

# Business Leaders *of* COLOR

Chicago United 2017



ADVANCING MULTIRACIAL LEADERSHIP

**Chicago United**





## LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE

We're delighted to introduce the 2017 Chicago United Business Leaders of Color, through a process and a publication we engage in and issue every other year. These inspiring leaders are ready candidates for corporate directorships, with proven track records of success.

This year's 50 honorees hold a vast range of experience in a variety of industries and belong to a network of the most influential, diverse, and inclusive leaders in the Chicago community. They provide shareholder value in the changing world of business and inspire others as they continue to progress, innovate, and model leadership behavior.

We are saluting this year's Business Leaders of Color at a particularly relevant time. We face serious divisiveness and associated challenges in our country today. However, these challenges are being met with remarkable action by our members and supporters, including recognizing and celebrating outstanding leaders.

And while we're honored to recognize this year's Business Leaders of Color recipients, we must highlight the opportunities for improvement that continue to emerge across the business community and in this publication. Just as it has been in the past, women represent only 30 percent of honorees. This underrepresentation is consistent with the findings of the Chicago United *Corporate Diversity Profile* (CDP) study. The sobering findings in the CDP indicate the great need to increase the mobility of women of color in the business community.

The Chicago business community has the opportunity to expand the pool of leadership by leveraging the significant contributions and potential of women of color. We will look within ourselves to take the lead in making our socioeconomic climate even stronger through racial and gender equity.

Since its inception in 2003, the Business Leaders of Color has identified nearly 370 board-ready candidates, who have served in more than 230 corporate directorships. And we look forward to building on this exceptional record with this year's Business Leaders of Color.

Please join Chicago United in applauding the transformational leaders profiled in the following pages.

Sincerely,



Anne R. Pramaggiore  
President & Chief Executive Officer  
ComEd, An Exelon Company  
Chairwoman, Chicago United



Gloria Castillo  
President & Chief Executive Officer  
Chicago United



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**Dr. Karen Eng**  
President and CEO, CSMI  
Co-Chair, 2017 Nominating Committee

**Lucino Sotelo**  
Vice President, Marketing, Grainger  
Co-Chair, 2017 Nominating Committee

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### **Business Leaders of Color Committee Members:**

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Stephen W. Beard, Executive Vice President, General Counsel and Chief Administrative Officer, Heidrick & Struggles  
Adela Cepeda, Managing Director, PFM Financial Advisors  
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Julie Felix, Manager, Diversity & Inclusion, Mesirow Financial  
Sunil Garg, Senior Vice President, Chief Information & Innovation Officer, Uptake  
Lisa Haley Huff, Senior Vice President, PNC Bank  
Carl Jenkins, Managing Director, BMO Financial Group  
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Joseph Q. McCoy, Partner, Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP  
Nazneen Razi, Senior Vice President & Chief HR Officer, Health Care Service Corporation  
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Mary Toomey, Senior Vice President of HR, Chicago Market HR Partner, Bank of America

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Stuart D. Strahl, President and Chief Executive Officer, The Chicago Zoological Society  
Mike Lewis, Board Director, Urban Partnership Bank, and Retired Executive VP, BMO Harris Bank

### **Special Recognition for Extraordinary Community Efforts of Nominations:**

Cindy Burrell, CEO, Diversity in Boardrooms  
Demetrio "D" Garcia, Global Business Development, Golden Hill Foods  
George Mui, Founder, Asian American Network

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**Project Director:** Teresa Sarna  
**Copywriting:** Stuart Baum, Teresa Sarna  
**Design:** Patricia Vogt

**Interviews:** Roger Crockett, Gloria Castillo, Teresa Sarna  
**Photography:** Ana Miyares, Sabin Orr  
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### **Contributing Staff and Consultants:**

David Arenas, Gloria Castillo, Zoë Eisenman, LaRinda Foster, Shenetta Johnson, Charmon Parker Williams, Riley Paul, Randy Suvada, Freddy Tsao, and Witney Withers

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# Shradha Agarwal

Co-Founder and President, Outcome Health

“It is important for leadership to be extremely data savvy to garner insights and to recognize patterns rapidly to align teams with priorities.”



Shradha Agarwal has a passion to innovate in order to advance society through technologies that positively shape the human condition. She believes profit with purpose is the best way for businesses to succeed in scale in the future.

Agarwal sees questioning as a way to spark innovation. Using the Socratic method of engaging with people deeply allows her to spark ideas in her team instead of dictating solutions. She believes that leaders must create an environment where people feel respected, engaged, and aligned, where they can safely debate and design new solutions that drive innovation.

Growing up in India, and during her education in Singapore, she identified opportunities for information flow to help people make better decisions. Later at Northwestern University, Agarwal recognized the effect media has on informing and engaging decisions and developed the philosophy that businesses should be agents for positive social change. She saw technology as a way to combine these two forces.

“We saw technology completely changing several industries. But, those that we cared deeply about, like healthcare education, had not seen much innovation that was patient-centric or physician-centric.” Her healthcare media company, Outcome Health, founded in 2006, now provides lifestyle education and healthcare solutions to 30 million patients each month. Even with doubling its revenue, profitability, and distribution year-over-year, the firm has consistently been recognized for its culture, customer service, and technology leadership.

A 2015 Prominent Woman in Tech award winner, Agarwal is always looking for more ways to connect people and actionable information. Agarwal co-founded JumpStart Ventures in 2011, which has since backed more than 40 companies in healthcare, education, and media communications with more than \$10 million in venture investments.

She also mentors entrepreneurs at Techstars, Impact Engine, and Blueprint Health. She is equally invested in the venture philanthropy model for scaling nonprofit solutions through her leadership at both SVP Chicago and The Chicago Public Education Fund.

