



Louisiana Association  
of Public Charter Schools

January 2021

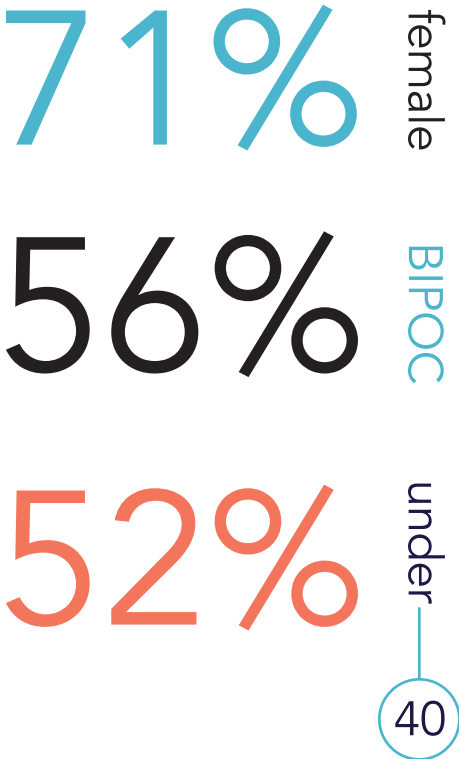
# Charter Board Leadership Academy Board Bank



# Board Bank

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In partnership with Education Board Partners, the Charter Board Leadership Academy (CBLA) is a six-month selective fellowship program that explores the most critical issues facing charter school boards. Fellows gain mastery in effective board governance and are prepared to assume the responsibility of charter school board service. The CBLA creates a pipeline of diverse and dedicated Fellows to serve as the next generation of leaders in Louisiana charter schools. Since 2018 program inception, CBLA Fellows are 71% female, 56% BIPOC, and 52% under age 40.





## About the Prospects

The candidates in this booklet are ready to make a difference by joining a charter school board. They are dedicated, knowledgeable, and passionate community members who have demonstrated their commitment to supporting public charter schools by completing the Charter Board Leadership Academy. They are prepared to put their knowledge into practice today.

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To recruit a candidate to your board, please contact  
**Kevin Gutterrez** — LAPCS Governance Director,  
at: [kgutterrez@lacharterschools.org](mailto:kgutterrez@lacharterschools.org) or **(504) 291-8479**.

<b>Laureé Akinola-Massaquoi</b> Teacher, Civic Leader, Advocate	<b>5</b>	<b>Tiffany Lewis, M.Ed.</b> Development, Educator	<b>25</b>	<b>Natalie Williams, BS, MA, PsyD Intern</b> Behavioral Health, Community Advocate	<b>45</b>
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## Laureé Akinola-Massaquoi

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*Teacher, Civic Leader, Advocate*

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Laureé is a Rhode Island native, but has been residing in New Orleans for over a decade. She holds the role as a Member Engagement Coordinator for Color of Change PAC and is a passionate advocate in her local and global community.

Laureé currently serves as the Community Outreach and Advocacy Chair for the National Urban League of Louisiana's Young Professionals GNO Chapter. Most recently, Laureé completed the Urban Leaders Fellowship-New Orleans and Leaders of Color New Orleans where she worked on a combination of policy advancement, community advocacy, and political strategizing.



# Laureé Akinola-Massaquoi

2019

CBLA Fellow



## Kristen Amond, JD

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*Attorney, Instructor, Philanthropy*

[kamond@millsamond.com](mailto:kamond@millsamond.com)

Kristen, a Louisiana native, is an attorney at Mills & Amond LLP and an adjunct professor at Tulane University, where she co-teaches a class on media law. She serves on the board of directors of Emerging Philanthropists of New Orleans and participates in leadership classes with the Council for a Better Louisiana and New Orleans Regional Leadership Institute. Before attending law school, Kristen taught second and third grade at charter schools in New Orleans. She is grateful for the opportunity to use her experiences as an educator and an attorney to serve the children of New Orleans.

# Kristen Amond, JD



CBLA Fellow

2018



## Caroline Bordelon

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*Attorney, Teacher*

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Caroline Bordelon, an attorney at the New Orleans firm of Gieger, Laborde, and Laperouse, is a native of New Orleans and a graduate of the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts. Caroline attended Oxford College of Emory University before receiving her bachelor's degree in Political Science from Emory University in 2007. Upon graduation, she served as a member of Teach for America Hawai'i, teaching middle school mathematics and leading several mathematics departments. While teaching, she earned a Master's in Education from Chaminade University in Honolulu. In 2015, she graduated cum laude from Tulane University School of Law.

# Caroline Bordelon

## Tap Bui

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*Public Health, Non-profit Management*  
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Tap Bui is the Vice President of Community Impact, Health and Fund Distribution at United Way of Southeast Louisiana. She is responsible for directing efforts and strategies in the Health impact area, inclusive of research, program investments, and collaborations. Tap also oversees all grant-making activities.

A New Orleans native, Tap has over nine years of experience in the public health field and nonprofit management. She currently serves as a board member of the Institute for Mental Hygiene.

Tap holds a Master's in Public Health from the LSUHSC School of Public Health, is a certified medical interpreter and fluent in Vietnamese.

 [linkedin profile](#)

2019 CBLA Fellow

# Tap Bui



## Karen Burks

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Finance, Workforce Development  
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Karen E. Burks is the Founder of Burks Management Firm, where she aids her clients with tools to successfully meet their financial recovery through financial education. Burks Management Firm was the 2018 recipient of the New Orleans City Business Money Makers honor. Karen is also the Career and Workforce Development Trainer with the Urban League of Louisiana, providing professional development training to career seekers.

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Academically, Karen has matriculated through her course studies and has a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration in Management from Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, Louisiana, and she has a Master of Arts in Management from the University of Redlands in Redlands, California. Karen possesses two credentials: a certification in Personal Finance from Teachers College, Columbia University (New York, NY) and a Certified Financial Education Instructor (CFEI) from National Financial Educators Council. Karen maintains memberships with several social, civic, and religious organizations such as: Urban League of Louisiana Young Professionals, Junior Achievement of Greater New Orleans—Vice Chair (2018-2019), National Black MBA Association, SCORE New Orleans—Vice Chair (2018-2019), Power Coalition Louisiana She Leads Fellow, Jump\$tart Louisiana Coalition, and United Christian Faith Ministries.

# Karen Burks



# Reginald Coleman

2020 CBLA Fellow

Reginald Coleman has worked in education for over 20 years as a teacher and school leader. He helped open two charter schools in Chicago before moving to New Orleans in 2009. Reginald was a high school principal for 8 years, helping to change the school culture in the schools where he worked. He was previously the education chair for the 100 Black Men of New Orleans for three years. Reginald holds a Master's degree from Lewis University in Organizational Leadership and a B.A. in Psychology.

## Reginald Coleman

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2018  
CBLA Fellow



## Angel Chung Cutno

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*Community Organizer, Program Director*  
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Angel Chung Cutno, a Louisiana native, graduated in Art Education from Louisiana State University. She began her teaching career in Louisiana before moving to California for several years. There, she gained experience in community organizing, nonprofits leadership, and developing project-based curriculum.

Angel moved back to Louisiana in 2016 to continue working in education and immediately became involved in other youth mentorship and service communities including Rotary Club, Asian Pacific American Society, and Leaders of Color.

One of Angel's proudest roles is being the Queen of the Black Seminoles Black Masking Indian Tribe of the 8th Ward.

