

CIVIC ACTOR STUDIO

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PILOT 2019



A collaboration between



THE UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO

Office of Civic
Engagement

with gratitude to the Harry L. Davis Center for Leadership for contributing to the program design

The Civic Actor Studio at the University of Chicago is a new leadership retreat designed to help strengthen the performative aspect of civic leaders and accelerate civic trust through Classic Theatre.

CIVIC ACTORS



DANIEL ASH

The Chicago Community Trust
dash@cct.org

Daniel O. Ash is associate vice president of community impact at The Chicago Community Trust. Dan previously served as the Trust's chief marketing officer from 2013 to 2019. Before that, he spent 10 years as vice president at Chicago

Public Media, production home of WBEZ/91.5FM (Chicago's primary NPR station), This American Life, Sound Opinions, Wait Wait... Don't Tell Me, and Vocalo.org.



DOMINIQUE ATWOOD

Deeply Rooted Dance Theater
dom@deeplyrootedproductions.org

Dominique Atwood is a graduate of Howard University, where she co-founded the first Contemporary Dance Company on campus, I.A.M. WE. In 2016 she was invited to participate as one of the region's leading dance leaders by former

First Lady Michelle Obama during her Celebration of Black Women in Dance. Dominique is currently a dancer with Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, and faculty at Studio One Dance Conservatory and Ballet Chicago. She serves as board chair of Young Ladies Aspiring Greatness, a mentoring program with a mission to create leaders through community service.



DARIUS BALLINGER

Chasing23 Youth Empowerment Group
darius@chasing23.org

Darius Ballinger is the founder and president of Chasing23 Youth Empowerment Group. He holds an AS in Human Sciences (Liberal Arts) from the City Colleges of Chicago Kennedy-King, and is

currently completing a BS in Entrepreneurship from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Darius most recently served on a team at the KLEO Center that focused on providing mentoring services to at-risk youth on the South Side of Chicago. He has worked for Urban Male Network, Guide Right, and Chicago Votes. He has been invited to be a motivational speaker throughout the U.S., most recently at the University of Florida Black Student Leadership Conference and the Chicago Public Schools Black Male Youth Summit.



VICTORIA BRADY

ABJ A.R.T.S.

victoriabrady@abjchicago.org

Pastor Victoria Carol Brady is an arts and community activist, playwright, singer, artistic director, and humanitarian. She is the founder and pastor of Restoring Hope Ministries International. She is also the president and CEO of Annie B. Jones

Community Services, Inc. (ABJ), an institute of high-end arts and culture that was founded as a child welfare agency by her mother Dr. Vivian R. Jones. Under Pastor Victoria's leadership, ABJ has transformed into a unique center for cross-generational arts entrepreneurialism, culture, peace-building, activism, and community empowerment. She holds BA degrees in Music/Theatre from Columbia College and Biblical Studies from the International College of Bible Theology. She also holds a Master of Arts degree in Applied Professional Studies from DePaul University.



LEILA BRAMMER

The University of Chicago
brammer@uchicago.edu

Leila Brammer is the director of the Parrhesia Program for Public Discourse at the University of Chicago. Her work is to foster robust, inclusive, and productive public discourse, dialogue, and deliberation in communities.



SAMANTHA BROWN

Deeply Rooted Dance Theater

samantha@deeplyrootedproductions.org

Samantha (Sam) Brown, a native of Coral Springs, Fla., is currently the dance education manager and executive assistant at Deeply Rooted Dance Theater. A 2013 graduate of Oberlin College with high honors in Africana Studies and Dance, she

acted as chair and treasurer of Oberlin's Hip Hop 101 and the Oberlin Black Musician's Guild, respectively. Since moving to Chicago in 2014, Sam has worked on the production staff at Hyde Park's The Promontory, curating, stage managing, and coordinating hospitality for Chicago's best rising talent. She is presently the administrative director for AileyCamp Chicago, a free summer program for youth 11-14 years old that exposes underserved adolescents to dance and other art forms.