- 
- Board director, OneGoal (since 2015); Leadership Council member, The Chicago Public Education Fund (since 2015), Board director, Chicago Children's Choir (since 2015); and Chicago Advisory Board member, Urban Alliance (since 2014)
  - *Crain's Chicago Business* 40-Under-40 (class of 2012)
  - Award highlights include White House Champions of Change: Immigrant Entrepreneurs; Women Making History: Outstanding Entrepreneur Category; Tech Woman of the Year (2013); and the Chicagoneess Award (2015)
-

# Luis A. Avila

Associate General Counsel, US Foods

“I think of myself as a student for life. As long as I am learning, I am always going to be interested, excited, and engaged.”

Luis Avila grew up in the Back of the Yards neighborhood, but didn't have a typical Chicago childhood. Since his father was a Mexican charro (rodeo cowboy), he spent his youth selling candy and caring for horses at ranches.

Avila was the first in his family for a lot of things: first to go to college, first to go to law school, first to work at and then open his own law firm, and now, first to be a leader at a Fortune 150 publicly-traded corporation.

As he puts it, “That’s just not everybody’s path.” Avila believes unique experiences develop abilities of self-reliance and problem solving. “Being the only person of color at a large law firm prepares us to think strategically in business or while serving a board. It distinguishes us and makes us valuable,” he affirms.

After law school, Avila practiced in a large law firm and then started his own practice before moving

into a corporate role as an in-house counsel for Heidrick & Struggles International. This led to his current position as associate general counsel at US Foods.

As a result, in addition to his knowledge of the law and of the legal and business challenges faced by professional services companies, he has had the experience of guiding a large multinational corporation through the many stages of what he calls, “one of the largest M&A deals that wasn’t,” the proposed merger between US Foods and its biggest competitor, Sysco.

As his focus has shifted to mergers and acquisitions, Avila has gained a new appreciation for the importance of corporate culture.

“At US Foods, I was taken aback when I first started. Everybody had the same vocabulary and all meetings started with focus recognition and focus feedback.” He soon realized this was a success factor for teams.

“It makes things so much easier when you have everyone agreeing on how they want to work.”

He strongly believes that, when integrating new companies and people into an existing structure, having a strong corporate culture and a training program can make expectations clearer and ease that transition.

- 
- Board director, Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois (since 2015); Board director, Latino Policy Forum (since 2016); and former regional president, Hispanic National Bar Association (2013-2016)
  - Appointed lead on SEC filings and NYSE/NASDAQ listing requirements, including proxy statements and a secondary public offering
  - Earned his Juris Doctorate from Columbia University School of Law, New York, NY
- 





# Nichole Barnes Marshall

Vice President and Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, L Brands

“The ability to adapt to different circumstances and cultural environments makes a better leader. If we can instill these skills early and cultivate them, we can create a better world.”



When asked what makes a successful inclusive leader in a diverse environment, Nichole Barnes Marshall responds, “Self-awareness, resilience and being an engaging leader.” She works with executives to strengthen emotional intelligence as part of their self-awareness journey and helps them operate with resilience in the face of a VUCA world (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous). Barnes Marshall lights up when talking about leaders, who are connectors and stabilizers in the face of uncertainty, and who bring people together across difference.

While a recruiter at the Chicago Tribune, Barnes Marshall drew the attention of Fred Hunter, the director of diversity, who saw she was able to quickly find, hire, and retain minority talent, building a group very different from what previously existed at Tribune. “He reached out to me and said, ‘How are you finding these people?’ Being diverse myself I tended to attract diverse talent.”

In her most recent role as Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Aon, Barnes Marshall exposed numerous MBE/WBE suppliers with partnership opportunities, increasing Aon’s internal diversity supplier spend while securing diverse professional service providers in risk, health, and talent. She was the first person to serve in a diversity and inclusion leadership role in a global capacity. She led a team with oversight for the inclusion councils in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, India, and Australia, as well as the business resource groups located around the world. She oversaw the development and implementation of diversity and inclusion for 72,000 colleagues in more than 120 countries.

Bringing diversity up to a global level means being willing to expand your worldview. As she puts it, “Understanding not only the colleagues’ needs but the clients’ needs in each global region requires engagement. You can’t bring your own U.S.-centric views to how the work gets done.”

In her current role as vice president and chief diversity officer for L Brands, Barnes Marshall is responsible for advancing the company’s cultural thought leadership on diversity and works collaboratively to influence the adoption of industry-leading diversity and inclusion practices globally. She leads the implementation of their integrated global diversity and inclusion strategy through effective partnership with business and human resources leaders to influence and affect change.

- 
- Board director, The Chicago Sinfonietta (since 2014) and Former Board director, National Association of African Americans in Human Resources (2009-2013)
  - Serves on the Black Creativity Advisory Committee, The Museum of Science and Industry (since 2014); The Diversity Leadership Council, The Executives’ Club of Chicago (since 2017); Corporate Advisory Council, Steppenwolf Theater (since 2015); and the Advisory Board, The National Association of African Americans in Human Resources (NAAHR) (since 2014)
-

# Pat Auveek Basu

Senior Vice President, Optum/United Health Group

“You advance innovation and civilization by putting together combinations of diversity of backgrounds, ethnicity, and economics that have not been put together before in the history of the world.”

Pat Basu is a pioneer in healthcare technology. He helped grow vRad into the nation's largest provider of on-site radiology and the world's largest telehealth firm, with operations in three continents and 17 countries. Basu also helped launch Doctor On Demand, which allows patients to video visit with physicians or psychologists from their phone or computer.

As he says, “Doctor On Demand makes the entire U.S. healthcare system more efficient. At the micro level, you have that visit faster, more conveniently, so you're treated sooner and more cost-effectively. If you multiply that across millions of patients, you can envision how that decreases healthcare costs.”

Doctor On Demand became the nation's largest provider of video visits serving over 30 million patients over 30 health plans, 20 health systems, and 500 employers clients, and was named the fastest growing health tech firm in 2015 by Goldman Sachs. Basu helped raise over \$80 million from top Silicon Valley investors to grow enterprise valuation four times over.