 [linkedin profile](#)

# Angel Chung Cutno



# Alvin David

Alvin David

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*Policy, Educator, Grants*

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Alvin David brings experience in data analysis, strategy, and policy to his independent consulting practice. Mr. David previously led education grant-making at Baptist Community Ministries and has served in various roles in the public education sector. After completing an Education Pioneers fellowship with the Louisiana Recovery School District, he continued to lead projects addressing special education, behavioral health, truancy and dropout prevention, and other equity initiatives, including the design and implementation of the citywide funding model for all New Orleans public schools. Mr. David studied at UC Berkeley and has continued his education in workforce development and finance. He also serves on the local board of 826 New Orleans.

2019  
CBLA Fellow

# Jeremy

## Jeremy Davis

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*Educator, Public Relations,  
Consultant*

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Jeremy Davis is an educator with a background in public relations, leadership development, and social responsibility. He began his teaching career in Jefferson Parish and later moved to New Orleans College Prep. Currently, Jeremy is the Education + Career Coordinator at Son of a Saint, a nonprofit organization that supports fatherless boys through mentorship. He is also a secondary associate at K. Allen Consulting, LLC, a global education consulting firm that empowers communities through professional development. Jeremy holds a bachelor's degree in public relations from Florida A&M University and a master's degree from Johns Hopkins University.



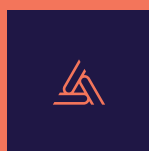
2019 CBLA Fellow

# Davis

## Tiara Denson

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*Policy & Advocacy, Educator*  
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Tiara Denson, a native of Jacksonville, FL, holds a BA in History with a concentration in African Diaspora studies from Spelman College and is currently pursuing a MEd in Education Policy and Leadership from American University School of Education.

Tiara relocated to Louisiana after serving as a Policy and Advocacy Fellow in the state's capital. Her commitment to educational equity was strengthened after uncovering the harsh realities of court-involved youth throughout the state and the lack of access to high-quality education. Tiara currently serves as a middle school writing teacher in Orleans Parish school system. She is passionate about combating juvenile recidivism and truancy.

Tiara is thrilled to have an opportunity to use her background in education, research, community engagement, and policy as a part of the Charter Board Leadership Academy.

2018 CBLA Fellow

# Tiara

# Denson





## John Edwards

*Healthcare, Education*

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John Edwards has 20 years of experience in healthcare and in the education industries, where he has managed strategic relationships with leaders of customer organizations. Currently, Edwards manages Louisiana and Arkansas for Imagine Learning, a leading K-12 online instruction provider. In his role with Imagine Learning, Edwards works with the departments of education and school districts to help students leverage math and literacy programs to close achievement gaps for students in Louisiana and in Arkansas. Edwards lives in Orleans Parish with his wife and daughter and has a son attending the University of Louisiana Lafayette.

# John Edwards

2020 CBLA Fellow



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CBLA Fellow

2020



## Caycee Francis, M.Ed.

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*Healthcare, Education*

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Caycee Francis, M.Ed. acquired her Elementary Education degree from Southeastern Louisiana University. As an Elementary Education teacher, she returned to college to get her Masters of Education in Counseling. She was trained at the University of New Orleans with a certification in Play Therapy. Caycee has spent many years dedicated to serving our youth, and in 2018 began a new venture of connecting, serving and educating corporate business leaders on leadership, personal development and execution. Caycee intends to continue a lifelong adventure of living out her purpose by connecting and helping as many as possible.



linkedin profile

# Caycee Francis, M.Ed.



# Kisha Laurent Gaudin

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*Community & Economic Development,  
Government, Clinical Research*  
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A New Orleans native and lifetime resident with professional experience in non-profits, property management, community and economic development, government, and clinical research, Kisha Laurent Gaudin is a Management Development Specialist with the City of New Orleans. She is a proud graduate of Xavier University Preparatory, later attaining a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology & Social Welfare from Dillard University and a Master of Arts degree in Organizational Management with a concentration in Human Resources from University of Phoenix.

Kisha is currently employed by the City of New Orleans as a Management Development Specialist with the Department of Public Works. She was previously a Leasing Director for 1st Lake Properties, a Recruiter for the New Orleans Center for Clinical Research, and a Housing Director for the Urban League of Greater Dallas.

Kisha is an active member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated, Junior League of Greater New Orleans, Urban League of Louisiana, the Alumni Association of Dillard University, BRAVO, and the Women's Guild. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of Citizens for a Better New Orleans. She also serves on the Executive Board of Xavier University Preparatory Alumni Association as Corresponding Secretary and Class Agent for her graduating class.

Kisha believes that change in the community is only achieved through service.



2018 CBLA Fellow

# Kisha Laurent Gaudin

## Sojourner Gibbs

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*Project Management, Public Relations, Educator*

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Sojourner Gibbs is an experienced project manager and public relations administrator, currently serving as Director of Programs and Policy Evaluation for the United College Action Network, Incorporated. She is the former Founding Dean of Students for KIPP Renaissance Early College Academy in New Orleans, and has an extensive history in college recruitment, marketing, and outreach for Salus Behavioral Institute, Claremont Graduate University – School of Arts & Humanities, and Dillard University.

# Sojourner Gibbs



2019 CBLA Fellow

Sojourner is a current Public Policy Doctoral Student at Southern University and A&M College, and also holds a Master of Arts Degree in Applied Women's Studies from Claremont Graduate University, a Certificate in Africana Studies from Claremont Graduate University, and a Bachelor of Arts Dual Degree in Urban Studies and Public Policy from Dillard University.

Mrs. Gibbs' professional affiliations include the American Association of Blacks in Higher Education, the National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals, Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, and the National Women's Studies Association. Additionally, Sojourner is an Urban League of Louisiana ULEAD Fellow (2017) and a 2019 Congressional Black Caucus Institute – Advocacy and Campaign Training Fellow.





# Cecilia Gillam

## Cecilia Gillam

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*Educator, Community Service*

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Cecelia Gillam holds a Bachelor's of Science in Secondary Education with a concentration in Biology and General Science from Southern University A & M of Baton Rouge, LA, as well as Master of Art in Educational Leadership. Cecilia has been teaching Science at Hahnville High School in St. Charles Parish for the past thirteen years. In 2015 she was selected as a Louisiana State Finalist for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science, the nation's highest honor for teachers of mathematics and science; awardees serve as models for their colleagues, inspiration to their communities, and leaders in the improvement of mathematics and science education.

Cecilia is the proud mother of four beautiful children. She is the creator and sponsor of Alpha Mu Omega sisterhood and community service organization and is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Educating our youth is her passion – with a goal of preparing students for lifelong learning and learning beyond the borders of high school.

2018  
CBILA Fellow



# Katherine Hammer

2019 CBLA Fellow

Katherine Hammer is an occupational therapist at the Hand Center of Louisiana, where she rehabilitates patients after upper extremity surgery. She is the President of Rotary Club of Mid City New Orleans. She also serves on the Wednesday at the Square Committee for the Young Leadership Council. She serves on the board of the Uptown Triangle Neighborhood Association and is active in her church. In her free time she enjoys biking, swimming, watching comedy, and going to art & music events.



Katherine  
Hammer

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*Medical Field,  
Community Engagement*  
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2020  
CBLA Fellow



## Emily Hartnett

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*Strategic Planning, Educator*

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Emily Hartnett currently serves as Deputy Chief of Strategy & Advancement of InspireNOLA Charter Schools, the highest performing open-admissions charter management organization in New Orleans. Emily leads strategic planning and growth initiatives, and oversees human resources, talent, communications, community, external relations, and data departments for the organization. Her core responsibilities include expansion efforts, long-term planning, evaluating organizational health, fundraising, and cultivating external partnerships. She has overseen the expansion of InspireNOLA from 2 schools serving 1,700 students to 7 schools serving over 5,200 students, and has secured over \$24 million in additional funding.

