leadership Reception	Black Enterprise & the National Black Empowerment Council (NBEC)	Zooz 636 Maine Ave. SW
9/12/2024	District Noire: A Night of Black Excellence CBC Edition	A1 EVENTS	Opera Ultra Lounge 1400 I Street NW

**Friday 13, 2024**

DATE	EVENT	HOSTED BY	LOCATION
9/13/2024	8th Annual Collective PAC Power Brunch	The Collective PAC	Yardbird Table & Bar 901 New York Ave NW
9/13/2024	IBWPPI's 16TH ANNUAL PUBLIC POLICY FORUM	International Black Women's Public Policy Institute	National Press Club 529 14th St. NW
9/13/2024	Jean Fairfax Legacy Luncheon Hosted by APS - Confirmed	Arizona Delegation	801 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, D.C.
9/13/2024	CBC Weekend Pilates & Brunch Social Club	Integrative Health & Musu Wellness	The City Club of Washington 555 13th St NW
9/13/2024	Harvesting Opportunity: Building a Thriving Future. Black Food Economy	Thrive 365	HQ House by The Burns Brothers 600 F Street NW
9/13/2024	Innovative Approaches to Urban Development   Convening During Congressional Black Caucus	Dr. Una S. T. Clarke Women in Government Series	MLK Memorial Library 901 G St NW
9/13/2024	12th Congressional District Lounge	Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib 12th District	The City Club of Washington 555 13th St NW
9/13/2024	Beyond the Ballot Box: A Fireside Chat on Building Legacies of Collective Black Wealth	The Gathering Spot DC and The Highland Project	The Gathering Spot 1720 I Street NW
9/13/2024	Legacy Legacy: A Networking Mixer	Airport Minority Advisory Council (AMAC), Johns Hopkins Society of Black Alumni (SOBA)	WILD DAYS 1201 K St. NW
9/13/2024	Reception for Honorary Host Congressman Danny K. Davis	Honorary Host Congressman Danny K. Davis (D-IL)	TBD
9/13/2024	The VIP Reception in Memoriam for the Honorable Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee	Democratic Leadership & CBC Members	Salamander DC 1330 Maryland Ave SW
9/13/2024	Official Celebration of Maryland Black Excellence	The Legislative Black Caucus of MD and the MD Black Caucus Foundation	Salamander DC 1330 Maryland Ave SW
9/13/2024	Black Men Vote x National Civil Rights Museum CBC Event	Black Men Vote + National Civil Rights Museum	K&L Gates LLP 1601 K St NW #1
9/13/2024	Michigan CBC VIP Reception & After Glow	The Urbane Group	The Park at Fourteenth 920 14th St NW



**Friday 13, 2024 (cont.)**

DATE	EVENT	HOSTED BY	LOCATION
9/13/2024	Iza Trini Lime	The Embassy of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago and Caribeat	Embassy of Trinidad & Tobago 1714 Massachusetts Ave NW
9/13/2024	CBC Sunset Social	Invite Only	Solaire Social 8200 Dixon Ave, Silver Spring
9/13/2024	#BlackWomenLead Reception	Emily's List & Higher Heights	12 Stories 75 District Square SW
9/13/2024	Pepco's 2024 "More Than Energy" Reception	Pepco	Pepco Edison Place Gallery 702 8th St NW
9/13/2024	The Arizona Community After Dark DC Experience	Arizona Delegation	Fabulous Restaurant and Lounge 2406 18th St NW
9/13/2024	NPhA 2024 CBC ALC Reception	National Pharmaceutical Association (NPhA)	Potomac View Terrace   APhA Headquarters 2215 Constitution Ave. NW
9/13/2024	FAMU Alumni & Friends CBC Welcome Reception	By FAMU National Alumni Association Washington DC Chapter	The Park at 14th 920 14th Street NW - 3rd and 4th Floor
9/13/2024	Arizona After Dark DC Experience hosted by HeroZona [Registration Link Inside]	HeroZona	2406 18th St NW Washington, DC 20009
9/13/2024	Michigan CBC VIP Reception & After Glow	Congresswoman Debbie Dingell, and Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib	Grand Hyatt Washington 1000 H Street NW
9/13/2024	CBC WEEKEND - CBC SUITS & SNEAKERS   CHUCKS & PEARLS RECEPTION	Social Architects	Perch SW Rooftop Lounge 69 Q Street SW
9/13/2024	History Makers 2024: A Night of Black Joy	The Collective PAC	Mellon Auditorium 1301 Constitution Ave. NW
9/13/2024	2024 Florida Party	Florida's Congressional Black Caucus Delegation - Rep. Frederica S. Wilson, Rep. Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick, and Rep. Maxwell A. Frost	THRoW Social 1401 Okie St NE STE #102
9/13/2024	The New Party Nola-bration	Peter Damon Group	Union Station 50 Massachusetts Ave

**Saturday 14, 2024**

DATE	EVENT	HOSTED BY	LOCATION
9/14/2024	Hip Hop Caucus	Hip Hop Caucus	The Park at Fourteenth 920 14th St NW
9/14/2024	Our Freedom, Our Futures: CBCF ALC Day Party	Planned Parenthood Federation of America	Ciel Social Club 601 K St NW
9/14/2024	2024 Nonpartisan Brunch hosted by HeroZona (REGISTRATION LINK IN DETAILS)	HeroZona	950 15th St NW, Washington, DC
9/14/2024	National Museum of African American History and Culture	Arizona Delegation	1400 Constitution Avenue, NW Washington, DC
9/14/2024	CBCI Alumni Brunch Young, Black and Elected	Sponsored by Live Nation	513 13th St., NW
9/14/2024	The After Brunch - Tasting Around the World	Skye Curry & The Urban Grape	Urban Grape DC 1301 9th St. NW
9/14/2024	South House vs Naija House - DC South House	South House	Culture (Ivy City DC) 2006 Fenwick St NE
9/14/2024	The CBC Weekend Social Mixer!	The G.R.O.W Initiative	Shanklin Hall 2325 18th St. NW
9/14/2024	CBC WEEKEND - 9TH ANNUAL CBC BLACK AND WHITE GALA	Social Architects	Omni Shoreham Hotel 2500 Calvert St. NW

**Sunday 15, 2024**

DATE	EVENT	HOSTED BY	LOCATION
9/15/2024	Dope Black Girls Brunch 2024	Color Vision	The Hamilton Restaurant 600 14th St NW Washington, DC
9/15/2024	CBC WEEKEND - 9TH ANNUAL CAUCUS BRUNCH AND DAY PARTY	Social Architects	The Mayflower Club 1223 Connecticut Ave
9/15/2024	Black Oak Collective 4th Anniversary Brunch	Black Oak Collective	The Gathering Spot 1720 I Street NW
9/15/2024	Congressional Black Caucus Cigar Social	D S T R K T	Hotel Washington 515 15th St. NW

## **BARBARA BARRETT, ESQ.**



**Barbara McConnell Barrett** is an American businesswoman, attorney and diplomat who served as the United States secretary of the Air Force from 2019 to 2021. She is also an instrument-rated pilot, and cattle and bison rancher.

As the 25th secretary of the Air Force, Barrett leads the affairs of the Department of the Air Force, comprising the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Space Force.

Barrett is a former chair of the Aerospace Corporation and a member on the boards of California Institute of Technology,[3] Jet Propulsion Laboratory, RAND Corporation, Smithsonian Institution, Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, and Lasker Foundation.

Barrett was appointed to the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution by a joint resolution of the House of Resolutions and the Senate, filling the vacancy created by the expiration of David M. Rubenstein's tenure on the board.[8] Barrett's appointment will last for a term of 1912 days, ending on September 17, 2026.