In his current role, Basu is a member of the Executive Leader Team at United Health Group, the largest healthcare firm in the world and number six on the Fortune 500. He oversees many innovation partnerships, as well as several business groups in OptumHealth, a national care delivery division including a \$22 billion stand-alone business unit. He is directly accountable for delivering \$9 billion in care delivery revenue of which 50 percent carries globally capitated insurance risk placing it at the vanguard of payer and provider care integration. He is responsible for revenue, profit, medical expense, and quality for the nation's largest care delivery business with over 10,000 physicians, nurses, and team members.

Basu is a member of some of the world's most important and selective foreign relations, and U.S.-bilateral relations organizations, between the United States and Japan, Germany, India, and Italy.

In a career full of extraordinary accomplishments, Basu points to his service as a White House Fellow under President Obama as the tipping point. “President Obama really inspired me. He blended confidence and passion in a remarkable way. A very cool, collected demeanor, but you knew that there was real fire inside him.” During this fellowship, Basu had oversight for key healthcare initiatives, led a delegation from the White House on a diplomatic trip to China, and helped facilitate over \$1 billion in treasury finance to American companies.

- Board director, Executive Committee, Optenative Corporation; Board director, University of Illinois (since 2012); Board director, Stanford University Medical Board (since 2013); and advisor, White House Fellows Foundation Board (since 2012)
- Former Board director, Illinois State Board of Health (2011-2016) and the American College of Radiology (2011-2015), and served as chairman of the STARS Mentoring Program (2008-2010)
- Member of Council on Foreign Relations (since 2011); Chicago Health Advisory Board, (since 2013); U.S.-Germany Atlantik Breucke (since 2012); Indiaspora – U.S. – India (since 2011); and U.S. Japan Leadership Council (since 2014)





# Cecelia Bolden

Chief Delivery Officer, SDI Presence

“I tell my daughter, a swimmer, ‘There’s no substitute for time in the water.’ You have to enjoy and embrace your craft to become good, and ultimately, great.”

In her 28 years of experience in the information systems industry at companies like Accenture, Oracle Corporation, MCI/WorldCom, marchFIRST, Divine, Inc., and now SDI Presence, with a host of clients in both government and private sectors, Cecelia Bolden has become a recognized leader in the systems integration arena.

At SDI, Bolden leads new initiatives and ensures creation of a sound strategy and vision through critical systems selection and business process reengineering. She created the SDI project management methodology for the company’s 130 professional consultants to systematize the company’s own internal processes as it grows.

Among other engagements, Bolden serves on the Governance Committee of SDI’s project team for the Illinois Tollway. This team provides day-to-day monitoring and management of the ITS communication network, IPass vendor/deployment oversight, and the IT Program Management Office.

Under Bolden’s management, the SDI Team has successfully renewed its multi-year contract and grown the account significantly.

Bolden sees many advantages to working at a smaller company, especially when it comes to employee engagement. “Our people are our product. We make sure they understand we value what they bring to the table.” She is an unwavering advocate of being sensitive to people’s various beliefs, and to spurring conversations about difficult issues. According to Bolden, this is a way employees know they are valued.

Another way she shows value to employees is by looking for opportunities to promote from within the company first, when possible. She describes a recent example where she identified a representative for an opportunity who had been managing a key account for more than a decade. “He said to me, ‘Cecilia, this job that you want to promote me into, it’s not a job for one person, it’s a job for two. You need a manager, and a really strong support person.’ I said,

‘Thank you for saying that. Now you have afforded yourself the opportunity for me to promote you and for you to promote someone else.’ I’ve had quite a few people on this account thank me for giving him that opportunity.”

- 
- Vice chairman, Circle Urban Ministry (since 2011); Board director and vice president, Jack and Jill of America (since 2005); Board secretary, The Links, Inc. (since 2011); and Advisory Board member, Leadership Illinois (since 2011)
  - Extensive community involvements include Business Leadership Council (since 2016); BDPA (since 2016); City Colleges of Chicago (since 2014); After School Matters (since 2008); Chicago Cares (since 2007); Circle Urban Ministries (since 2013); Greater Chicago Food Depository (since 2010); and more
  - Woman of Excellence Award, Chicago Defender (2016)
- 



# Joseph Malik Bradley

Global Vice President IoT & Digital Services, Cisco Systems

“Digitization is the intersection of people, process, data, and things. I said, ‘people first’ because that’s where the maximum value is. Nothing is created until you connect it with people.”



If any asset or object in your world could talk, what would you want it to tell you? According to Joseph Bradley, people would want it to say where it is and how it’s doing, and to predict how it will be in the future.

As vice president for Internet of Things (IoT) at Cisco Systems, these are the questions he tries to answer – especially the predictive part, which even real-time analysis doesn’t always answer. As the pace of technology speeds up, he says, “Real time is too late.”

Bradley believes the technological revolution must keep a tight focus on people. Whether growing Forbes Magazine’s 2015 number one startup, Uptake, to its valuation of \$2 billion in just one year, or building an IoT headquarters in Chicago for Cisco Systems, he values culture as the most important piece of sustainable competitive differentiation.

As he puts it, “Everything you see from a technology standpoint can be copied now inside of six months. What really is going to keep you ahead is that culture of innovation.”

To make culture thrive, Bradley relies on education. Unlike most other technologists, he isn’t only focused on STEM. “In a world where all the answers are known, knowing what questions to ask will be valuable. Liberal arts majors are who know those. You’re going to see a rise of the humanities, because those people understand what questions to ask.”

Diversity of thinking, whether it comes from education, race, gender, or background, is crucial to Bradley as a way to break people out of their stagnant assumptions and boost innovation.

When it comes to improving diversity in Chicago, he believes networking and connections are the best and most valuable tools. “The core measures of success

to attract investment have changed. What is more important now is not the value of your wallet, but the value of your connections. You have to remove the friction out of connecting with people.”