Before joining InspireNOLA, Emily served as a curriculum director, instructional coach, and teacher, and was an administrator of a turnaround school that achieved the highest academic gains of any New Orleans public school in 2014. Emily holds a Bachelor of Science in Political Science and Business from Tulane University and a Master of Arts in Education Leadership from Columbia University, Teachers College.

# Emily Hartnett



linkedin profile



Alex Hochron

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# Alex

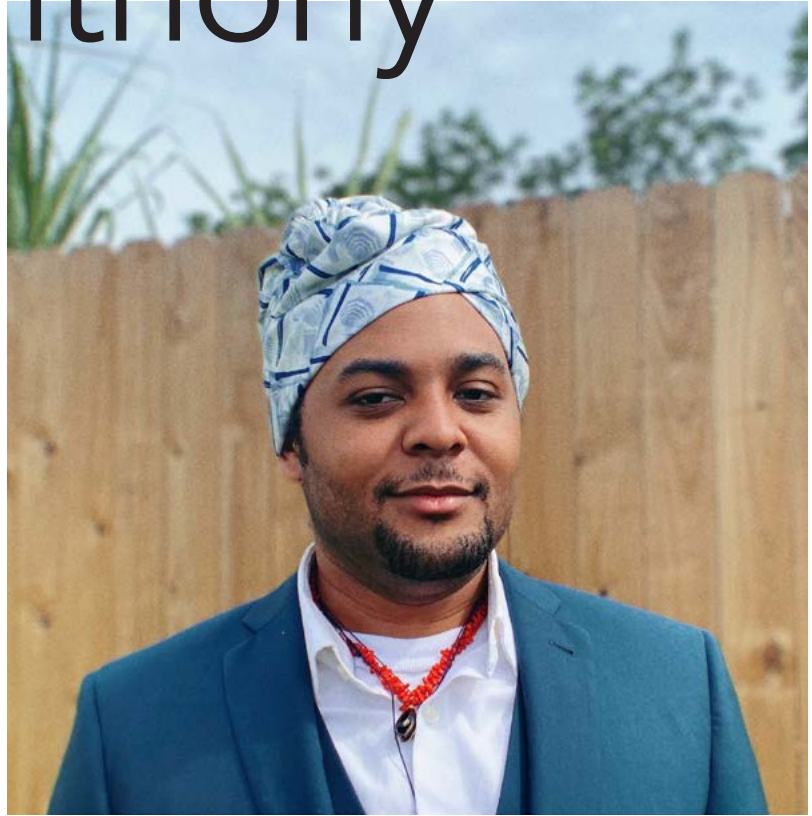
Alex began his education career teaching Math and Special Education in St. John the Baptist Parish. He earned a Master's in Educational Leadership and Administration at the University of Oregon, and in 2008 returned to New Orleans to lead school turnaround efforts at Walter L. Cohen and Joseph S. Clark High Schools. While at Clark his team had the second highest SPS gain in the state, over 28 points. Alex currently works as an education consultant, coaching school and district leaders across the state, supervising data science projects, leading strategy work, and most importantly, being a Dad.



2019  
CBLA Fellow

# Hochron

# Anthony



Anthony Johnson

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Community Engagement, Advocacy  
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Anthony Johnson is an experienced advocate with a proven track record of defending and uplifting marginalized and underserved communities. His work has centered on providing holistic and trauma-informed support to individuals and communities that have been victim to erasure and oppressive systems in the US and abroad. He brings over a decade of experience in community, legislative, and education advocacy.



 [linkedin profile](#)

# Johnson

2020 CBLA Fellow

## Jaryd Kase

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*Small Business Development,  
Strategic Management*  
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Jaryd is a management consultant specializing in helping small businesses develop successful growth strategies. Jaryd holds a Bachelor's degree from Tulane University and a Master's degree from Harvard University. He also holds a Graduate Certificate in Strategic Management from Harvard University and was part of the 2017 cohort of the Youth Leadership Program's Leadership Development Series in New Orleans. In 2016 he co-founded Les Enfants d'Abord, a youth education nonprofit located in Senegal. He remains active in the organization's work. Jaryd lives in New Orleans with his wife, son, and puppy.

# Jaryd

2019 CBIA Fellow

# Kase



linkedin profile





## Tiffany Lewis, M.Ed.

*Development, Educator*

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Tiffany Lewis is the Development Director for the Louisiana Fair Housing Action Center. Tiffany knew since age five that it was her calling to be involved in educating both the minds and hearts of students; fostering the development of empathy, perspective-taking, and a commitment to service above self. Tiffany has transitioned to development after 18 years of teaching in Orleans Parish Public Schools. As a student-centered professional, it is her hope to amplify her impact on student achievement beyond the school setting. In order to advocate for all receiving needed resources, development has become her priority.

Fundraising and development for nonprofits empowers those from under-resourced communities to rise above barriers and create a future of their design. Development is the vehicle she will use to continue her life's mission to support the disruption of systems that are unjust and unfair. A New Orleans native, she earned a BA in English (Writing) from Loyola University New Orleans and a M.Ed.+30 in Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration in Language and Literacy.

 [linkedin profile](#)

# Tiffany Lewis, M.Ed.

# Afina Lockhart, Ed.D.



2020 CBLA Fellow

# Lockhart

*Nonprofit Management, Educator*  
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Dr. Afina Lockhart has been an educator for over 20 years. Her life's journey led her to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia. Upon graduation, Dr. Lockhart returned to Chicago and worked as a credit analyst for American National Bank. With a deep influence from various renowned public school educators, she enrolled in Roosevelt University to complete a Master of Arts degree in Secondary Education and an endorsement in General Science. She continued her pursuit in Education by completing a Doctorate of Curriculum and Instruction as well as earned an endorsement in School Supervision and a Superintendent's Endorsement at Loyola University Chicago.

In 1997 Dr. Lockhart became a founding teacher for the Academy of Communications and Technology charter school where she taught middle school math and science and high school biology and chemistry. In 2004 she became a district wide administrative leader for Chicago Public Schools. Here Dr. Lockhart managed a wide range of academic enrichment programs and grants serving up to 100 high schools and nearly 10,000 CPS high school students. Dr. Lockhart led the increase in the number of students enrolled in advanced placement courses, AP course offerings as well as the number of students taking advanced placement exams. Further, Dr. Lockhart proudly served as CPS liaison to a number of communities across the City of Chicago for Mayor Richard M. Daley's Renaissance 2010 initiative. In 2007, she became an Assistant Principal at Hyde Park Academy High School where she worked to build student and teacher capacity among 10th and 11th grade levels. Dr. Lockhart was particularly instrumental in expanding the advance placement program leading to a significant increase in AP success at Hyde Park Academy High School.

Dr. Lockhart served as Principal of Hirsch Metropolitan High School for 3 years. In her first year as principal, she eliminated a 5-year ACT decline by increasing ACT scores, the percentage of students' meeting/exceeding in math as well as EPAS gains for reading. In the same year, Dr. Lockhart reduced student misconducts by nearly 76%. In year two of her leadership she, again, increased ACT scores and the daily attendance rate. In the same year Dr. Lockhart led a grant writing process and was awarded the Illinois State Board of Education's \$2.4 million School Improvement Grant and a \$500,000 ISBE Community Schools Grant

Dr. Lockhart served as an Adjunct Professor for Concordia University Chicago. Here she led doctoral and master degree candidates by delivering instruction in Instructional Coaching for Effective Teaching and Evaluation, Assessment and Data-Driven Decision Making courses. She most recently served as Site Director for College Track New Orleans and is grateful for her time spent preparing scholars to become first generation college graduates.