## SENATOR MARK KELLY



**Senator Mark Kelly** is an independent leader who came to the Senate to serve Arizona’s working families, not corporate special interests.

As the son of two police officers, Senator Kelly learned the value of public service at an early age. He attended public schools from elementary school all the way through graduate school. Senator Kelly earned his B.S. degree in marine engineering and nautical science from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and later an M.S. degree in aeronautical engineering from the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School.

As a Navy pilot, he made multiple deployments on the aircraft carrier USS Midway and flew 39 combat missions in Operation Desert Storm. Senator Kelly is the recipient of the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, and multiple Air Medals.

He has logged more than 5,000 flight hours in more than 50 different aircraft and has over 375 carrier landings. Senator Kelly retired from the Navy with the rank of Captain. In 1996, he was selected as an astronaut in the same NASA class as his identical twin brother Scott. Senator Kelly’s first of four trips into space was as pilot of STS-108 in December 2001, during which he helped deliver equipment, supplies, and additional crew members to the International Space Station.

All in all, Senator Kelly has spent more than 50 days in space — traveling over 20 million miles. He retired from NASA in 2011 after commanding Space Shuttle Endeavour on its final flight.

Now, Senator Kelly has embarked on his next mission — serving as a U.S. Senator for Arizona, in the seat once held by Senator John McCain. After being sworn in on December 2, 2020,



## CONGRESSMAN AND ARIZONA SENATOR ELECT RUBEN GALLEGO



**Congressman Ruben Gallego** represents the 7th District of Arizona, including parts of Phoenix, Glendale, and Tolleson, in the U.S. House of Representatives. This Marine Corps combat veteran, and lifelong community leader, is the son of Hispanic immigrants. He was first elected in 2014. Representative Gallego was the first in his family to attend college, graduating from Harvard University.

Congressman Gallego served in the Arizona House of Representatives from 2010 until 2014. As a state legislator, Congressman Gallego became known for his tough stance against extreme legislation in the state legislature. He also led the push for Medicaid expansion and securing in-state tuition for veterans.

Representative Gallego has largely focused on U.S. national security, is a member of the House Armed Services Committee and CHAIR of the Intelligence and Special Operations subcommittee. As a member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs and Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, Representative Gallego works to improve the health and wellbeing of veterans. This includes but is not limited to improving mental health care, funding to address veterans' homelessness in Phoenix and across the country.

As a member of the House Natural Resources Committee, he has fought to uphold Tribal sovereignty and our federal trust responsibility to Native Americans and Alaska Natives. He held the first-ever House hearing on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, led the fight to protect sacred spaces and affirm Tribal Nations' right to sovereign homelands, and championed investment in broadband and other critical infrastructure on Tribal land.

Congressman Gallego is a member and former First Vice Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, a member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, a Vice Chair of the LGBT Equality Caucus, and a Democratic Caucus Assistant Whip.



## CONGRESSMAN GREG STATON



Throughout his career, **Greg Stanton** has worked tirelessly to deliver results for Arizona families. Serving as Phoenix mayor from 2012 to 2018, he focused on building an economy rooted in innovation and trade. Under his leadership, Phoenix created thousands of quality jobs and recently saw the highest wage growth in the nation.

Greg has earned a reputation for working across the aisle to get things done. His biggest accomplishments in Phoenix were passed with bipartisan support: the City's investment in biosciences and higher education, support for small businesses, and national recognition for leadership on LGBT equality. In 2015, Stanton won reelection and successfully led one of the most ambitious transportation initiatives in the country—a bipartisan, voter-backed plan to extend Phoenix's light rail system, expand bus service, and improve thousands of miles of roadways over the next 35 years.

During his time in Congress, Stanton has focused on planning for the state's water future, investing in public transportation and infrastructure, building Arizona's economy of the future, and lowering costs for working families. Stanton is a member of the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee and the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Before his election as mayor, Greg served nine years on the Phoenix City Council and as Arizona's Deputy Attorney General. He attended Marquette University on the Harry S. Truman Scholarship and earned a law degree from the University of Michigan.

Greg and his wife Nicole have two children.



## BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN



**Bonnie Watson Coleman**, a distinguished public servant, currently in her fifth term in the United States House of Representatives, has dedicated her career to championing the rights of New Jersey families and advocating for equity among all individuals. She holds the distinction of being the first Black woman to represent New Jersey in Congress.

As a member of the Appropriations Committee, Watson Coleman plays a pivotal role in shaping federal spending priorities. She also serves as Chair of the Policing, Constitution, and Equality task force within the Congressional Progressive Caucus, where she actively contributes to progressive policy initiatives.

Born into a family with a rich history of public service, Watson Coleman carries on her father's legacy, the legendary state legislator John S. Watson. Her advocacy focuses on marginalized communities, women, and economically disadvantaged populations.

Before her tenure in Congress, she served eight consecutive terms in the New Jersey General Assembly. During this time, she shattered racial and gender barriers, becoming the first Black woman to hold the positions of Majority Leader and Chair of the New Jersey Democratic State Committee. Notably, she led efforts to reform prisoner re-entry programs, earning national recognition for her work in prisoner rehabilitation and release.

In 2016, Watson Coleman co-founded the Congressional Caucus on Black Women and Girls, highlighting the unique challenges and successes of Black women in policy debates. She also actively participates in several congressional caucuses, including the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, the Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus, and the Congressional Asian-Pacific American Caucus.

A well-educated leader, Watson Coleman is a graduate of Thomas Edison State College and has received honorary doctorate degrees from multiple institutions. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and co-chairs the Girl Scouts of America Capitol Hill Honorary Troop. She resides with her husband, William, in Ewing Township, and they have three sons and three grandchildren.

Bonnie Watson Coleman continues to make a significant impact in Congress and remains committed to advancing the interests of her constituents and marginalized communities across the nation.



## CONGRESSMAN AL GREEN



**U.S. Congressman Al Green**, a devoted civil rights advocate, embarked on his ninth term in the United States House of Representatives, representing Texas' 9th Congressional District, commencing on January 3, 2021. With a resolute dedication to amplifying the voices of the underrepresented, he's a staunch advocate for those often marginalized in society.

In the House of Representatives, Congressman Al Green serves on two significant committees. He's a member of the Financial Services Committee, actively participating in three subcommittees: Diversity and Inclusion; Housing, Community Development, and Insurance; and Oversight and Investigations, where he chairs. He also holds a position on the Committee on Homeland Security, contributing to the Emergency Preparedness, Response, & Recovery and Border Security, Facilitation, & Operations subcommittees.

Hailing from New Orleans, Louisiana, Congressman Al Green's upbringing instilled in him the values of education and unwavering resistance against injustice. He pursued education at Florida A&M University, Howard University, and the Tuskegee Institute, ultimately obtaining his Juris Doctorate from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law in 1973. His legal prowess earned him accolades in Federal Procedure and Conflicts during his law school years.

Following law school, he co-founded and co-managed the prestigious law firm of Green, Wilson, Dewberry, and Fitch. In 1977, he assumed the role of Justice of the Peace in Harris County, Texas, a position he held for an impressive 26 years until his retirement in 2004. Throughout his career, Congressman Al Green has earned the admiration of colleagues and community leaders for his legal expertise, impeccable character, and ability to collaborate with diverse individuals.

For a decade, he served as president of the Houston Branch of the NAACP, significantly expanding its membership and influence under his leadership. His outstanding service has garnered numerous awards and accolades, showcasing his unwavering commitment to the community.

In Congress, Congressman Al Green is a member of the Congressional Asian-Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) and the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC). He also actively participates in various community organizations, including Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, AFSCME, LULAC, NAACP, and Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity.