- 
- Chairman, Hortau Corporation (since 2015); Board director, Solveu (since 2016); Board director, Pogwaa (since 2016); and Advisory Board member of Accountable Physician Practices (CAPP)
  - Senior research fellow, International Institute for Management Development (since 2015)
  - Chairman’s Choice Award for Excellence in Innovation & Execution, John Chambers, CEO, Cisco, (2013 & 2014); the only employee to ever win twice
  - Top 100 Executives in America, Uptown Professional, (2014)
-



# George Burciaga

Managing Director of Global Municipal Development & Innovation, CIVIQ Smartscapes

“It is important to find your purpose, to build your plan, and to stick to what you believe in, even with every obstacle against you.”



George Burciaga doesn't just ponder the future, he's building it, bit by bit.

Burciaga launched elevate DIGITAL in 2012, a software firm that aims to transform citizen engagement at the street level with its “Citizen Mobility Experience,” a platform connecting devices, processes, data, and messaging across SMART Cities. The platform engages users by touch, Wi-Fi, mobility, and sensing, and enables cities to become efficient and sustainable by connecting everyone and everything.

He successfully raised \$14 million for elevate DIGITAL, which was recently acquired by CIVIQ Smartscapes, the industry and global leader within the Internet of Things (IoT) and smart city technologies.

Burciaga sees smart cities as a way to transform the way we live by re-thinking the assumed natural purpose of things around us. “In a smart city, if there is a gunshot, the city should hear it, dispatch police, tell the buses to stop moving in that direction, brighten the lights in that area, and tell everyone connected to that Wi-Fi network to stay away.”

Science fiction? Not according to Burciaga. All of this could happen based on the direction of the software and the hardware he developed with elevate DIGITAL. He believes that in the very near future all the objects around us will react to human actions, by using data to build predictive services. “I started to recognize that if I could build a solution that was developed around the heartbeat of every city, which is the people that live there, then I could help improve safety, transportation, and other services to build a better place for people to live.”

Burciaga continues to find ways to innovate through technology. Informed by his experiences of being raised by his grandparents and three older uncles in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood, attending Chicago Public Schools, and becoming the first college graduate in his family, he maintains a clear purpose behind innovation. This drive based on purpose is spurred in part by a comment made by his childhood friend and mentor, Richard Wallace. “He said, ‘If you don't know where you're going, how will you know when you get there?’ In order to make a plan and to know how to implement it, you need to clearly identify your purpose,” shared Burciaga.

- 
- Board director, Chicago United (since 2014)
  - Former board director, State of Illinois Literacy Foundation and Former Board treasurer, Chicago United Futbol Club (2010)
  - Served on the Advisory Council of City Colleges of Chicago, City of Chicago Business License Council, Elevate Miami Technology Council, and the Illinois' Economic Recovery Commission
  - Actively engages in the Chicagoland Entrepreneurial Center's “Future Founders” program
  - Started the “Follow Me” program to encourage Chicago-area high school students to attend college
-

# Louis Carr

President Media Sales, BET Networks

“People will forget the revenue that you brought in and people will forget your title. But, if you impact people’s lives by teaching them something, that’s a legacy.”



Louis Carr recently celebrated his 30th year at Black Entertainment Television (BET) Networks, where he is now president of Media Sales.

Over his career, Carr has worked for the top black businessmen in media: John H. Johnson of Ebony and Jet magazines, Earl Graves of Black Enterprise magazine, and Bob Johnson, the founder of BET. “All giants, all icons.” He had personal relationships with them, so he received equal parts mentoring and tough love. “I learned a tremendous amount.”

In Carr’s book, *Dirty Little Secrets*, he shares the lessons, “My way of trying to pay back the debt of so many.”

Spurred by the lack of diversity in the media marketing industry, he started the Louis Carr Internship Foundation 15 years ago. Each summer the foundation places 10-15 interns of color in major media and marketing companies around the country, while providing mentoring to help them gain the

fundamentals of business. Carr notes, “This year will mark 155 interns we’ve had over the 15-year period. Of those 155, 31 have gone into the industry and gotten full time jobs.”

Carr believes, for most corporate jobs, industry-specific experience is less important than foundational business skills. “A CEO can leave a pharmaceutical company and go run a cereal company. Clearly there are small learning curves once you get the basic things down.”

He sets an example by hiring people of color who may not have done things on the scale of a major corporation, but who have related experience and can learn quickly.

Carr strongly believes the time is right for people of color in the media industry. “The impact, the power, the ownership that young people have over media, music, technology, and fashion, is unprecedented. On the cutting edge, you have black and brown kids.

Regardless of what you see in the news, this is the best time to be a young person of color in American history.”

- 
- Board director for Boys Hope Girls Hope and the United States Track and Field Foundation
  - Former Board director for the Ad Council, International Radio and Television Society (IRTS), American Advertising Federation (AAF); and the Video Advertising Board (VAB, formerly the CAB)
  - Received the 2016 Diversity Award from the Hyatt Corporation and the First Annual (2016) American Advertising Federation Pat Marin Excellence in District Leadership Legacy of a Lifetime Diversity award
  - Wrote two books titled *Dirty Little Secrets* and *The Little Black Book: Daily Motivations for Business and Personal Growth*
-



# Guoxing Chai

Global Head, Retail Banking Product Analytics, HSBC

“Know what your passion is and make your intention known. Get connected with the leaders who are going to help you. Take a job with a lot of unknowns.”



Guoxing Chai has worked in different parts of Asia, Eastern Europe, and the United States. “I actively seek to work in different geographies in the world,” says Chai.

It was during his time at GE Capital Poland where he accepted his first leadership role as chief credit officer and established a department from scratch in a country where he didn’t speak the language and while the business was going through a credit crunch. “It was probably the toughest assignment that I have taken on in my career,” says Chai. “But in the end, I learned a lot.”

In his current role as global head of retail banking product analytics for HSBC, Chai manages a team of analytics professionals across the globe, specialized in mining data and creating insights for consumer banking products through advanced analytics, ranging from customer targeting, spend behavior analyses, life-cycle management, and product pricing.

Chai believes there is still a myth about what makes a good leader.