Dr. Lockhart will now serve as the Northwest Indiana Region Instructional Specialist for Phalen Leadership Academies, a nationwide turnaround charter school network.

Dr. Lockhart's educational experiences have shaped her commitment to building strong curricular and instructional capacity among principals, assistant principals, counselors, teacher leads and culture and climate staff. Her professional history demonstrates effectiveness in the areas of creating a student-centered learning community that challenges all students to high academic rigor and exemplary behavior. Her character is one that exudes professionalism and a vision for academic growth for all students and ethical leadership.

Dr. Lockhart is the oldest of 7 siblings, Tanzania, Emeka, Chi, Kelechi, Rashunda and LaToya, and the proud aunt of 6 nieces and 5 nephews all-residing in the Chicago, Houston, Memphis and Dallas areas.

## Vasy McCoy

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*Educator, Architect*

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Vasy McCoy is the Chief of School Leadership for ReNEW Schools and the School Director for ReNEW Schaumburg Elementary School. After a career as an architect and college professor, Vasy followed his passion to teach to New Orleans. Vasy was recognized as the RSD “High-School Teacher of the Year” in the 2009-2010 school year, founded an alternative high school in 2011, and continues as a school and network leader today. Vasy’s areas of expertise include leadership development, building a high-achieving and joyful academic culture, instructional coaching, attracting and retaining talented educators, facilities management, and adult leadership and management.



2019 CBLA Fellow

# Vasy McCoy



# B. McGhee

Dr. Breanne McGhee is a full-time clinical optometrist in New Orleans, LA, where she is a native. She completed her collegiate degree at Xavier University of Louisiana and continued onto Pacific University College of Optometry, where she dually obtained her Doctorate of Optometry (OD) and Master's in Education (MEd) degrees in 2016. Dr. McGhee completed a Family Practice Optometry residency at Bond Wroten Eye Clinic in Louisiana, affiliated with the Southern College of Optometry. Later, she earned a Fellowship in the American Academy of Optometry (AAO). Currently, Dr. McGhee is pursuing a PhD in Educational Leadership at Pacific University. She is also an active member of the Optometry Association of Louisiana (OAL), American Optometric Association (AOA), and National Optometric Association (NOA). Her professional interests are advocating for equitable educational opportunities for youth through community involvement and legislative policy.



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Dr. McGhee also has a passion for increasing access to eye care. In 2016, Dr. McGhee created a community outreach group, Elite Youth of Excellence & Service (E.Y.E.S.), which primarily serves to mentor local high school and college aged students. Through E.Y.E.S., student volunteers go out into various communities to educate and spread awareness about ocular and systemic health. Through the program's EYE can READ, EYE can LEARN initiative, Dr. McGhee visits local schools to talk with educators about the role of vision in learning and identifiable visual and behavioral signs of a struggling student. E.Y.E.S. also offers free comprehensive vision exams and eyewear to children from low socioeconomic and homeless backgrounds.



Breanne B. McGhee OD, MEd, FAAO

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# Alexina Medley

## Alexina Medley

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*Educator, Community Engagement*

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Alexina Medley began her professional career in pharmacology, but it did not take her long to figure out that she needed to be in education to positively affect the lives of young people. Alexina began her teaching career as a Special Education educator at Beauregard Middle School, providing her students with the resources needed to graduate from high school with a regular diploma. After eight years at Beauregard Middle Mrs. Medley transitioned to Warren Easton, eventually becoming assistant principal.

The need to expand her areas of expertise brought her to the New Orleans Public Schools central offices, where she organized, implemented and coordinated after school programs throughout the district, and launched the High School Reform Program. However, she missed working with children and accepted a position as Principal of Thurgood Marshall Middle School, a position she held for four years prior to Hurricane Katrina.

In 2006, Mrs. Medley was appointed as Principal/CEO at Warren Easton Charter High School, where she retired after 12 years. During her tenure as Principal, she served as President of the Greater New Orleans Collaborative of Charter Schools for two years. Under Mrs. Medley's leadership, Easton achieved a graduation rate of 100 percent from 2011-2017. Prior to retiring, Mrs. Medley led Warren Eaton to a 106.5 A-Rating Top Gains School Performance Score.

2020  
CBLA Fellow

# KD

## KD Minor

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*Marketing, Career Development*

[knarcisse.minor@gmail.com](mailto:knarcisse.minor@gmail.com)

With a belief in responding to demographic, political and social shifts by acting in creative ways that generate new solutions, Louisiana native KD Minor practices innovation to her core. After feeling siloed, an impromptu move to New Orleans in 2012 revealed her passion. She worked her way from the front desk of a small boutique hotel to becoming an area 5-diamond hotel's Marketing Manager, all while organizing grassroots initiatives and attending classes at Tulane after hours.

A professional Marketing Strategist, KD currently serves as the Outreach Coordinator for EMPLOY at The Cowen Institute where she works to reconnect opportunity youth to education or employment.



2018 CBLA Fellow



[linkedin profile](#)

2019  
CBLA Fellow



## Megan Mitchell

*Accounting, Consulting*  
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After several years bouncing around the Central time zone (as far north as Chicago and as south as Birmingham), Megan landed in New Orleans in 2016. After a past life as a CPA, she currently works for a hospital consulting firm, assisting non-profit clients across the United States to ensure they're paid their contracted rates by insurance companies. Megan lives in the Carrollton neighborhood and enjoys raising plants.



# Megan Mitchell



2019 CBLA Fellow

## Sarah Stickney Murphy

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*Development, Nonprofit Fundraising*

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Sarah Stickney Murphy (she/her/hers) is a native New Orleanian and proud product of New Orleans Public Schools: Robert Mills Lusher Elementary and Middle School, Benjamin Franklin Senior High School, and New Orleans Center for Creative Arts. She has attended The Boston Conservatory, Loyola University of New Orleans, Manhattan School of Music, and New York University's Heyman School of Philanthropy.

Sarah has raised over \$20 Million for nonprofits, with a focus in educational organizations. She is the former Director of the Annual Fund and Reunions for Tulane University's A.B. Freeman School of Business and currently serves as the Associate Director of Development at The NOCCA Institute.

 [linkedin profile](#)

# Sarah Stickney Murphy



2018

CBLA Fellow



## Kendra Norwood

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linkedin profile

*Attorney, Community Engagement*

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Kendra Norwood is currently a staff attorney at the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. She received her B.S. in Biology from Howard University and her J.D. from the University of Arkansas, William H. Bowen School of Law. Kendra previously served on the AIDS Law Board and is a graduate of the Parent Leadership Training Institute.

In her spare time, Kendra enjoys practicing karate and has recently earned her blue belt.

# Kendra Norwood

# Talia Maria Pennington, Ed.D.

*Educator, Mentor*

[talia.pennington@gmail.com](mailto:talia.pennington@gmail.com)

Talia Maria Pennington, Ed.D., a native of Chicago, Illinois, is a passionate enrollment management and college counseling expert who has served black and brown students in the city of New Orleans for over a decade. Dr. Pennington was the College and Career Specialist with InspireNOLA Charter Schools, a School Administrator and Leader of School and College Counseling at Eleanor McMain Secondary School, and a Senior College Counselor at KIPP: Renaissance High School. Before returning to K-12, Dr. Pennington served as the Assistant Director of Recruitment at her alma mater Dillard University and was also an instructor for the office of Academic Center of Excellence.