NICOLE CLARK-SPRINGER

Deeply Rooted Dance Theater

nicole@deeplyrootedproductions.org

Nicole Clarke-Springer began formal training under the guidance of Claudette Soltis (Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and Joliet Ballet Society) and at the Indianapolis Ballet Theatre under Dace Diodonis. In 2013, she joined the Kevin Iega Jeff

and Gary Abbott as the newest member of the DRP artistic team and was named Deeply Rooted Dance Theatre's Emerging Choreographer for the program Generations. Nicole received her BS in Arts Administration-Dance from Butler University in Indianapolis and served as an adjunct professor at Western Kentucky University's Dance Department. She also served as assistant choreographer to Kevin Iega Jeff for Congo Square Theatre's Nativity for two years.



KATIE COLVIN

Pilot Light

katie@pilotlightchefs.org

Katie Colvin is the director of education at PilotLight, where she facilitates teacher support, professional development, and program evaluation. She is a native of northwestern Pennsylvania and graduate of Pennsylvania State University,

with undergraduate majors in International Studies, Advertising, and French. Katie joined Teach for America in Baltimore and taught in Baltimore City Public Schools. While in Baltimore, she earned a master's in Leadership in Teaching. Upon moving to Chicago, Katie taught elementary school in the Washington Park neighborhood and high school at DRW College Prep in the North Lawndale neighborhood.



MICHELLE DASSINGER

Chicago Hyde Park Village

michelle.dassinger@chpv.org

Michelle Dassinger joined the Chicago Hyde Park Village in January 2019 as executive director. She is responsible for building operational systems and growing institutional memory that will lead to the long-term sustainability of CHPV. Michelle

has worked with older adults in various settings for more than 20 years, primarily on the South Side of Chicago. She was a part of the complementary and alternative medicine team of Horizon Hospice/JourneyCare for 14 years. Additionally, she has worked with Little Brothers - Friends of the Elderly in direct service and administrative capacities. Her board and fiscal management experience includes homeowner's board president, Friends of Ray School treasurer, and vestry member at St. Paul & The Redeemer Church. Michelle has a BA in Philosophy from Rhodes College in Memphis and MA from the University of Chicago Divinity School.



ASHLEY FLOYD

LINK Unlimited Scholars

afloyd@linkunlimited.org

Ashley Floyd, vice president of institutional advancement at LINK Unlimited Scholars, is responsible for strategic planning, communications, and fund development to support the organization's overall visibility, impact, and programs.

She received her BFA in Dance Performance/Choreography from the University of Southern Mississippi, MA from the University of New Orleans, and MBA from Governors State University. Ashley sits on the Big Shoulder's Chairman's Advisory Council (2018 Membership Co-Chair), Gus Giordano Jazz Chicago Associate Board, Auditorium Theater's Auxiliary Board, and the Junior League Chicago.



KEVIN GORDON

100 Black Men of Chicago

kevin.gordon@100bmc.org

Kevin Gordon is a member of the 100 Black Men of Chicago, where he serves as the board secretary and is committed to the growth and development of Chicago's African American youth by creating opportunities and changing lives. Kevin is a senior-level administrator with extensive

experience in nonprofit, higher education, community relations, and public service. He is a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. and holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and Master of Education from the University of Illinois at Chicago.



CHRIS GUZAITIS

The Odyssey Project

chris.guzaitis@ilhumanities.org

Chris Guzaitis is the director of the education + grants division at Illinois Humanities, the nonprofit state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Before assuming this role, Chris directed the Odyssey Project at Illinois Humanities

from 2015-2018. Before that, she was an assistant professor of Queer Studies in the Gender, Feminist, and Sexuality Studies Department at Scripps College. Chris also taught courses at Claremont Graduate University, Pomona College, and the University of California, San Diego. Her commitment to issues of access to education began as she navigated, by trial and error, her way through higher ed as a first-generation college student.