He says, “I think that what people look for as signs of leadership are people who are more extroverted, who have a loud voice, people who are more charismatic. I feel like a thoughtful, reflective person is a better leader than a seemingly charismatic, aggressive sort of person.”

He argues that a thoughtful person is more willing to listen to diverse views and build consensus, which results in better decision-making.

Chai sees having diverse people on his team as an advantage when working in a global business, so he actively seeks out people of different nationalities and backgrounds. He observes, “It creates a lot more cultural sensitivity. People have very different characteristics depending on which country you come from. Being conscious of different backgrounds helps

us understand the nuances of different cultures when we go into project meetings.”

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- Board director of Midwest ASCEND
  - National Chair, Asian/Pacific Islander Committee, HSBC USA
  - One of his earliest jobs was an exercise in cultural understanding. When he first graduated from University, he taught English for five years, but he also did a lot of translation work. “I did one of the first English programs China ever put on TV. I did translations and voiceovers for the English news.”
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# Eduardo Conrado

Executive Vice President, Strategy & Innovation Office, Motorola Solutions, Inc.

“Every business model has potential to be disrupted, faster than most management teams imagine.”

Eduardo Conrado has lived all over the world. He grew up in Nicaragua, earned his MBA in Barcelona, ran an international team in Argentina, and managed the creation of an international design and innovation center in Tel Aviv. As a true citizen of the world, he understands the urban ecosystem needed to spur innovation.

So, when he was looking for a site for one of Motorola's innovation hubs, he picked Chicago. He appreciates that Chicago has all the right attributes: universities that provide a diverse talent base, a startup community surrounded by mature companies, and a diverse workforce. “There are only a few places in the world with that vibrancy.”

To staff the innovation hub, Conrado assembled a team with a broad range of backgrounds and expertise. “We have PhDs in plasma physics, industrial designers, and ethnographers sitting on the same floor with behavioral researchers, designers and software people, architects, and data scientists.”

A 24-year veteran of the firm, Conrado is currently the executive vice president of Motorola Solutions' Strategy & Innovation Office. Reporting directly to the CEO as a member of the company's executive committee, he is responsible for accelerating growth-focused innovation across the company's products, services, and software.

He oversees Corporate Strategy, focused on portfolio transformation; the Chief Technology Office (CTO), focused on advanced design and solutions strategy; the Information Technology Office (CIO), focused on transforming IT into a business-enabler; and Motorola Solutions Venture Capital, which makes strategic investments in startup companies.

As the pace of disruption speeds up in the business world, innovation and “unexpected collaborations” need to happen much faster. “You need to have a team that is set up to feel comfortable in disruption, to observe it, and then to internalize it, to be able to drive change within a company.”

When innovating and directly creating something new, you can do research where you pose a set of questions to customers, and out of that get quantitative views. But Conrado's team knows that in some cases, the only way to get needed insights from customers is from observation. Conrado explains, “Our CPO says, ‘The customer won't tell you what they need, but they will show you.’ That's what ethnographers do. They spend thousands of hours riding along with police officers and firefighters, observing, asking questions, and ‘spending a day in the life.’ From there they can see what areas we can improve with technology.”

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- Board director, ArcBest (since 2016); Board director, Ascension (since 2014); Board director, Chicago Red Cross (since 2013); Board director, The Field Museum (since 2016); and Advisory Board member, Sonim Corporation (since 2016)
  - Former Board president, Business Marketing Association (2010-2015) and former Board director, Association of American Advertisers (ANA) (from 2011 to 2015)
  - HB2B Magazine's Marketer of the Year (2011)
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# Stephen Davis

President, The Will Group

“It is a privilege, as an entrepreneur, to have the social and financial capital to invest in people, change lives, and create the ecosystems that we want.”



Stephen Davis had an entrepreneurial outlook even before he was in business. Out of college he was set to be an NFL star. He relates, “I was on the Miami Dolphins and I had a big contract. But I didn’t want to play for a football team; I wanted to own a football team.”

After leaving football, he was offered the opportunity to manage a division for GE. “Before they could say opportunity, I said, ‘Sign me up.’ The only thing I wanted more than to be Jack Welch was to have my own company.”

Davis left GE in 1986 to start the Will Group, a parent company with seven member companies in the construction and energy related industries. Even after 30 years in business, he still has the sense of entrepreneurial urgency. “Every month that I make payroll is another month that I get to stay in business. When you work for a big company you just don’t think about that.” One of the key lessons he learned in both business and on the gridiron, is the importance culture plays in team success. “I heard many years ago, ‘Intent creates a habit, which

creates a tradition, which creates a culture.’ We have to be very intentional,” explains Davis. “If we want our ecosystems to evolve to where we have people living and working in communities, buying houses, and paying taxes, we’ve got to be intentional. Part of that is having community businesses of scale.”

At the Will Group, he looks for people who embrace the company culture as well as performance. If they have neither, he says, it’s easy to pass on them. If they have both, he puts them on his team. He also strongly believes in giving ex-offenders a second chance by hiring them, something that benefits the community as well as the company. “They are some of the most loyal and hardworking employees. There’s nothing like somebody who has been given a second chance.”

Davis is intentional with his influence as well. After discussing the need to provide teenagers direction with a friend, Davis drew on his many unique experiences to create Tuskegee Next. Building on the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen, the program provides a clear path to aviation careers for at-risk

youth. The program is entering its third year and, after completing just two classes, is responsible for 18 people who’ve had solo flights and 14 that are now private pilots.

“I got the chance to glance at a young lady’s smile during her flight. She now has a different purpose. She has confidence. If some guy comes up and says, ‘Hey sweetie, what are you doing?’ She says, ‘I fly airplanes, what do you do?’ That’s the kind of thing that really excites me.”