Beyond recruitment, teaching, and aiding young people to and through college, Dr. Pennington mentors youth in her community and has helped them become world leaders who are culturally aware and concerned with improving the human condition.

Recently, Dr. Pennington relocated to neighboring state Texas, and is now serving as the Director of College Counseling at KIPP: Houston High School.

Outside of Dr. Pennington's daily advocacy for education, she focuses a lot of her energy towards Autism and Breast Cancer Awareness. She is also a small business owner and in 2015 launched WoodenTreasureWorks, LLC., which specializes in personalized hand painted wooden crafts.



Dr. Pennington received her Doctorate of Education from the University of Holy Cross. She also has earned degrees from Roosevelt University, University of Southern California and Dillard University. She also is a graduate of the Harvard University Summer Institute on College Admissions.

Dr. Pennington wholeheartedly leans on a quote by the late Maya Angelou: "When you get, give. When you learn, teach." Dr. Pennington is a teacher and a giver, and has no regrets for having those characteristics.

2019  
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## Sonia Scott

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*Educator, Community Engagement*

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Sonia Scott is a recent graduate of Louisiana State University Shreveport with a concentration in Education Leadership, having attended undergraduate studies at Texas Southern in Houston, Texas. She is a current board member of ONE Nola and an active member of Leadership for Educational Leadership, which focuses on organizing and being a voice for/with the community. Sonia has worked in education, teaching mathematics for grade levels six through ten. She has experience working with student support and working as a case manager for students with services. Sonia is an alumni of Teach For America. She is passionate about education and the students that make her life worth fighting for.



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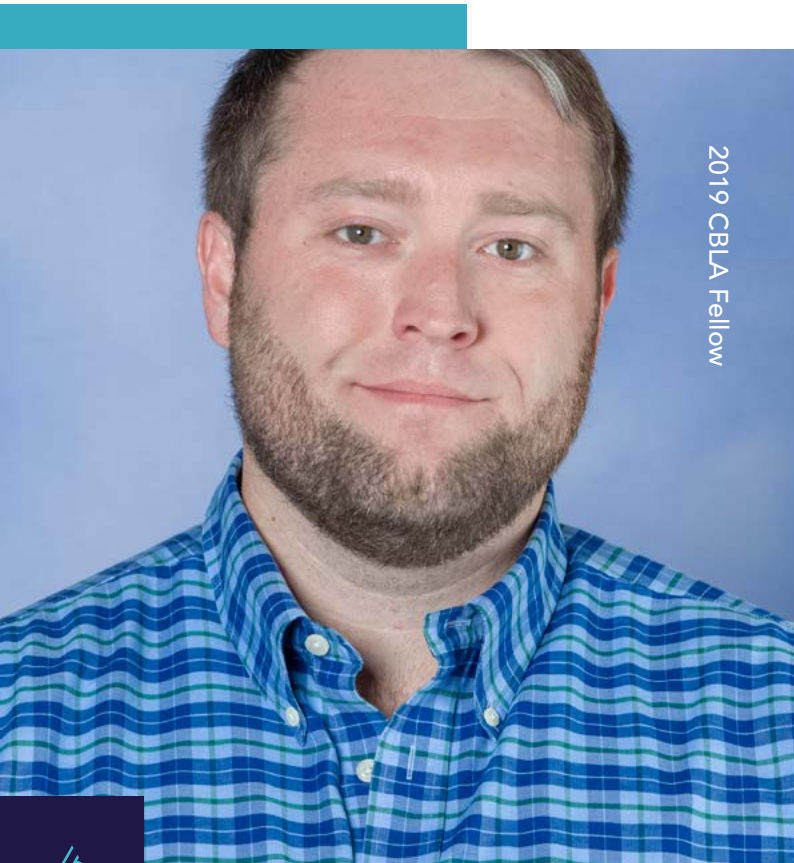
# Sonia Scott

## Stephen Sewell

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*Business, Project Management,  
Community Engagement*  
[StephenTSewell@gmail.com](mailto:StephenTSewell@gmail.com)

Stephen Sewell is currently a Change and Configuration Project Manager contracting for the USDA. Prior to this role, Stephen spent two years as the Vice-President of Petro-Marine Underwriters, an offshore oil and gas consulting firm specializing in financial assurance and regulatory compliance. He also spent four years working as a Project Manager and Senior Consultant on the BP Oil Spill Settlement Project. From 2011 to 2013, he worked in several consulting engagements, with clients ranging from USAA to the Louisiana State Board of Nursing. Stephen also spent two years working for the Office of Governor Bobby Jindal, both as a Regional Field Director and as Press Assistant.



Stephen is actively involved in the Young Leadership Council, where he is the current VP of Development, a member of the Board of Directors, and also a Project Leader for the Leadership Development Series. He also recently completed a fellowship for the Loyola Institute of Politics.

Stephen holds an MBA from LSU, with a specialization in Management Consulting, and an undergraduate degree in Business Management. He also holds his PMP Certification. At LSU, Stephen was a member of Theta Xi Fraternity, where he served as President from 2009-2010. Sewell was also selected to the Leadership LSU Class of 2010. A New Orleans native, he is a graduate of Jesuit High School, Class of 2006.

# Stephen Sewell

# Cherie Teamer



2018  
CBLA Fellow



## Cherie Teamer

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*Attorney, Communications, Public Affairs*

[cherie@teamerlaw.com](mailto:cherie@teamerlaw.com)

Cherie Teamer is an Attorney and a New Orleans native. She is a graduate of Tulane University Law School. Cherie also earned her bachelor's degree from Louisiana State University 's Manship School of Mass Communication with minors in African American Studies and Political Science.

Cherie is currently a Louisiana State Bar Association Lift Fellow focusing on Reentry Work. She primarily works on policy and legal issues surrounding driver's license and child support obligations impacting reentry participants. Cherie also operates a solo real estate, successions, and personal injury practice. Additionally, she works in a political consulting practice that focuses on Public Affairs and Municipal Land Use.



# Jacquelin

## Jacqueline Thanh

*Advocacy, Nonprofit Leadership, Community Engagement*

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Jacqueline is an advocate, womanist, and creative who thrives on forging pathways for sustainable post-traumatic growth and resilience for the next generation of leaders. Her academic and professional commitments, both domestically and abroad, have centered on healing through critical unlearning and redefining leadership. She brings over a decade of expertise in trauma-informed survivor advocacy and program development working across racial, cultural, and generational lines for youth and families on the frontlines of New Orleans, Chicago, Oakland, and San Francisco.

As the Executive Director of the Vietnamese American Youth Leadership Association of New Orleans (VAYLA-NO), she leads the community center in New Orleans East which historically pioneered the fight against environmental racism through youth organizing and language access during the post-Katrina reconstruction period. Under her leadership, VAYLA has grown into an intersectional voice and ally with an Asian American lens championing race, gender, and health equity as and serves as a pivotal resource hub and community incubator in the American south. VAYLA provides culturally integrative programming to facilitate in-depth leadership development through civic engagement, reproductive justice, and environmental justice education in the greater New Orleans area.

# Thank

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## Annie Tête

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*Writer, Educator*  
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Annie Tête is a science writer. She designs curriculum for PhD Science, a national K-8 science program from Great Minds. Annie has worked in science education since 2002, teaching middle and high school biology for 10 years and leading STEM programs at The National WWII Museum and the Louise S. McGehee School. Through research with Montana State University and a fellowship with 4.0 Schools, Annie has worked to increase quality science education access to all students through in-classroom mentorship from science and engineering professionals. She enjoys traveling with her two sons, parading with Krewe Des Fleurs, yoga, and running.