With humility, he often responds to inquiries about his well-being with, "Better than I deserve," a testament to his gratitude for his blessed life.



## REPRESENTATIVE QUANTA CREWS



**Rev. Quantá Crews** is a dedicated public servant, minister, and real estate appraiser serving Arizona's 26th District in the House of Representatives, alongside Cesar Aguilar, since 2023. A native of Wayne County, Michigan, Rev. Crews brings a wealth of experience in property appraisal and community advocacy to her role in the legislature. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in History from Grand Canyon University and has previously worked as a property tax appraiser for both county and state government offices, where she became an advocate for ethical standards in property valuation.

An associate minister at The Historic Tanner Chapel A.M.E. Church in Phoenix, Rev. Crews coordinates the No Limits Special Needs Ministry, providing spiritual support and inclusive programming.

Her ministry and professional experiences fuel her commitment to addressing inequities and dismantling legislative barriers that disproportionately impact marginalized communities.

As a state representative, Rev. Crews is deeply committed to expanding affordable housing, championing reproductive rights, and ensuring Arizona's water resources are preserved for future generations. A passionate equity advocate, she emphasizes the importance of civic literacy, believing that a well-informed public is essential to catalyzing meaningful change within government systems.

In addition to her legislative duties, Rev. Crews serves as a Democratic precinct committeewoman for the 26th legislative district. Outside of her professional and public service life, she enjoys spending time with her sons and is an aspiring lyricist, often expressing herself through poetry.



### **MAYOR KATE GALLEGO**



**MAYOR KATE GALLEGO** has spent her career working to find solutions to complex problems. Prior to being elected as Mayor, she served for five years as the City Councilwoman for District 8, a large district covering much of South Phoenix. Her record of proven results includes leading the campaign to pass Phoenix's citywide transportation plan through 2050 and working to ensure equal pay for equal work.

While on the council, Mayor Gallego helped make Phoenix a leader in job creation and worked with police and firefighters to improve public safety and make neighborhoods more secure.

In March 2019, Mayor Gallego became the second elected female Mayor in Phoenix history and the youngest big-city Mayor in the United States. Mayor Gallego is passionate about building a Phoenix that works for everyone, including her son, Michael, and she led the effort to partner with AARP to make Phoenix a city where seniors can thrive.

She believes everyone should have access to cutting edge medical care and has led on expanding Phoenix's biomedical campus. Mayor Gallego is working to grow the city's economy, create jobs, and stand up for the city's core values.

Prior to being elected Mayor to the city that she loves, Mayor Gallego worked on Strategic Planning and Economic Development for the utility company, Salt River Project. She worked to attract new companies and jobs to Phoenix. Mayor Gallego graduated from Harvard University and earned an MBA from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania.

### **MAYOR COREY WOODS**



**MAYOR COREY WOODS** was elected mayor of the City of Tempe in March 2020. In his professional career, he is the Executive Director of Community Relations at ASU Preparatory Academy. Woods is responsible for assisting the managing director with operations, external partnerships, and strategic initiatives.

He previously served as the chief operating officer for the Greater Phoenix Urban League, director of college and career articulation for the Phoenix Union High School District, and director of government relations for the American Lung Association of Arizona.

Woods served as a council member for the City of Tempe from July 2008 to July 2016. He was elected to the Tempe City Council in May 2008 and reelected in March 2012. Woods was instrumental in guiding city policy that led to Tempe's perfect score in the Human Rights Campaign's "Municipal Equality Index." He championed initiatives in the areas of affordable housing and human services while working tirelessly to improve community development standards to attract business investment and protect neighborhoods.

Woods was named 2022 "Advocate of the Year" by the Arizona Housing Coalition for his advocacy work expanding affordable and workforce housing opportunities. He currently serves as Vice Chair of the United States Conference of Mayors' Housing and Community Development Committee and as Co-Chair of the National League of Cities' Housing Supply Accelerator.

## COUNCILMAN KEVIN ROBINSON



**Councilman Kevin Robinson** is a retired (36 1/2 yrs.) senior law enforcement executive with more than eighteen (18) years of upper management and executive level experience serving the fifth (5th) largest city in the United States. He is also a full time Lecturer in the Watts College of Public Programs and Community Solutions at Arizona State University where he instructs in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice.

Councilman Robinson was elected to the Phoenix City Council representing District 6 – which includes the Ahwatukee, Arcadia, Biltmore, and North Central neighborhoods. He was sworn in on Monday, April 17, 2023.

Robinson’s twenty-plus years of board of director experience has been exclusively in the non-profit arena, the most significant being his service (17 1/2 yrs.) to the Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) of Central and Northern Arizona.

It was in this capacity that he served two terms as President of the Board while directing a successful multi-million-dollar capital campaign. It was with RMHC where he led several different committees, budget, strategic planning, and board development.

In 2020, Robinson was selected by Arizona Supreme Court Chief Justice Robert Brutinel to serve on the Arizona Judicial Council (AJC). The AJC is a policy-making body that oversees the judicial system in Arizona. During the latter part of 2020, Councilman Robinson was nominated by former Arizona Governor Doug Ducey to fill a seat on the Arizona Police Officers Standards and Training Board (AZPOST). AZPOST stands to foster public trust and confidence by establishing and maintaining standards of integrity, competence, and professionalism for Arizona peace officers and correctional officers.

Robinson’s executive-level law enforcement experience (involving several different divisional assignments) included but was not limited to, oversight of the Phoenix Police Department’s approximate 500 million dollar yearly budget, a complex hiring process of sworn, non-sworn, technical, and professional staff, the training process and curriculum, emergency communications system, information technology, records management, property/evidence management, the high-risk tactical and K-9 teams, the air support unit, the investigative units involving homicides, sexual assaults, robbery, drugs, family violence, and burglary, as well as the uniformed patrol function.

Robinson and his wife, Dr. Michele Halyard, have three adult children, James, Christina, and Jordan.

They also have two energetic dogs, a Portuguese Waterdog (Lily) and a Goldendoodle (Daisy).



## COUNCILWOMAN KESHA HODGE WASHINGTON



**Kesha Hodge Washington** was sworn in as District 8 Councilwoman on April 17, 2023, she is the first African-American woman to be elected to the Phoenix City Council. Councilwoman Hodge Washington serves on the Economic Development and Housing and Transportation Infrastructure and Planning Subcommittees and her top priorities in the district are homelessness, affordable and attainable housing, and economic development.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington moved to Arizona from the U.S. Virgin Islands in 1999 and has been active in Phoenix ever since. The daughter of a mechanic and a bookkeeper, she is a first-generation college graduate who earned her bachelor's degree from the University of the Virgin Islands and her law degree from Arizona State University College of Law.

After graduating from law school, she clerked at the Arizona Court of Appeals. She served as Assistant Attorney General working to protect children in physically and sexually abusive environments, before moving into private practice.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington is a professional problem solver, lawyer, consensus builder, and passionate leader committed to the constructive development of our community. Her 20 years of experience in law firms, government practice, and in-house settings has given Kesha valuable insight on how to effectively achieve results.

Among her community service, she helps to raise scholarship money for high school and college students, mentors' young women, and provides free legal services to those in need. She is also active with several organizations including Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and the American Bar Association.



## COUNCILWOMAN BERDETTA HODGE



Berdette Hodge has been a resident of the city of Tempe for over 40 years. She was raised in Tempe and graduated from Tempe public schools. From a young age, Berdette sought to become a transformative leader in our city. She wanted to make a difference in the lives of others. She has been a lifelong contributor to community well-being through public service and a passion for community-building.