MYETIE HAMILTON

The Provident Foundation
myetiehamilton2@gmail.com

Myetie Hamilton brings more than 18 years of experience leading innovative change in K-12 education, and a deep personal and professional commitment to Chicago's South Side communities. She served most recently as deputy

chief of schools for Network 9 within Chicago Public Schools, managing transformation for 27 schools in the Woodlawn, Bronzeville, and Hyde Park communities. As executive director of EPIC Academy, Myetie leads organizational strategy and vision, fundraising and external relations, and board engagement. She holds a bachelor's degree in Business Management from Alabama A&M University and master's degree in Public Administration from Illinois Institute of Technology, and is a Leadership Greater Chicago Fellow Class of 2016.



KENDRA JULION

Pilot Light
kendra@pilotlightchefs.org

Kendra Julion is the community programs director at Pilot Light. She graduated with a Master of Science in Health Communications from Northwestern University. She was also a research assistant on federally funded studies that focused

on medication management in community health centers and increasing physical activity in African American women. Her areas of interest for her future professional practices will focus on developing and implementing community intervention and programs that address food access and education in underserved communities.



KENNETH MALONE

100 Black Men of Chicago
malonekennethr@gmail.com

Ken Malone is a board member of 100 Black men. He is a corporate strategist, software executive, and management consultant focused on the global financial market and communications firms seeking to bring greater efficiency and effective-

ness to their enterprise-wide systems. Ken has managed organizations with 1000+ technology employees, and led successful campaigns to embed small aperture database technologies into the first rendition of smartphones, the world's most sophisticated satellite networks, and data interaction of the world's largest computer systems with next-level data analytics. Ken has attended the University of Illinois at Chicago, studying business administration and entrepreneurship, and the Cambridge Institute at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



HILESH PATEL

The Field Foundation of Illinois
hpatel@fieldfoundation.org

As the leadership investment program officer at the Field Foundation of Illinois, Hilesh Patel is dedicated to working with Chicago's aspiring leaders and their organizations. Hilesh was

previously the deputy director of Hyde Park Art Center, overseeing public programs, marketing and communications, finance and operations, and strategic planning.



AUDREY PETTY

The Odyssey Project
audrey.petty@ilhumanities.org

Audrey Petty is a writer, educator, and native South Sider. She is director of the Odyssey Project at Illinois Humanities and a member of the Prison+Neighborhood Arts Project.



MATHIS PRUNTY

ABJ A.R.T.S.
mathisprunty1990@gmail.com

Mathis "Sirmac Beats" Prunty is a local producer from Chicago, who has worked with several artists nationwide. An alumnus of South Shore High School and active member of ABJ's Board of Millennials, Sirmac Beats is no stranger to the

South Shore community. He's been an activist for more than 10 years. He serves the community through leadership and mentorship, focusing on illustrating the importance of self-awareness. Sirmac Beats helped develop the arrangement for a song entitled "Peace Didn't Stop We Did," which was featured at the Peace School's annual International Peace Day event at Daley Plaza in September 2018.



TIANA PYER-PEREIRA

The University of Chicago
tianap@uchicago.edu

Tiana Pyer-Pereira is the associate director for advancement and diversity in the University of Chicago Office of the Provost, where she is responsible for developing programs related to the Diversity and Inclusion Initiative and Faculty

Development Program. Tiana is trained in social justice education and social science research methods. Previously, she worked as a research manager at UChicago's Survey Lab.



SILVIA RIVERA

WBEZ - Vocalo
silvia@vocalo.org

Silvia Rivera is managing director of Vocalo Radio. In her role, she curates music and stories that connect and inspire Chicagoans.



IMANI RUPERT-GORDON

Affinity Community Services
imani@affinity95.org

Imani Rupert-Gordon is the executive director of Affinity Community Services, a social justice organization that focuses on health and wellness, leadership development, and community building.