Annie Tête

2020  
CBLA Fellow



## Gail Thomas, Ed.D

*Educator, Special Education, Consultant*  
[dgcr-4@msn.com](mailto:dgcr-4@msn.com)

Dr. Gail Thomas, born and raised in New Orleans, has over 30 years of firsthand experience with the changing landscapes of the education system. Her expertise is extensive; over the course of her career, she has had experiences in teaching, assessing students' skills, writing and implementing Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and overseeing compliance of special education departments. Being on the frontline, she has had the opportunity to serve in various capacities that directly impact all students, particularly those students with special needs. Dr. Thomas specializes in working with students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder. Additionally, she has worked in several leadership roles in both K-12 and in post-secondary settings. As a professor in the department of education, she taught graduate-level courses that have allowed her to educate and empower other special education teachers and administrators. As a consultant, her overall mission is to ensure that each student's precise needs are met, ensuring that they receive the best education opportunities by utilizing evidenced-based resources and customizable skills and strategies to help them achieve their academic goals.

 [linkedin profile](#)

# Gail Thomas



# Todd



Todd Wackerman

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*Educator, Entrepreneur*  
[wackermt@gmail.com](mailto:wackermt@gmail.com)

Todd Wackerman is the founder and director of STEM Library Lab, a local equipment-share resource center for educators in New Orleans. He taught Physics and a variety of other STEM subjects at public schools in New Orleans and Brooklyn from 2010-2016.

Todd received his MBA from Tulane's Freeman School of Business, an MAT in Science Education from the University of New Orleans, and a BA from Boston College in Political Science and History. He feels most comfortable when surrounded by books or trees. He once finished 11th to last in the Boston Marathon.



2019 CBILA Fellow

# Wackerman

# Jeanette "J.R." Weiland

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*Business & Economic Development, Author*

jeanette.weiland@gmail.com



Ms. Weiland currently serves as the Vice President of Bio, Innovation, & Special Projects with the New Orleans Business Alliance. Her career and skills span over financial services, healthcare finance, and economic development, while she holds a MBA and MA in Arts Administration from the University of New Orleans. Jeanette is also the mother of two young children, and author of the children's book "Beignets for Breakfast." Her next book, "Red Beans & Rice," will be released in the Fall 2020.

2020 CBLA Fellow

# J.R.



linkedin profile



# Weiland



## Briana Spruille White

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*Public Health, Educator*

[bjsnola@gmail.com](mailto:bjsnola@gmail.com)

Briana Spruille White is a native New Orleanian who received her BS in Public Health from Dillard University and her Master's in Education from the University of New Orleans. Briana was employed by the Louisiana Department of Health Office of Public Health for 15 years where she trained and developed staff, managed programs, and developed key partnerships. Most recently Briana worked at the Institute of Women and Ethnic Studies where she managed a federal adolescent sexual and emotional health program.

Briana is passionate about fostering leadership, contributing to the success of young people, and community presence. She received the key to the City of Lake Charles for her community mobilization and coalition efforts. Briana thrives on self-care and is immersed in her New Orleans culture.

# Briana Spruille White

# Brittney Y. Williams

*Educator, Youth Services Coordinator*

[brittneywilliams@gmail.com](mailto:brittneywilliams@gmail.com)

Brittney Y. Williams is a native of New Orleans, Louisiana. She is a mother of a blossoming middle school student and a true believer that education is universal. All students should have access to education whether it is in a traditional classroom or hands-on trade/vocational experiences. She attended both public and private schools in the city of New Orleans. Brittney's motto is "What she wants for her own biological child, she wants for any student/child she encounters." She is a graduate of Southern University at Baton Rouge, where she received a Master's of Art in Mental Health Counseling and Bachelors of Science in Psychology. She is also a graduate of The University of New Orleans where she received her Master's of Education in Higher Education Administration. Throughout her professional career she has been afforded the opportunities to work with Frederick A. Douglass High School, as the Senior College Counselor, Delgado Community College's Dual Enrollment Program as the Coordinator and an Advisor, University of New Orleans' Jefferson Upward Bound Program as a Program Advisor, Diversified School Support Services, LLC, as a Graduate Intern, Trinity Behavioral Health Services, as the Student and Family Advocate, and Workforce Investment Area 21- Youth Services, as a Senior Counselor Monitor.

In her current role, she assists high school students as they prepare for their post-secondary options through post-secondary course selection and registration, completion of financial aid applications, assistance with the college application process and acts as liaison between high school students and their families, post-secondary advisors/counselors and various administrators. In this capacity, she is responsible for high school seniors, ensuring their post-secondary success, while working with additional stakeholders and partners.

In her free time Brittney works hands-on with low income, first generation students and their families explaining and ensuring that they understand state graduation requirements, the college application process, financial aid procedures and application processes, and conducting and facilitating various career planning and development workshops through the academic school year. She has experience with the process of school building level committee meetings, individualized educational plan meetings, behavioral observations, teacher interviews, parent interviews, and student interviews. In addition, she has experience administering,



scoring, and interpreting results of various standardized tests. Also, she's had the opportunity to score and interpret various rating scales. She believes that access and equity are important while continuing to always give back to her community. Her son is the light of her world. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. Community service is an integral part of her life. Her experiences within her graduate studies, personal life, and professional life have allowed her to learn theoretical knowledge and apply it to her daily work. As a resident of New Orleans, she is elated to give back to her community and its surrounding areas. She wholeheartedly enjoys working with students of all ages and enjoys being a positive contribution and influence on others.

# Brittney Y. Williams

Natalie Williams holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Grambling State University and a Master of Arts in Professional Counseling from Amberton University, Garland, TX. She is currently working on her PsyD in Behavioral Health Leadership. Working in the mental health field, Natalie enjoys teaching and changing lives across communities. She is a strong advocate for children and adults in our community, making sure they are involved in school, work, and have positive role models to share feelings and thoughts. As Marketing Director with a local mental health agency, Natalie attends monthly speaking engagements, teaching and sharing information in the community about mental health and the importance of recognizing the signs of mental health in the workplace, classroom, community, and the home. During her time off, she enjoys spending time with her family, her church family, and her 12-year-old schnauzer poodle, Mr. Music.



# Natalie Williams

Natalie Williams, BS, MA, PsyD Intern

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*Behavioral Health, Community Advocate*

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## Rashidah Williams

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Architecture, Urban Strategy

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# Rashidah

As Assistant Director of Tulane School of Architecture's Small Center, Rashidah manages the annual budget, stewards relationships with funders, oversees the RFP process for potential and future projects, and coordinates the communications and engagement strategy for the Small Center. Rashidah has experience in community engagement, design, business development, and administration. With a background in architecture, urban design, and graphic design, Rashidah brings a dedicated desire to create strategies that allow New Orleans to function at its full potential. Born and raised in New Orleans, Rashidah has unique insight into how the culture and context of her hometown captivate residents' and visitors' hearts and minds.

# Williams

2018 CBLA Fellow





## Shannon Williams, MBA

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*Accountant, Project Management*  
[smwilliams1274@gmail.com](mailto:smwilliams1274@gmail.com)

For the past 17 years, Shannon Williams has had the pleasure of serving an institute of higher learning in a financial role. As an Accountant, she has learned timeliness, adherence to policies and procedures, accountability, attentiveness, and teamwork (to name a few) are all transferable skills that can be extremely relevant in various aspects. Shannon, as well as her children, is a product of New Orleans Public Schools. She joined the CBLA, eager to learn about the leadership aspect of the education system. Shannon hopes to gain insight, learn, and contribute to the landscape providing equal educational opportunities for the children of New Orleans.