In 2022, Berdette made history when she became the first African American female elected to the Tempe City Council. Six years prior, in 2016, Berdette made Tempe history, becoming the first African American woman elected to public office in the City of Tempe by being elected to the Tempe Union High School District Governing Board. Throughout her tenure, Berdette brings experience managing one of Arizona's highest performing school districts. She has had the privilege of serving as both the President and Vice President of the governing board. In her role, she has stood as a champion for the needs of students, educators, staff, and working families. During her tenure on the Tempe Union High School District Governing Board, Berdette has developed skills critical to public service. She takes pride in her ability to bring people together and to set goals and strategies for community success.

Berdette is no stranger to operating community institutions responsible to tens of thousands of Tempe residents. She has received accolades for her responsiveness and proactive approach on community relations. She also knows what it takes to work with the local business community to ensure that it also has a role making Tempe the best place to work, learn, and thrive in Arizona. Berdette enjoys strong working relationships with fellow municipal leaders, as well as county, state, and federal elected officials.

Berdette takes a great deal of pride in her two sons, Jevin and Jazin, who are both graduates of Tempe schools and lauded community leaders. In her free time, Berdette volunteers with student groups in Tempe, such as the Compadre High School Teenage Pregnancy Program (TAPP), where she serves as a mentor and assists with community engagement efforts.

Berdette is a proud graduate of Arizona State University, where she received her bachelor's degree in business administration from the W.P. Carey School of Business.

### Memberships, Boards, and Commissions

- Workforce Readiness and Livable Communities, Co-Chair, Tempe City Council Committee
- Tempe Union High School District Governing Board Member
- Maricopa Association of Governments Regional Domestic Violence Council
- Commissioner, Arizona Commission of African American Affairs
- Arizona School Board Association Black Caucus Board Member
- Vice President of the Booker T. Washington Child Development Center
- East Valley NAACP Leadership Team
- Save Our Schools Arizona Board Member and Advisor
- National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials
- Larry Thomas Youth Development Foundation Board Member
- Tempe Family YMCA Board Member
- Tempe Audit Committee Community Service
- Tempe Woman's Club
- Kiwanis Club of Tempe, Member
- Habitat for Humanity of Central Arizona
- Keep Tempe Beautiful

## ROBBIN COULON



**Robbin Coulon** has been a dedicated member of the Arizona Community Foundation (ACF) Board of Directors since 2013. With a decade of unwavering service, she has played a pivotal role in the organization's growth and development. Coulon's commitment to philanthropy and leadership within ACF is truly commendable.

Over the years, Coulon has held various essential positions within ACF, including Chair Emerita, Vice-Chair, and chairing both the Philanthropic Services and Compensation committees. Her contributions extend to her involvement with the Nominating and Governance Committee.

In her capacity as Chair, Coulon provided visionary leadership, helping ACF chart a course for a promising future. Her dedication to philanthropy is further exemplified by her board membership at the Ellis Center for Education Excellence, where she continues to contribute significantly to STEAM education initiatives.

Beyond her role at ACF, Coulon serves as the Director of Legal Services for the Area Agency on Aging, Region One. This non-profit organization focuses on assisting older adults, victims of late-life domestic violence, family caregivers, and individuals with disabilities. Her legal career has been marked by impactful work, including representing individuals in various class action cases involving employment, special education, public accommodations, housing, and voting rights.

Coulon's impressive educational background includes a Bachelor of Arts with honors from Arizona State University and a Juris Doctor from the ASU Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law. Her commitment to the legal profession is underscored by her membership in the Arizona Black Bar Association, the American Inns of Court, and her past presidency of the Arizona Women Lawyers Association.

Furthermore, Coulon actively contributes to her community by serving on the executive boards of the National Conference of Women's Bar Associations Foundation and the Black Theatre Troupe.

Robbin Coulon's unwavering dedication to philanthropy, legal expertise, and community involvement make her an asset to both ACF and the broader Arizona community. Her leadership and commitment to making a positive impact have left an indelible mark on the organizations and causes she serves.



## CHRIS DOBSON



**Chris Dobson** is Vice President of Salt River Project (SRP), one of the nation's largest public utilities. He is a fourth-generation Arizonan with extensive experience in agriculture and business.

Chris owns and operates two farms in the southeast Valley, which produce alfalfa, Bermuda, corn, cotton, wheat, barley, and oats. He also has a custom hay baling company as well as rental properties in Florence, AZ.

SRP is the oldest multi-purpose Federal reclamation project in the United States. It has been serving Central Arizona with reliable supplies of water and electric power since 1903 when it was formed to build the Roosevelt Dam, nearly 10 years before Arizona became the 48th state.

Chris is committed to carrying on SRP's strong legacy of leadership in water and power to ensure that the Valley and all of Arizona continue to grow and prosper. The Dobson's have been associated with SRP since it was founded in 1903. A member of the Dobson family has served on the company's Board or Council for 106 years of SRP's 120-year history. Chris has served as an elected Board and Council member since 2006 and was elected Vice President in 2022.

Chris has a bachelor's degree in business management from the University of Phoenix. He and his wife Jennifer live in Chandler. They have six children and two grandchildren.

## **ROB TAYLOR**



**Rob Taylor** is Associate General Manager & Chief Public Affairs & Corporate Services Executive of Salt River Project

Rob Taylor oversees Salt River Project's public policy efforts and corporate support services. These activities include managing Federal, State, Local and Regulatory government affairs, Regulatory, Audit & Compliance, Consumer Affairs, Supply Chain, Transportation, Logistics & Warehousing, Flight Services, Facilities and Mechanical Construction Maintenance Services. He is a member of the General Manager's Staff, reporting directly to the CEO.

While at SRP Rob has served in a variety of roles including leading SRP's Regulatory Department and as a Regulatory Attorney at SRP. In addition to his time at SRP, he also led Arizona Public Service Company's Federal Regulatory Department, was an attorney in private practice, served as Legal Counsel for the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee, was a legislative assistant to United States Senator, John McCain, and was Judicial Law Clerk to the Honorable Cecil Patterson, Arizona Court of Appeals. Rob attended Arizona State University for both his law degree and undergraduate degree.

Rob is an active leader on professional and community boards. He currently serves on the Phoenix Art Museum Board of Trustees, The Nature Conservancy Board of Trustees, the Greater Phoenix Chamber Board of Directors, the Valley Partnership Board of Directors, and the Be A Leader Foundation Board of Directors.

## **ESSEN OTU**



**Essen Otu** has managed to successfully harness his passion diversity and inclusion by leveraging his experience and perspective to build more equitable and inclusive communities and institutions. While his career has spanned the government, non-profit, healthcare and utility industries, Essen currently serves as the Manager for Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) at SRP where he is charged with accelerating the impact of diversity and inclusion and positioning SRP as a D&I leader.

Essen is a founder of Real Engagement through Active Philanthropy (REAP), a Black men's philanthropy circle in partnership with the Arizona Community Foundation, is a former Virginia G. Piper fellow, currently serves on the boards of the Diversity Leadership Alliance, Vitalyst Health Foundation where we served as past Chairman of the board, and the Arizona Community Foundation.

Essen received his undergraduate degree from Arizona State University and graduate degree through the National Urban Fellows Program at Baruch College in New York.



## ASHLEY BUNCH



**Ashley Bunch** is a Senior Public Affairs Manager at Arizona Public Service (APS), Arizona's largest investor-owned electric utility. Her primary responsibilities include managing municipal affairs and stakeholder relationships in Phoenix. She has worked in government and government affairs for over 15 years. She previously served as Chief of Staff to Phoenix Councilman Jim Waring and worked on the Martinez for Governor 2010 Campaign and Senator John McCain's 2008 Presidential Campaign.