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Affinity's core constituents are Black lesbian, bisexual, and transgender women and LGBTQ youth of African descent in the Chicago metropolitan area. Previously, Imani served as the director of the Broadway Youth Center, part of Howard Brown Health in Chicago. She worked for eight years at the University of California, Santa Cruz as a lecturer and developed campus-wide programming. Imani holds a bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and a master's degree from the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration.



JONATHAN SWAIN

LINK Unlimited Scholars
jswain@linkunlimited.org

Jonathan Swain is the president and CEO of LINK Unlimited Scholars, Chicago's oldest college success and career readiness organization focused on African Americans. Before assuming a staff role, he served as the chairman of the Board of

Directors. Jonathan is also the president and principal of Kimbark Beverage Shoppe and Eat Drink and Be Events. He was born and raised in Chicago's Hyde Park community, the son of African American entrepreneurs. Jonathan is civically engaged, currently serving as a commissioner of the Chicago Board of Elections, previously as chairman of the Chicago Zoning Board of Appeals. He has degrees from Duke University, Northwestern University School of Law, and the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

CIVIC FACILITATORS



HARRY DAVIS

Chicago Booth School of Business
harry.davis@chicagobooth.edu

Harry L. Davis studies leadership, strategy, creativity, and innovation. He earned a bachelor's degree in Sociology in 1959 and MBA in Marketing in 1960 from Dartmouth College. He earned a master's degree in Sociology in 1969 and PhD in

Marketing in 1970 from Northwestern University.



RYAN PRIESTER

Office of Civic Engagement
rkpriest@uchicago.edu

Ryan K. Priester leads the work of the Community Programs Accelerator, coordinating collaborations between UChicago faculty, students, and staff and local nonprofits. Through the Accelerator, he supports the success of nonprofits whose work

benefits South Side neighborhoods.



JOANIE FRIEDMAN

Office of Civic Engagement
joaniefriedman@uchicago.edu

As executive director of civic leadership, Joanie Friedman is responsible for advancing the knowledge, teaching, and practice of civic leadership locally, nationally, and globally to increase civic trust and strengthen cities. Working across the

University, she raises the visibility of programs and partnerships that strengthen the civic sector via civic leadership education.



GABRIELLE RANDLE

Court Theatre
gerandle@gmail.com

Gabrielle Randle is a scholar and professional dramaturg and director in Chicago. Her recent collaborations include co-directing *We are Proud to Present a Presentation...*, by Jackie Sibbles Drury, at Steppenwolf for Young Adults. She has

also dramaturged with Court Theatre, Sideshow Theatre, Victory Gardens, Chicago Dramatists, and the Wirtz Center for the Performing Arts. Gabrielle is an active member of the Black Theatre Association Focus Group for the Association for Theatre in Higher Education and has served two terms as its graduate representative. She is a PhD candidate at Northwestern University. Her ongoing dissertation project, "On the Possibility of Blackness and the Inevitability of Revolution: How Black Feeling Changed the World," examines Blackness and affect through the valence of critical performance theory.



CHARLIE NEWELL

Court Theatre
cnewell@uchicago.edu

Charlie Newell has been artistic director at Court Theatre since 1994. He has directed more than 50 productions. He has taught in the Civic Leadership Academy for five years and with Chicago Booth for more than 10 years. Charlie has also directed

at Goodman Theatre, Guthrie Theater, Arena Stage, John Houseman's The Acting Company, the California and Alabama Shakespeare festivals, Juilliard, and New York University. He has served on the Board of TCG, as well as on several panels for the NEA.



ANGEL YSAGUIRRE

Court Theatre
aysaguirre@uchicago.edu

Angel Ysaguirre is the executive director of Court Theatre. Previously he was executive director of Illinois Humanities. He has served on the boards of the Theatre Communications Group, Donors Forum of Chicago, Illinois Center for the Book, Horizons

Community Services, Blair Thomas and Company, and Next Theatre.