# Shannon Williams

2020  
CBLA Fellow



# Steve Williams

2019 CBLA Fellow

Steve is a native of New Orleans. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History Education from Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama. He also graduated with a Master of Science in Teacher Leadership from Walden University. He began his student teaching in Huntsville City Schools. Steve returned to New Orleans and began teaching at Abramson Science and Technology. He is currently the Dean of Students at Eleanor L. McMain High School.



Steve Williams

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*Educator*

[seawilliams88@gmail.com](mailto:seawilliams88@gmail.com)



2019  
CBLA Fellow



## Jamar Wilson

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*Educator, Social Work, Community Engagement*  
[jamar3000@gmail.com](mailto:jamar3000@gmail.com)

Jamar Wilson was born in Thomasville, Georgia and is a proud graduate of the University of Georgia with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Bachelor of Social Work.

Following his graduation, he moved to Houston, Texas where he taught high school science and math for four years. During those years, Jamar was also a 12th Grade Level Chair and Boys Varsity Soccer Coach.

Jamar and his wife moved to New Orleans in 2015. During his time in New Orleans he has been an Instructional Coach, Assistant Principal, and is currently the Dean of Student Support at KIPP Leadership Primary. Jamar also leads the education focused organizing group, ONE NOLA.

 [linkedin profile](#)

# Jamar Wilson



## Tiffany Young

*Educator, Teacher Development, Community Engagement,  
Health & Fitness*

[tyoungdu@gmail.com](mailto:tyoungdu@gmail.com)

Tiffany Young is a dedicated servant of the community, committed to the betterment of education and impacting the lives of our youth in a positive way. She is a Dillard University graduate- B.A. Business Management 2011 and a Southern University of New Orleans graduate- M.A. Criminal Justice/Juvenile Justice concentration 2020. Tiffany has spent the past eight years in education serving as an educator, she has served the past eleven years in ministry at her church as the Director of the Youth Ministry, she serves as board member/ CEO for the service organization she founded- Ladybug Communities, and she currently works in education as Manager/Coach of Teacher Leadership Development at Teach For America.

Tiffany is an entrepreneur (Trybe Coaching) and additionally seeks to better her community in the areas of health & fitness as a Christian Health & Nutrition Coach. Growing up in the Louisiana school system she has had the opportunity to teach and achieve impact in, is full circle for her. Coming from a lineage of educators, Tiffany entered the CBLA program to further impact, increase her depth of knowledge, and to continue to help make a difference for our students in more ways than one.

2020 CBLA Fellow



# burnox



linkedin profile

Baton Rouge Area

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Board Bank

# Baton

# Rouge Area

2020  
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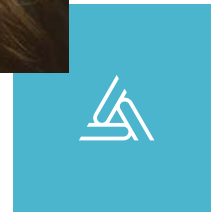
## Joseph Britt

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*Procurement Management, Community Engagement*  
[josephbritt@sbcglobal.net](mailto:josephbritt@sbcglobal.net)

With more than 20 years of supply chain experience, Mr. Britt is currently a Regional Procurement Manager for Westlake Chemical Corporation. He has spent the majority of his career in the petrochemical industry and is actively involved in his community as well as his profession. He currently serves as Treasurer for the Capital Area United Way and also as a Lector in his church. He is also a member of the 2020 class for Leadership Louisiana. Most important, he enjoys spending time with his wife, Lauren, and son, Wells. Mr. Britt holds a bachelor's degree from Louisiana State University and an MBA from the University of Houston.

# Joseph Britt



# Emily Campbell

Emily Campbell, PhD

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*Higher Education, Policy*

[emilybcampbell83@gmail.com](mailto:emilybcampbell83@gmail.com)

2020 CBLA Fellow

Emily currently serves as the Chief Enrollment Management Officer for the Louisiana Community & Technical College System (LCTCS), where she works to create a strategic vision for student success at Louisiana's 12 public community colleges. She has fifteen years of experience in education. She began her career as a high school teacher in the EBR School System. She then worked at LSU, serving in various administrative capacities. Before taking her current position at LCTCS, she was a Senior Policy Analyst for the Louisiana Board of Regents, where she had a key role in developing and analyzing statewide higher education policy.

# Nikki

## Nikki Dangerfield

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*Graphic Design,  
Community Engagement*  
[ndangerfield@stand.org](mailto:ndangerfield@stand.org)



Nikki Dangerfield is a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana and a product of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System. She graduated from Palm Bay High School in Florida and went on to obtain an associate degree in graphic design. She worked as a graphic designer for 23 years and spent 10 of those years as a FedEx Office Manager. Nikki is a single parent to four wonderful children. As an active parent in her children's education, she realized Graphic Design was the wrong profession for bringing systemic improvements to her community. Her deep passion for education and her community guided her search for opportunities to get more involved. Her commitment made her one of Stand's most successful volunteers. With the leadership and guidance of Stand, Nikki and her children participated in a Frontline documentary (Separate and Unequal). Her brave action, outstanding leadership, and passion for education opened the door for her to transition into the full-time role of Baton Rouge Organizer with Stand for Children Louisiana in 2014. During her time with Stand, Nikki obtained her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Theology, and is currently working on her Doctorate in Biblical Psychology. Nikki's hard work; record of successful organizing; and commitment to empowering staff, parents, and volunteers led her into her current role of Regional Organizing Director in 2018. Nikki is most proud of the successful campaigns her team has led and the positive impacts they have brought to the students of the greater Baton Rouge area.



2020 CBLA Fellow

# Dangerfield

# Dr. Kimberly Handy

Dr. Kimberly Handy

*Educator*

[englishteacherhandy@gmail.com](mailto:englishteacherhandy@gmail.com)

I am honored and humbled to introduce myself to you, Dr. Kimberly Handy, born and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana, who has taught high school and college English for 16 years mostly with fourteen years at the Anchorage School District (ASD) in Anchorage, Alaska, one year at West St. John High School - Edgard, LA, and one year at Dutchtown High School - Geismar. I take this precious opportunity to articulate my educational, professional, and community goals, which are already reflected in my continued education I have pursued and along with continued development of my skills at every opportunity. I, Dr. Kimberly Handy, consider myself one the rare ones, who has not only heard the resounding requests for great women and men, but has also taken on

this profound undertaking to make it a part of my life's adventure of service, commitment, and continuous character development. The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education. Martin Luther King, Jr. I permeate Dr. King's quote in every facet of my life - blending education and character for useful experiential applications in my work and community and as an English Language Arts facilitator utilizing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) - it is imperative that students not only learn, but through active engagement, understand the essentials of an English Language Arts Program....that transcends beyond the walls of a classroom.

2020 CBLA Fellow



CBLA Fellow

2020

## Karen Jakuback

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*Development, Educator*

[karen.jakuback@teachforamerica.org](mailto:karen.jakuback@teachforamerica.org)

I currently serve as Director of Development for Teach For America, South Louisiana and enjoy engaging with our community supporters and board of directors. I grew up in North Louisiana attending public schools, received my B.A. from the University of Dallas and taught elementary school in Texas and in EBR. I received my M.Ed. from LSU in Education Administration and spent 17 years as a non-public PK- 8th grade school Administrator/Principal. I completed my doctorate degree in Educational Leadership from Seton Hall University, did private consulting work and returned to the work that resonates with my public school foundation.