Ashley is passionate about serving her community and has been a long-time volunteer and board member with the Junior League of Phoenix. Most recently serving as the Executive Vice President where she managed the day-to-day operations of the organization. She has also worked with the Arizona Chapter of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and Phoenix Children's Hospital. She currently sits on the board of directors for Dodie Londen Excellence in Public Service, East Valley Chambers of Commerce Alliance, and Phoenix Committee on Foreign Relations.

Ashley has a Master's in Public Administration from Villanova University and a Bachelor of Science degrees in physiology and psychology from the University of Arizona.

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## ASHTON PRINCELL



**Ashton Princell** joined the Arizona Public Service public affairs team in 2023. She graduated from the University of Arizona with a bachelor's degree in communication and a minor in political science.

Before returning to Arizona with her husband in 2016 she spent 6 years in DC working for Congress and the American College of Cardiology. Ashton Was born and raised in Central Arizona. She currently lives in Phoenix with her husband and children



## KARL GENTLES

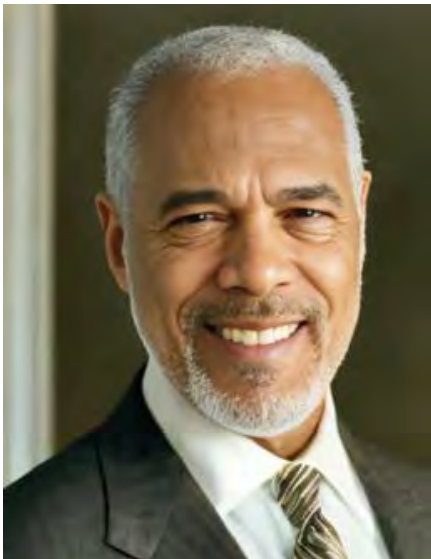


**Karl Gentles** is a partner in The Gentles Agency, a public relations firm specializing in government relations and strategic communications. He has worked or consulted for some of the state's most iconic companies over his 30+ year professional career. He has extensive experience in the nonprofit, business, and political sectors.

Gentles is a proud two-time graduate of Arizona State University, earning his MBA and undergraduate degree in Organizational Communication. His community-involvement includes, amongst others, serving two-terms on the Arizona Corporation Commission, Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee, and board member of the Arizona Venture Development Corporation, Morrison Institute for Public Policy, Arizona Community Foundation, Black Philanthropy Initiative, amongst others.

Karl is married to Carla Wright Gentles, a 29-year U.S. Army Reserves (Ret.), also also a partner in the Agency, who holds a Doctor of Education from Grand Canyon University.

## MICHAEL KELLY



**Michael Kelly** is the Manager of Kelly Consulting Alliance, a Phoenix-based firm specializing in economic development advocacy, management, public relations, marketing consultation, and power networking. He has a distinguished history in public service, including a pivotal role as Senior Policy Advisor for former Phoenix Mayor Skip Rimsza, contributing to downtown Phoenix's economic revitalization.

Kelly's extensive volunteer work includes leadership positions on numerous boards and commissions, notably a 14-year tenure with the Arizona Community Foundation (ACF), where he co-founded the Black Philanthropy Initiative. He currently chairs the Ellis Center for Education Excellence at ACF and serves as President & CEO of The Leadership Consortium (TLC), advocating for educational programs and initiatives.

TLC, a non-profit, historically provided scholarships to low-income and special needs children to attend private K-12 schools. For more than a decade, the non-profit has sponsored the Arizona Delegation to the Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference held annually in Washington, D.C.

A member of Valley Leadership Class XXI, Kelly holds a Master of Arts in Teaching and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from the University of Pittsburgh, as well as an Associate Degree in Social Work from Allegheny Community College. His diverse career also spans radio broadcasting, voice-over work, and television, earning national awards as a local music video program producer.

Michael and his wife Vera have 3 adult children, Moise, Orisha, and Vaughn. And 5 grandchildren, Keairra, Licensed Cosmetologist, NC, Natalia, a student at the University of Arizona Barrett's Honors College, Elon, Southern University Women's Soccer SWAC Champions, Baton Rouge, Caitlyn, Elementary School Honor Roll, and Christian, a brilliant kindergartner!

## **DR. SONYA PEARSON**



**Sonya Pearson, Ph.D., J.D. CEO**, NuSerenity Wellness with advanced degrees in Law and Psychology and extensive experience in grant writing, entrepreneurship, and consulting. Her career is marked by nearly three decades of impactful leadership and strategic partnerships across the non-profit, education, and healthcare sectors.

Dr. Pearson's dedication to Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIB) is reflected in her roles with organizations like the Mesa United Food Bank, A New Leaf, and the Special Olympics, supporting marginalized communities and fostering civic engagement. Her journey began at Tulsa Regional Hospital as a Psychology Technician and at Rogers State College as a Counselor, forming a strong foundation in healthcare and counseling.

Sonya founded NuSerenity, a Weight Loss and IV Therapy Medical Spa, pioneering telehealth and mobile services to improve healthcare accessibility. Dr. Pearson established a campus medical center at Crowder College, showcasing my leadership and innovation in healthcare services.

As Vice President for the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) West Charleston region, she managed a \$3 million budget and led a team of healthcare professionals, spearheading partnerships to support a variety of health sciences programs. A highlight of her work is forging a strategic partnership with the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) to create sustainable, debt-free healthcare education pathways, directly addressing the pressing issue of student debt.

This collaboration aims to support nearly 4,000 health sciences students, providing financial relief and hands-on healthcare experiences through tuition subsidies and accelerated academic programs. Throughout her career, she has cultivated partnerships with organizations such as Goodwill, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Urban League, and the NAACP, increasing resources and access to education. These collaborations align with the Arizona Congressional Black Caucus's mission to enhance community engagement and teach marginalized populations.

## **BERTRAND RUSSELL, JR., ESQ.**



**Bertrand Russell, Jr. Attorney at Law**, is the founder and Senior Pastor of Fountain of Life House of Worship, a multigenerational and community based church located at the base of South Mountain in Phoenix, Arizona. Fountain of Life was organized in 2003 and truly is “A Place Where Everyone is Loved.” The church has been blessed with many ministries to serve the community, including a private Christian school and Fountain of Life is in the planning stages of building an affordable senior housing facility, along with a community life center and gym.

A native of Phoenix, Arizona, Bishop Russell acknowledged at an early age the gifts and talents God had given him and his desire was to use them for Kingdom expansion.

He served as Minister of Music for many years and served in numerous other capacities of ministry with a servant’s heart. Bishop Russell is an entrepreneur, and a bio-vocational pastor with a weekly television ministry in Phoenix, Arizona. He is the District Leader for the State of Arizona, Global United Fellowship under the leadership of Bishop Neil C. Ellis, Presiding Prelate. In July 2018, he was elevated to the office of Bishop under the leadership of Bishop Neil C. Ellis, Global United Fellowship.

Bishop Russell was educated in Phoenix and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Communication, *Cum Laude*, and a Juris Doctor Degree from Arizona State University. A practicing attorney for over 28 years, he is also the Founder of “The Law Offices of Bertrand Russell, Jr.”

In 1982, Bishop Russell married his wife of over 36 years, Jeannette. They are the parents of two children, Maya and Kye, and their daughter-in-law Alicia, who all reside in Phoenix. They have two beautiful grandchildren, Aaliyah and Amir. Together the family serves in ministry at Fountain of Life with a mission to love God passionately and people patiently.



## VICTORIA WILLIAMS



**Victoria Williams**, was born in Germany and adopted by a young military family, along with her sister, as an infant. She's lived across the U.S. and the globe and is insatiably curious. She joined American Express in September of 2009 and has held various roles from T & D to operations management, and account development. Global project management and now she leads Campus operations for the US and her teams recruit for multiple business units summer interns and Campus full-time hires.