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- Board director, The Haymarket Center of Chicago (since 2013); Board director, Inland Real Estate Trust, Inc. (since 2011); Board chairman, DuPage Airport Authority (since 2005); Board chairman, William & Mary Davis Foundation (since 2006); Board director, The Trust Company of Illinois (since 2016); and Board director, PMI Energy Solutions (since 2014)
  - Former Board director, Wheaton Bank and Trust (2006-2016)
  - The Will Group was named a 2010 Black Enterprise Magazine Top 100 Black Business
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# Billy Dec

Chief Executive Officer, Rockit Ranch Productions

“I have figured out how to make business and solving problems fun. I like to work with positive, fun people who get things done in a collaborative way.”

It seems like the only thing Billy Dec hasn't done is sleep. A child of Filipino immigrants, Dec is a two-time Emmy Award winning TV personality, producer, actor, attorney, entrepreneur, promoter, and White House advisor. Since his first job in 6th grade checking coats in a Chinese restaurant, Dec has never rested. He lost his father and brother when he was in high school, so he started supporting his mother and baby sister. He remembers, “Thankfully the restaurant industry was there for me. People banded together and gave me jobs.” Unable to accept his spot at New York University, he worked his way through college at University of Illinois, while developing a following as a nightclub promoter.

While pursuing his law degree at 22, he was simultaneously opening a series of nightclubs. After graduation, however, he had to pick a path: attorney or nightclub owner. He selected hospitality. “I had already built a family of 250 teammates and had tens of thousands of people in my database. I would have eventually lost those connections if I changed everything and became an attorney. I could never go back and recapture that momentum.” Dec eventually went to Harvard Business School to learn the financial side of the business, and ended up starting Rockit Ranch Productions, a hospitality and entertainment development company specializing in the creation, marketing, and management of restaurants, bars, and nightclubs. He now oversees a 10-person leadership team and has more than 650 employees at eight restaurants and nightclubs.

Additionally, Dec frequently contributes to the “Today Show,” “Good Morning America,” and “Windy City Live” and has had acting roles in TV & film, most recently on shows including “Empire,” “Criminal Minds,” and “American Crime Story.” He is also producing his own projects with former studio executives he assembled to lead the newly formed Elston Films.

Thinking back, he says, “Scary waters are what I was born in. Often people are thrown off by the storm, but I have been through worse. I love the challenge of solving really tough problems.” During all of this, he founded the Filipino Executive Network, which led, in part, to an invitation from President Obama to join the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Dec also serves on the White House Bullying Prevention Task Force. The secret to his success? He leverages his ability to build relationships. “I was able to network and build relationships on an exponential level to deliver value by putting really amazing people together to create outstanding entertainment experiences.”

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- Board director, Asian Americans Advancing Justice (since 2015)
  - Community involvements include Lookingglass Theatre (founder of the Junior Board National Council) and Make-A-Wish
  - Won the State of Illinois “Excellence in Business Award” and is in the Asian American Hall of Fame Award
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# Peter M. Ellis

Partner, Chair of Complex Litigation Practice and Executive Committee Member, Reed Smith

“Innovation is about quickly moving from concept to execution. Identifying a need is easy, executing and integrating are where many great ideas fail.”



Peter Ellis is the national chairman of Reed Smith’s Complex Litigation Group and also serves as a member of their executive committee, the firm’s global governing board. As an attorney dealing with national and international clients, Ellis says being a person of color in an industry where most practitioners are not diverse has made him much more aware of his surroundings, the business community, and opportunities presented. “I haven’t taken anything for granted. Iron sharpens iron.”

Ellis believes being transparent in connection to using a “carrot” approach associated with a willingness to embrace culturally competent leaders and a “stick” associated with failing to do so can help firms not just talk about diversity and inclusion, but act on it more quickly.

“If we are going to be successful in executing on our strategy as a business then we need to weave into every aspect of our business the diversity of our talent in thought, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. It is just a fact that a more diverse talent base is a better talent base.” He sees specific examples of clients rewarding firms that are practicing diversity and inclusion versus giving it lip service. “Those that do not will be left behind.”

Ellis combines his passion for diversity with his commitment to ecological conservation and community improvement. As a trustee for the Chicago Botanical Gardens, he helps make sure their impact is seen and felt throughout the city, not just on the north side. By partnering with other groups including Windy City Harvest and the Cook County Forest Preserves, he engages a diverse clientele around issues such as education, conservation, and health.

In 2014, he co-founded the Chicago Black Partner Alliance (CBPA), which currently has more than 100 members from 53 firms, to provide a safe environment for African American partners at large law firms to exchange ideas.

As former chair of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Ellis worked with key leaders from the State’s justice system and the public to identify ways for leaders to collaborate across disciplines for the betterment of the community and the integrity of the criminal justice system.

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- Vice chairman of the Board, The Harris Theater for Music and Dance; and vice chairman of the Board, Chicago Botanic Garden; member of the Conservation and Policy Council, Forest Preserves of Cook County (since 2015); and Advisory Board member, Institute for Inclusion in the Legal Profession (since 2011)
  - Former Board director for the Jazz Institute of Chicago and the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless; former Advisory Board chairman, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (2011-2014); and former Advisory Council member, Juvenile Justice Leadership Counsel (2012-2014)
  - Fellow, Leadership Greater Chicago (2007)
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# Opella F. Ernest

Chief Clinical Officer, Health Care Service Corporation

“In order to lead, you have to take care of yourself to be ready to meet the challenges. As a physician, I understand what happens when you don’t.”

Whether as a practicing physician or as a medical director and business leader, putting “people first” is clearly at the core of all Opella Ernest’s endeavors. Ernest, a Board certified family medicine physician, is senior vice president and chief clinical officer for Health Care Service Corporation (HCSC), reporting directly to the chief executive officer. She is responsible for HCSC’s medical policy and quality and accreditation areas. She is also responsible for establishing HCSC’s external healthcare policy efforts and public healthcare agenda in support of its business strategy. “Our purpose (at HCSC) is to serve our members in sickness and in health,” says Ernest. “As a member owned company, we take that purpose very seriously.”