# Karen Jakuback



# Clifford Sylvester Lewis

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*Educator, Coach*

[c.lewis@mentorshipbr.org](mailto:c.lewis@mentorshipbr.org)

My name is Clifford Sylvester Lewis; my friends call me Cliff or Coach. I was born in Brewton Alabama, on November 9th, 1956. I grew up in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, after graduating from High School; I attended The University of Southern Mississippi on a Football Scholarship. 1981-84 Linebacker, Green Bay Packers. 1985-1989 Restaurateur/private sector Graduate school at the University of North Carolina in 1990. I was a Collegiate Football Coach for 16 years. From 2008 to the present I have worked in the EBR School system in both charter and traditional public schools as a Parent/Community Liaison.



# Coach

2020 CBLA Fellow



## Patrick Martin

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Government, Administration, Community Engagement  
[business@patrickmartin.com](mailto:business@patrickmartin.com)

Patrick Martin is an accomplished public servant with a passion for promoting educational opportunities for all children. He has served in significant roles in the Baton Rouge District Attorney's Office, the Office of the Legislative Auditor, and the Office of Governor Mike Foster. Since 2005 he has worked for Louisiana State University, currently serving as Assistant Vice President for Real Estate, Public Partnerships, and Compliance. He serves on the board of directors for the BASIS Baton Rouge charter school and is also on the board for AMI-Kids-Baton Rouge, which helps at-risk youth with job training and other educational opportunities. Mr. Martin lives in Baton Rouge with his wife Wendy, step-son Raymond, and daughter Mia. Mia is first grader at BASIS.



[linkedin profile](#)

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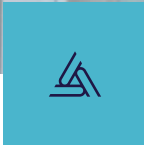
# Patrick Martin



## Jade Miller

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*Public Administration,  
Community Engagement*  
[jade.allegra.m@gmail.com](mailto:jade.allegra.m@gmail.com)



Jade was born in Baton Rouge but raised in Katy, Texas. She earned a Bachelor's in Sociology and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Texas at Arlington. Jade has a passion for the community and is active in the fight for educational equity. She serves on the board for the South Coalition for Education as the Director of Finances. She is also currently in two leadership cohorts with New Schools of Baton Rouge and Urban League of Louisiana.

# Jade

2020 CBLA Fellow

## Marie Mullen

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*Educator, Nonprofit Organization*  
[marie.mullen@teachforamerica.org](mailto:marie.mullen@teachforamerica.org)

Marie Mullen started her educational journey the moment she started attending school. As a child and now an adult, her many experiences have opened her eyes to the complex strengths and challenges that the current education system presents to South Louisiana students. Marie is a native of Baker, Louisiana and obtained a BS of Biological Sciences from Louisiana State University. In 2008, she joined the Teach For America corps as a high school science teacher.



Since completing her corps commitment, Marie worked with South Louisiana – Teach For America for the past 10 years placing teachers where they are most needed in the South Louisiana region and leading the operations and finance work that supports great teachers and education leaders in South Louisiana. Her experiences as both a parent of 5 children, a native of the South Louisiana region, an educator and education advocate have formed her belief that people and communities have power to ensure their students receive an excellent education.

2020 CBLA Fellow

# Marie Mullen



I was born, raised, and bred in Monroe, Louisiana. A small college town in the Northeast part of the state. I grew up picking berries, pears, plums, and even apples from trees found while roaming freely and fearlessly throughout the neighborhood. We played outside from sun up to sun down every day, especially during the summers. In 5th grade I marched with the school band for a new tax legislation to pass. It was a success and funded needed repairs at my elementary school. I attended middle school and high school in an environment where teenage pregnancy, drugs, and gang fights were common. I dropped out of high school in the 11th grade. After missing days and constantly arriving late to school, I could still pass any exam. I was bored. There were rare teachers who threw books to the side and told us they were filled with lies. Let me tell you the truth, she said. While other instructors simply asked us to define in writing "Who Am I?" beyond our names and date of birth. We the students were engaged and barely blinked. We were given a history of who we were and who we were to become in the future. These two curriculums produced my identity of self and gave me a fearless mentality, because there was nothing to be lost and everything and anything was possible for gain. I was limitless. And this is probably why, it never occurred that I was a statistic, at risk, or underserved in a failing school.

In 2004 while living on low income with 2 children under the age of 2 years old, I passed the GED test on my first try. I enrolled in the community college the following semester. For less than \$600, I was able to enroll in over 12 credits. I was hungry for knowledge and in a rush to resolve my financial situation. I worked fulltime at a plasma donation center and attended class Monday – Saturday. I went on to complete my Associates of Science degree from Delta Community College and a Bachelors in Medical Laboratory Science from University of Louisiana at Monroe in 2014, and eventually my Masters in Healthcare Administration in Louisiana State University- Shreveport.

In 2015 I relocated to East Baton Rouge Parish to work with one of the areas leaders in healthcare. Healthcare is filled with new innovations and processes that are implemented daily. While most education processes have sat stagnant in the traditional system. This has motivated me to become an advocate for change for the disenfranchised. As a member of the governing board, I identify with the visions of the charter system and the young people they serve.



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Charter systems are an improvement and they have the opportunity to revitalize education without restraints that have plagued the traditional education system. As a Scientist, I'm drawn to assist in this innovative opportunity. The youth in East Baton Rouge Parish are now being given the opportunity to receive an education that fits millennial skills and leadership opportunities. Charter schools are pursuing the opportunity to prepare young leaders for the future. Education can prepare students to not only become productive citizens but produce other productive citizens as well. As a member of the governing board, I choose to follow these new roads that pave opportunities for young visionaries to vision themselves as limitless. As a Mother, Medical Laboratory Scientist, Grant Evaluator, Peer review grant and proposal data analyst, philanthropist, and informal educator, I offer my skills to future governing boards with the background knowledge of the outcome of the youth involved.

# Shaw

2020  
CBLA Fellow

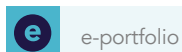


## Brittani Williams, M.A.

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*Higher Education, Policy*  
[Brittani.dm.williams@gmail.com](mailto:Brittani.dm.williams@gmail.com)

Brittani Williams is a higher education professional with experience in the areas of student support, college access, transition, success of post-secondary education, career readiness & development. Her expertise in higher education includes, but is not limited to, knowledge of the student college choice processes, universities admission processes, federal, institutional and private aid policies, and professional career exploration. Brittani earned her Master's from LSU in Higher Education Administration and will be starting her doctoral program at Texas Tech, Fall 2020 in the Education Leadership Policy program.



# Brittani Williams, M.A.



# Neotha N. Williams

2020 CBLA Fellow

## Neotha N. Williams

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*Educator*

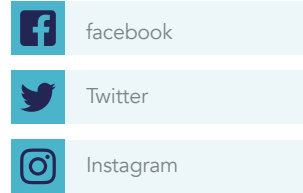
[mosessteminc@outlook.com](mailto:mosessteminc@outlook.com)

Neotha N. Williams is a secondary educator in the West Baton Parish School System. She attained an MS in Criminal Justice with a concentration in law enforcement administration. She received a BS in Biology with a concentration Microbiology from Southern University in Baton Rouge. Ms. Williams has been the Science and Engineering Fair coordinator in West Baton Rouge for the last three semesters. Prior to becoming a secondary educator, she was employed as an environmental and manufacturing lab analyst specializing in quantitative analysis.

In her spare time, she is the administrator and founder of NGSS Physical Science professional learning network (500 members). In the future, she plans on opening her own educational consulting firm that would focus on incorporating technology and NGSS Science standards in the classroom.



Louisiana Association  
of Public Charter Schools



**LAPCS** is a nonprofit membership organization that serves as a voice for charter schools in Louisiana. We work in partnership with charter schools and the community to support, promote, and advocate for high-quality charter schools that provide educational choice to families statewide.

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