Over her tenure at American Express, she has been very engaged in leadership roles within the Employee Engagement Networks, was the Phoenix Liaison for all the Colleague Networks and was co-chair for the 2018 and 2019 Give2Gether Campaigns, as well.

Victoria holds a BA in Political Science and Communication from The University of AZ and a Master of Science in Organizational Leadership from Grand Canyon University (summa cum laude). She is the mother of three twenty-something young adults India, Jasmine, and Jayden, and a four-year-old Weimaraner, Lucy, who often accompanies her on her hikes. She is the proud Gigi to Vashti Amari who turns one in September of this year.

She became a U.S citizen in 2002 and loves to travel internationally at least once a year. Victoria is a member of the 2018 cohort of the African American Leadership Institute, was the Valley of the Sun United Way's WLC Woman of the Year, serves on multiple non-profit boards, and volunteers with the YWCA and various other local non-profits.

Victoria was recently named the incoming Chairman of the Board for the Herberger Theater Center. She is a active member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, and was their 2020/21 Tempe Alumnae Chapter Social Action Chair. She is active and enjoys hiking, bicycling, yoga, and anything creative or outdoors.

## DR. CORINICE WILSON



**Dr. Corinice Wilson, Ph.D**, Dean of Retention & Engagement Tulsa Community College, New TLC Advisory Council Member

As a first-generation, low-income student, Dr. Wilson is a proven example that a quality education is the "Great Equalizer".

She holds a PhD in sociology from Oklahoma State University and two master's degrees, in human relations with an emphasis in counseling and sociology with an emphasis in criminology and social inequality from the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University, respectively.

## **DR. VERNON MORRIS**



**Dr. Vernon Morris** is a Foundation Professor and Associate Dean of Knowledge Enterprise and Strategic Outcomes in the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at Arizona State University. In this role, he supports and amplifies the creative, scholarly, and critical work of nearly 350 faculty and staff.

He also manages programs that enable over 1000 students per year to participate in research activities and internships. Dr. Morris holds appointments as a Senior Sustainability Scientist in the Julie Ann Wrigley School of Sustainability and is an Affiliate Faculty in the School of Earth and Space Exploration (SESE).

He is one of the inaugural leads of ASU's Presidential Postdoctoral Program and Presidential Graduate Scholars Program; two initiatives designed to address the production, enhanced recruitment, and improved retention and success of Black and other racialized faculty across the academy. The program has supported the recruitment of over fifty postdoctoral fellows eligible for faculty positions at ASU and over 75 graduate students in its first four years of implementation.

Dr. Morris' research focuses on the chemical evolution of airborne particles in the lower troposphere and their implications to urban aerobiology, climate, and environmental justice. He has published over 80 refereed publications, book chapters, and technical reports and garnered over \$75M in research funding as principal investigator. He has served on numerous technical advisory committees and currently serves on the National Science Foundation Committee on Equal Opportunities in Science and the National Climate Security Roundtable. His recent recognitions include the 2020 American Geophysical Union Presidential Citation for Science and Society, a 2022 Flinn Foundation Distinguished Scholar, and the 2023 AGU Lifetime Achievement Award for Diversity and Inclusion.

Dr. Morris is passionate about broadening the participation and success of racialized and marginalized groups in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). His training programs are responsible for producing 60% of the African American PhDs and 30% of the Latina PhDs in Atmospheric Sciences between 2006 to 2018 in the United States. His K-gray geosciences outreach programs have engaged over 25,000 learners since 2011.

## ASHLEE ATKINS



**Ashlee Atkins** is an accomplished HR professional with over eleven years of experience within training, recruitment, and project management with a focus on diversity and inclusion within the workforce. In her current role as a Culture and Inclusion Manager at ASU Enterprise Partners, she is responsible for developing and implementing strategies, programs, and initiatives that promote Inclusive Excellence while partnering with their Inclusive Excellence , Employee Resource Groups, HR Business Partner Councils and other key stakeholders to deliver our Inclusive Excellence strategy.

Outside of her day job, she is the immediate past President of the Greater Phoenix Urban League Young Professionals (Phoenix YP) and Program Manager for YP CoNext at ASU.

This mentorship program builds a bridge between ASU Black college students and Phoenix YP to foster personal and professional development, around leadership, life skills, and community service to aid in the transition from college students to high-performing young professionals.

Ashlee holds a Master's degree in Business Administration from the University of Phoenix and a Bachelors of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Arizona.

Ashlee has also sat on the boards of the National Association of African Americans in Human Resources Arizona Chapter (NAAAHRAZ) and National Coalition of 100 Black Women Phoenix Metropolitan Chapter. In 2022, she was a recipient of Phoenix Business Journal 40 under 40, 2022 Color Magazine 40 under 40 and the Greater Phoenix Chamber's Athena award finalist in the young professional sector. Ashlee is also a proud active member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.



## CYNTHIA FORD



**Cynthia Ford** was born and raised in Cleveland and with Cleveland politics. Cynthia has worked for and with many prominent officeholders and political campaigns. Cynthia's first exposure to being an advocate and political activist dates to the days of stuffing envelopes and adding stamps to letters for the Mayoral Campaign of the Late Carl B. Stokes. She has continued to strive for equity, equality, human rights, education, and the elimination of voter suppression.

Cynthia holds a Bachelor of Arts (BA) from Hiram College, a Master of Education (MEd) from Cleveland State University, and a Project Management Professional (PMP) from the Global Project Management Institute. Currently, Cynthia is employed as a Project Manager and holds a seat on the Board of Directors for the Project Management Institute Phoenix Chapter.

As you can see, having worked on the Hill, Cynthia knew everyone in DC and was a phenomenal addition to the TLC Team.

## RHOSHAWNDR L. CARNES



**Rhoshawndra L. Carnes** is a Community Development Consultant at Arizona Public Service (APS)

She the immediate past chapter president of the Phoenix Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. where she served four years in that capacity.

After college, she was employed by Xerox Corporation as a Buyer. In August of 2001 she relocated to Phoenix, AZ and worked for the State of Arizona' Department of Economic Security (DES) as a Homeless and Food Bank Contract Manager. Rhoshawndra decided to leave state government and go back to corporate America and became a Buyer for Honeywell Corporation.

She obtained her Bachelor of Science degree in Hotel and Resort Management and Minority Relations from Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in Rochester, NY. Rhoshawndra also obtained her Master degree in Nonprofit Studies.



## **DR. ASHLEY HODGE**



**Dr. Ashley Hodge**, a South Phoenix native and third-generation graduate of the Roosevelt Elementary School District, is deeply committed to her community. Her educational journey, rooted in South Phoenix, led to degrees in Social Work from Arizona State University and a doctorate in Behavioral Health. In May, she achieved her second doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Southern California. Actively engaged nationally and locally, Dr. Hodge contributed to Red Cross Disaster Relief initiatives from 2019 to 2022.

Currently, she serves as co-chair of the Education Committee at the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, advocating for health, education, economic empowerment, and civic engagement for Black Women and Girls.

As a Governing Board Clerk in Roosevelt Elementary School District, Dr. Hodge is dedicated to preparing students for high school challenges. Her role as a Board Trustee for the Arizona School Board Association Insurance Trust underscores her commitment to educators' well-being. Dr. Hodge promotes a holistic approach to education, emphasizing social-emotional learning and students' physical and mental well-being. Her leadership aligns with her goals for the SRP Board: Advocating for environmental justice in the transition to clean energy. Increasing solar energy usage in Arizona. Raising awareness about environmental conservation and sustainable living. Ensuring council diversity and representation from various backgrounds.