In her previous role as the chief medical officer for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois, Ernest pursued an innovative care model that increased access and effectiveness of healthcare by partnering with a large gastroenterologist practice to support the development of the first specialty care intensive medical home for members with Crohn’s disease. The model was selected by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association for presentation to Congress in November 2016 to reflect innovations in health care.

Early in her career, Ernest learned the importance of putting people first when it comes to business decisions. At the time as a medical director, she was responsible for overseeing the integration of two medical facilities. While there were complicated logistical changes dealing with locations, processes, and technology, understanding the people side was, to Ernest, the real key. She says, “If you can get the right people, then you can deal with the process and technology parts. It became clear very quickly that people are the foundation of the equation, if you are going to make a change happen, and if the change is going to be sustainable and successful.”

Ernest has served as the executive advisor for the African American’s in Motion Business Resource Group for HCSC and has focused on talent development and succession planning with her team. “I have made an investment in developing people who want to grow. That’s been a big part of what drives me. It is an investment that you make in people along the way.”

As a family physician, she has always been acutely aware of the profound variations in health status driven by disparities of gender, ethnicity, and economic situation. Her vision is to develop initiatives to address these issues and improve outcomes for underserved populations using a diverse team that fully understands and appreciates the people and communities they serve.



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- Board director, Innovista Health Solutions (since 2015)
  - Former Advisory Board member American Lung Association (2015-2106), Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association (2014-2015), and Rosencrance Foundation Chicago (2013-2015)
  - Serves as the executive sponsor for the HCSC Health Equity initiative
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# Verónica Gómez

SVP Regulatory & Energy Policy and General Counsel, ComEd, An Exelon Company

“The art of leadership is creating a space and a process that allows for people to provide input, reflect, and come to conclusions in their own way.

Verónica Gómez was born in Chicago, the child of Cuban immigrants. After receiving her A.B. in economics and political science at Stanford, she returned home for law school at the University of Chicago.

Gómez works as senior vice president for regulatory and energy policy and general counsel at ComEd, supervising 93 employees and a budget in excess of \$40 million. Though new to this role, she has already taken a leading role in planning for the implementation of the Future Energy Jobs Acts, which will pivot Illinois toward the new clean economy by significantly expanding energy efficiency, jumpstarting renewable energy, and ensuring that low-income communities benefit from a clean energy future.

Gómez finds her background makes it easy for her to relate to different groups of people, from the line workers to the broad spectrum of ComEd’s

customers. She is also able to effectively translate that experience to other senior colleagues.

She explains, “When you have senior group that is not very diverse, and you try to manage up when you are very different from that group, that is a whole different challenge.” Whether managing integration after an acquisition or hiring new talent, Gómez is able to smooth the path to inclusion.

These communication skills were critical at Exelon in her role immediately prior to ComEd, where she supported two corporate mergers and then was responsible for integrating their litigation functions into Exelon. This required her to lead those professionals, the broader group, and the department through significant changes.

Her ability to make connections helps Gómez in the increasingly customer-centric business environment. By being relatable and making conversations

easier, she is able to ask better questions, get more honest answers, better examine issues, and identify solutions from a different angle.

“We need to listen to what our customers want. But to really perform at the highest level as a company, we also need to engage so deeply with our customers in order to help them define what they want, by helping them to understand what we can do for them.”

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- Board director and chair of the Governance Committee, Illinois Legal Aid Online (since 2008); Board treasurer, Chicago Bar Foundation (since 2012); and vice chair of the Board, Friends of Jones College Prep (since 2014)
  - Serves as a Governing Member Ambassador for the Chicago Zoological Society (since 2012)
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# Craig A. Griffith

Partner, Sidley Austin LLP

“The associates that tend to excel are those who see the unanswered question as the opportunity and run to it.”

Craig Griffith is a partner and member of the Executive Committee at Sidley Austin LLP. With 27 years at the firm, he is the senior member of the Global Finance practice group, where he oversees the functions of 17 partners and 27 associates and counsel.

He also serves as global co-chair of the Committee on the Assignment and Compensation of Associates, which includes 70+ partners and 7 administrators who manage the professional development and compensation for nearly 1,000 associates. In this role, Griffith created a system for the annual assessment of all candidates for promotion to partner. In response to the 2008 financial crisis, he managed the reorganization of the firm's associate ranks, worldwide, which saved Sidley Austin \$60 million globally, and positioned the firm to emerge from the recession poised for growth.

He stresses the importance of having senior lawyers who believe in and support associates. “I made mistakes and they came back and continued to train, supervise, mentor, and sponsor me. That added to my confidence in my ability to succeed.”

When assessing associates for potential partnership, he looks for those who demonstrate their capacity for high-level critical, analytical thinking, and who are hungry to learn and to enhance their skill set.

“I have a great deal of confidence in my colleague's abilities and I believe that my job is to help bring them out. Just as that was done for me.”

Thinking about hiring strategies for the future, Griffith acknowledges that expectations go both ways. In his discussions with younger associates about their expectations for work/life balance, he notes, “We used to scoff at it, but it's something that our millennial population expects without any hesitation. And if we're honest about it, much of what our millennial colleagues say they want are things we want too, but just haven't necessarily figured out how to achieve.”



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- Board director, Lupus Society of Illinois (since 2011) and Board director, Thurgood Marshall College Fund (since 2014)
  - Former Board director, YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago (2004-2006)
  - Participates in Real Men Read (since 2011)
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# Pedro Antonio Guerrero

Chief Executive Officer, Guerrero Howe Custom Media

“An optimist outlook is not one that’s blind to reality, but one that’s prepared for different possibilities.”

Most people don’t view art school as a place to learn business management techniques, but Pedro Guerrero disagrees with that sentiment.

When he scrutinizes his P&L report, he thinks of a lesson he learned in a drawing class: “Looking in your mirror, you draw yourself. You think you see your reflection, but then you see a self-portrait that doesn’t look anything like what you thought it looked like, and you’re forced to adjust.”

When you’re looking at the P&L, you think your business is doing this or that, but when you look at the hard numbers, it’s actually telling you something different.”