## ERNEST ROSE



**Mr. Ernest Rose** is a visionary leader in education, currently serving as the Superintendent of Wilson Elementary School District #7 in Phoenix, Arizona. With over two decades of experience in educational administration, Mr. Rose has a well-established record of developing innovative programs and fostering inclusive, collaborative learning environments. His extensive expertise spans curriculum development, policy creation, and strategic leadership, making him a transformative force in the field of education.

Mr. Rose is dedicated to ensuring that all students have access to high-quality educational opportunities. Since assuming his role at Wilson Elementary School District in 2021, he has focused on elevating student performance and enhancing staff development.

Under his guidance, the district has engaged in Project Momentum Arizona, an initiative designed to improve academic outcomes by aligning instruction with Arizona State Standards. Recognizing the unique challenges faced by the district, Mr. Rose has been instrumental in addressing key areas such as teacher collaboration, differentiated instruction, and common assessment development.

Throughout his career, Mr. Rose has launched numerous impactful programs, including instituting the Kids at Hope philosophy district-wide, obtaining AdvancEd Accreditation, and creating Arizona's first Big Picture Learning School. Additionally, he spearheaded the Microsoft IT Academy and Adobe Certification Program, providing high school students with valuable technical skills. His commitment to leveraging technology to enhance learning is evident in his work establishing 1-to-1 technology initiatives and project-based learning environments.

Mr. Rose is also an active community leader, serving on various boards and committees focused on educational and youth development. He is a lifetime member of both the National Alliance of Black School Educators and the National Association of School Superintendents, where he collaborates with other leaders to advance equity and excellence in education.



## **ROXANN FAVORS**



Roxann Favors, Assistant Aviation Director & Chief Revenue Officer. From a public service career that has spanned two decades, Roxann Favors intimately understands the work needed to be a successful civil servant. Ms. Favors began working with the City of Phoenix in 2003 in the city's highly competitive management internship program.

After successfully completing the internship, she was promoted to management within the Business and Properties division of the Aviation Department. Ms. Favors stayed with the Aviation Department for eleven years, five of which were as a Deputy Aviation Director of the Business and Properties division.

Subsequently, Ms. Favors was selected to be the Major Events Administrator for the city of Phoenix. In this role she was instrumental in bringing high profile events to Phoenix, such as the 2016 College Football Playoffs (CFP) Championship Game, the 2017 NCAA Men's Final Four, the 2017 Lost Lake Music and Arts Festival, and the annual M3F Music Festival. Additionally, it was through her leadership that Phoenix participated in bids for and won the opportunity to host Super Bowl LVII in 2023. Other major events that Phoenix will host in the future thanks to Ms. Favors' efforts are the upcoming NCAA 2024 Men's and the 2026 Women's Basketball Final Four tournaments.

Going back to her roots, Roxann has returned to the Aviation Department as Assistant Aviation Director/Chief Revenue Officer overseeing the Business and Properties, Contracts and Services and Technology divisions, and Sky Harbor's air service development program.

Ms. Favors holds a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's degree in public and international affairs, both from the University of Pittsburgh. In addition, Ms. Favors is a Certified Member of the American Association of Airport Executives.



**CHAD R. MAKOVSKY, A.A.E.**



Chad Makovsky, A.A.E., Aviation Director, was named City of Phoenix Aviation Director in March 2021. He provides executive leadership and strategic direction for the Phoenix system of airports, including Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX), Phoenix Deer Valley Airport (DVT), and Phoenix Goodyear Airport (GYR). In his role, Chad leads one of America’s largest airports with 24 airlines providing nonstop service to more than 140 destinations across North America and Europe. Chad returned to Phoenix after serving as the Executive Vice President of Operations at Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport (DFW). Before DFW Airport, Chad held various roles with the City of Phoenix Aviation Department, Burbank Airport, John F. Kennedy International Airport, and America West Airlines over his 34-year professional career.

Chad is an Accredited Airport Executive with the American Association of Airport Executives and serves on their Board of Directors and their International Board (IAAE). He also serves on the Board of Directors for Airports Council International – North America, and on the Airport Oversight Committee for the Transportation Research Board’s Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP). He also serves on several state, regional, and local boards including the Arizona Lodging and Tourism Association, the Arizona Governor’s Tourism Advisory Council, and the Arizona Humane Society. He holds a Private Pilot’s License, a Bachelor of Science in Aviation Operations from St. Cloud State University, and a Master of Business Administration from Arizona State University’s W.P. Carey School of Business.



## LORNE EDWARDS



As Chief Sales Officer of Visit Phoenix, Lorne Edwards sets and guides the overarching sales and destination services strategic initiatives and operational competencies of the DMO. Edwards is responsible for positioning Greater Phoenix as the premier global destination for meetings, events, and leisure travel visitation.

He has served on the American Society of Association Executives Industry Partner Alliance Board, DI's Convention Sales & Services Committee, and its Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee, was named to the U.S. Travel Association's Inaugural Leadership Program earlier this year and sits on the University of Arizona's Health Sciences Community Council.

Edwards was also a founding member of Association Forum's Healthcare Collaborative which has heightened the reputation of Phoenix as a world-class hub for hosting national healthcare and scientific conferences.

Edwards has held several leadership roles at Visit Phoenix including most recently Sr. Vice President of Sales & Destination Services. Additionally, Edwards spent over 16 years with Hyatt Hotels Corporation in sales leadership roles in Boston, Denver, Atlanta, and Orlando. A native of Antigua, West Indies, he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and Hospitality Management from the University of Central Florida.

Edwards has been a supporter of TLC and our participation in the CBC for many years.



## RON PRICE



**President & CEO, Ron Price** leads the Visit Phoenix team in its mission to promote the power of travel to elevate our communities and inspire our visitors. With more than 27 years of experience in the tourism industry, Price has long been an active proponent of national, state, and local tourism.

He serves on various industry and community boards and is a member of the Board of Directors for the U.S. Travel Association, the Board of Directors and Executive Committee for the Arizona Lodging and Tourism Association, the Board of Directors for Downtown Phoenix Inc., the Greater Phoenix Chamber, and is a member of the Phoenix Aviation Advisory Board and Phoenix GO Bond Arts & Culture Subcommittee.

Before he arrived in Greater Phoenix, Price served as President & CEO of the Arlington Texas Convention & Visitors Bureau. He previously served as Assistant Executive Director of Visit San Antonio, a recognized leading convention destination. Before his time in the DMO world, Price spent over 12 years as a Marriott International executive.

Under Ron Price's leadership as CEO of Visit Phoenix, the region experienced a record-breaking surge in tourism, with visitors to the Phoenix metro area generating nearly \$23 billion in total economic impact in 2023, including \$12.9 billion in direct spending. This activity supported 141,000 jobs and contributed \$1.6 billion in state and local tax revenue. Statewide, 45.2 million visitors spent \$29.3 billion, fueling a 7% increase in tax revenues and adding nearly 9,000 jobs to Arizona's economy. The 2024 NCAA Men's Final Four further bolstered the region, delivering a \$429 million economic impact, \$153.2 million in labor income, and \$21.2 million in tax revenue for Arizona. These achievements underscore Ron's pivotal role in driving tourism's vital contributions to the state's economic prosperity.



### QUINTON WARD



**Q Ward** is a 15+ year DJ and broadcast veteran. The Detroit native has spent over 20 yrs in the entertainment space spanning several different roles in and around professional sports, film, television, music and philanthropy. He's had a very diversified life and career having lived and worked in 4 countries, on 3 continents and in over a dozen cities.

Q is the former in-arena DJ for the Phoenix Suns, a manager for creatives, a BMI-published songwriter, co-host of Civic Cipher (a one-hour talk radio show currently broadcasting nationwide), co-founder of The Change Society 501(c)(3) and currently owns the media imprint, Hip Hop Weekly. @iamqward

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### RAMSES JA

**Ramses Ja** is an award-winning broadcasting professional with a career spanning over two decades on radio and television stations across the country. Being a celebrated DJ and media personality, Ramses has been featured on many billboards, magazine covers, newspaper articles, and national radio and television. Ramses has always taken this notoriety and used it to inspire Black and Brown youth. As a former president of his college's Black Student Union, this has been central to his efforts his whole career.

Ramses has gone on to win media and activist awards from several prestigious institutions including the NAACP and The Black Philanthropy Initiative. Currently, Ramses hosts Civic Cipher with Q Ward.



Additionally, Ramses hosts The Black Information Network Daily Podcast where he interviews Black journalists around the country to gain more insight into national news stories. The Black Information Network Daily Podcast is found on the Black Information Network—a subsidiary of iHeartmedia. @ramsesja

## **RESTRUCTURING OF TLC – PRESIDENT & CEO COMMENTS**

Good Afternoon, Colleagues,

For over two decades, I have had the privilege of attending the Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference (CBC), a gathering that is both inspiring and challenging for African Americans across the nation. During these years, I have heard the jests and barbs from our brothers and sisters who, with a mix of humor and incredulity, have questioned Arizona's presence and our experience as African Americans in Arizona. Comments like, "Hey y'all, since 10 of you are here at the CBC, are there any Black folks left in Arizona?" or "Isn't that where Barry Goldwater was from?" were delivered with a wink and a nod. Others have offered sarcasm but not without an underlying curiosity: "What's it like being Black in Arizona? Didn't you all rescind the MLK Holiday?"

Though these remarks carried a sting, they also fueled a fire within me—a determination to shatter the myths and misconceptions about African Americans in Arizona. As the saying goes, "The best revenge is success," and we have indeed succeeded beyond measure.

I am incredibly proud to share that our journey from those humble beginnings, where only a handful of us represented Arizona at the CBC, has led to an extraordinary transformation. Today, I am pleased to announce that our Arizona Delegation to the CBC boasts over 120 registered participants—a formidable group representing the very best and brightest Black people in our state.

Our delegation includes State Legislators, esteemed members from the Governor's office, Mayors and City Council members from Phoenix, Tempe, and Avondale, as well as Judges, Magistrates, Attorneys, Medical Doctors, Ph.D.'s, Academic faculty, staff, Corporate Executives, Consultants, Municipal Administrators, Clergy, Community Leaders, and Non-Profit representatives. Perhaps most significantly, we are joined by the bright minds of tomorrow—students from Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, South Mountain Community College, and Tulsa Community College

The slings and arrows have now been replaced with admiration and respect. "Wow, I didn't realize Arizona had such prominent African American leaders," is a refrain we hear often, a testament to our collective efforts and the undeniable impact we have made.

None of this would be possible without your unwavering commitment, your tireless advocacy, and your belief in the potential of our community. Together, we have not just answered the questions posed to us—we have redefined what it means to be Black in Arizona.

Thank you for your dedication and for being part of this incredible journey.

Michael Kelly, President & CEO  
The Leadership Consortium



## VISION AND MISSION

**Vision and Mission:** TLC's vision is to promote the development of African American, Hispanic, and other individuals of color as community leaders. This is achieved through comprehensive instruction, professional training, and career development programs designed to improve their skills and capabilities

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We extend our deepest gratitude to the Burton Family Foundation for their generous support as the premier sponsor for the 2024 Arizona Delegation to the Congressional Black Caucus and their instrumental role in establishing The Leadership Consortium Student Leadership Institute.

Guided by a belief in the inherent dignity of all individuals, the foundation's commitment to advancing individual achievement through education and human services initiatives is truly inspiring. By prioritizing high-need, underserved, and underrepresented communities, the Burton Family Foundation works tirelessly to eliminate disparities and create pathways to shared prosperity, embodying the values of equity, opportunity, and empowerment. Their partnership is pivotal in shaping a future where every individual has the resources and support to thrive, and we are honored to have them as a driving force in this vital mission.



**THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED**

*In Loving Memory of Ebonee Flack Sifuentes*



**March 10, 1984 ~ July 17, 2024,**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 2024 AZ Delegation to the Congressional Black Caucus honors and celebrates the remarkable life of Ebonee Flack Sifuentes, a beacon of strength, leadership, and compassion. Born in Ft. Worth and molded by her diverse upbringing in Texas, California, and even Okinawa, Japan, Ebonee's life was a testament to resilience and dedication.

Ebonee was not just a community and corporate leader; she was a force of nature in every endeavor she pursued. Her journey in the financial industry, spanning 15 years, saw her rise from an intern at Merrill Lynch to a Field Supervision Director overseeing nearly 200 financial advisors. Her roles at Sage Point Financial, AIG Advisor Group, and MassMutual were marked by her unwavering commitment to excellence and her ability to lead with integrity.

As the Chair of Economic Development for the West Valley NAACP and Co-Chair for the Black Philanthropy Initiative in Arizona, Ebonee's influence extended far beyond her professional achievements. She was a champion for financial literacy, small business growth, and racial equity, using her platform as Ms. Black Globe Barbados to advocate for these crucial causes.

Ebonee's leadership was also evident in her involvement with the Greater Phoenix Urban League Young Professionals and the National Coalition of 100 Black Women Inc - Phoenix Metropolitan Chapter. Her contributions to the community were recognized with numerous accolades, including the Phoenix Business Journal's 2023 40 Under 40 award.

Ebonee was a survivor and an advocate, a 10-year stroke survivor who turned her personal battle into a mission for awareness and support. Her academic accomplishments, with degrees in Finance and Economics, and an MBA in Management, were matched by her practical wisdom and her strategic, problem-solving mindset.

Ebonee's life was a mosaic of service, empowerment, and love. She improved the Arizona community through her board service, philanthropy, and volunteerism. Her legacy is one of strategic thinking, execution, and a relentless drive to empower others.

As we remember Ebonee Flack Sifuentes, let us carry forward her spirit of dedication, her commitment to excellence, and her unwavering love for her community. She leaves behind a legacy that will inspire and guide us for years to come. May she rest in peace.

Ebonee Flack Sifuentes was a community and corporate leader, licensed financial professional, speaker, author, real estate investor, and the reigning Ms. Black Globe Barbados. She served as Chair of Economic Development for the West Valley NAACP and Co-Chair for the Black Philanthropy Initiative in Arizona, and former liaison to the Black/African American Business Resource Group of over 1000 members.

In addition to being in leadership with the NAACP and Black Philanthropy Initiative, Ebonee was a member of the Greater Phoenix Urban League Young Professionals and the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc. - Phoenix Metropolitan Chapter. As Ms. Black Globe, she uses her platform to advocate for financial education, small business growth, and racial equity.

Ebonee was a 10-year stroke survivor and awareness advocate, and she held degrees in Finance and Economics, as well as an MBA in Management. She was a Fellow of the Executive Leadership Council, a graduate of the African American Leadership Institute, and an awardee of the Phoenix Business Journal's 2023 40 Under 40.

Ebonee Flack Sifuentes was known for strategic thinking, problem-solving, execution, networking, and empowering others. She uses her skills and resources in finance, economics, and leadership to improve the Arizona community through her board service, philanthropy, and volunteerism.

Ebonee went home to be with the Lord on July 17, 2024. And was loved and respected by family, friends, professional colleagues, and the community she served so well!

*"A life that touches others goes on forever"...*

**BUILDING BRIDGES:**  
**“Strengthening**  
**Communities**  
**through**  
**Sacrifice**  
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