Guerrero comes from a family of artists and businessmen. His great-grandfather started Rosarita Bean Company and his grandfather was a photographer for Frank Lloyd Wright. His father moved to California and sent Guerrero to boarding school in Rhode Island at age 13.

Early exposure to executives and leadership of many backgrounds influenced the development of his current business endeavors. He is founder and CEO of Guerrero Howe Custom Media, LLC, a media company headquartered in Chicago that publishes seven brands including *Hispanic Executive* magazine and *The Alumni Society*, an association of Latino business executives.

The collection of brands is tightly focused on a vision executed across multiple platforms. Each brand has a shared purpose of recognizing, promoting, and developing great executives. The focus has paid off with awards from FOLIO and The Society of Publication Designers.

Since he took sole ownership of the organization in 2015, he has overseen a 20 percent growth year-over-year. Guerrero received a fellowship from The Stanford Latino Entrepreneur Initiative in 2015, a first-of-its-kind partnership between Stanford University and the Latino Business Action Network.

Whether it is in painting or in business, Guerrero says, “You have to have a vision, but at the end of the day you have to figure out a way to make that vision a reality. It’s not a linear process.”

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- Board director and member of the Strategic Plan Task Force, Chicago Foundation for Women (since 2015) and Board director, president-elect, Entrepreneur’s Organization, Chicago Chapter (since 2014)
  - Former Board director, Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement (2014-2015)
  - Serves the Senior Leadership Committee of Association for Latin Professionals For America (ALPFA) Chicago Chapter (since 2016)
  - Selected by Chicago Foundation for Women to lead their Strategic Planning Task Force, focusing on growth and expanding their mission (2016)
  - Earned his Master of Fine Arts from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago
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# Steven V. Hunter

Partner - Commercial Litigation Group, Quarles & Brady LLP

“Push in times of peace and lead in times of conflict. Leadership is service rather than showmanship.”



Steven Hunter has a unique way of dealing with the confrontational environment he faces as a trial lawyer in international business disputes. He teaches yoga.

Hunter is a trial lawyer representing clients as lead counsel in business disputes around the world. He has won jury trials and bench trials as well as domestic and international arbitrations. When everyone else is aggravated, he is able to add calm to the situation, analyzing, and considering rather than simply reacting.

Hunter considers himself as a futurist, so it is no surprise he leads a number of the firm's technological innovations. He serves on the firm's National Innovation Committee, is the national chair of the Electronic Discovery and Record Retention Group at Quarles & Brady, and is one of a handful of attorneys in the U.S. certified as an Association of Certified e-Discovery Specialists (ACEDS).

Instead of using 20 to 40 lawyers to go through thousands of emails and documents, the firm can have two or three complete the process in a week using electronic discovery. This provides a dramatic increase in efficiency, which “...helps us focus on learning what's actually in the material rather than just sifting through it. We can focus more on what clients are paying us higher rates for,” says Hunter.

As an equity partner at Quarles & Brady, Hunter serves as an advocate, a counselor, a civic leader, and firm manager, developing close relationships and mentoring younger lawyers at the firm and enhancing an inclusive culture.

“Culture is the way that individuals in the organization behave with one another. It is the bottom threshold for what behavior is acceptable, and is the higher threshold for what behavior is lauded. The way that companies reward and endorse people really is a symbol of their corporate culture.”

- Board director, Chicago Childcare Society (since 2014) and Iona Calhoun School of Classical Ballet (since 2005)
- Former Board director, Chicago Sinfonietta (2009-2014); Chicago Volunteer Legal Services (2006-2010); Health Connect One, Inc. (2013-2015), and Chicago Committee on Minorities in Large Law Firms (2007-2010)
- General Counsel, Northeast Illinois Council of the Boy Scouts (since 2015)
- Advisory Board member of The Art Institute Leadership Advisory (since 2016); Museum of Science and Industry Presidents' Council (since 2015); and ISBA Commercial Banking (since 2015)
- Fellow, Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (since 2012); and Clinic co-chairman, Chinatown Legal Clinic (since 2011)

# Ted Jackson

Vice President Operations, Novolex

“If you think about the pace of technological change for the next wave of leadership, we are preparing leaders now to do work that hasn’t even been defined yet.”



Ted Jackson built his career as a management consultant and turn-around expert on the foundation of his engineering degree.

He initially intended to go to graduate school for engineering, but instead ended up working for a company supporting public safety communications systems for the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta. While he enjoyed the engineering aspects of dealing with cutting edge technologies, he found the business challenges more interesting, and decided to change his direction to business consulting.

After completing a successful consulting project for Novolex, a \$2.5 billion international packaging company, Jackson joined full time as vice president of operations for their \$700 million Duro Division, where he developed and implemented an operational improvement plan that doubled earnings of the division in two years. He now manages 10 direct and over 2500, union and non-union, indirect employees across eight Duro manufacturing facilities, including

seven in the United States and one in Mexico. He is responsible for Novolex’s companywide environmental health and safety performance of 6000 employees in all 50 Novolex plants in the United States, Canada, Mexico, China, and Europe. He also conducts due diligence for Novolex corporate acquisition targets and develops and implements post-merger integration synergy savings plans.

Jackson believes flexibility and interpersonal skills will be critical for ‘the business of the future’ due to multiculturalism and globalism. These, he says, are outputs of a quality education.

To this end, Jackson is involved with Social Venture Partners of Chicago which takes a venture capital approach to community engagement and educational opportunities, helping close the gap and creating a stronger pipeline to college for people of diverse backgrounds in the city. He has also established endowments to ease the financial burden for those emerging leaders who secure acceptance at college.

For those just starting out in business, Jackson’s advice is to not over commit. “One of the most valuable lessons for me has been the notion of being disciplined around under-promising and over-delivering.” He believes managing expectations can help your long-term reputation. “Early in your career, you are really anxious to prove yourself and can get into a situation where you bite off more than you can chew.”

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- Board director, Binkable (since 2016)
  - Won two M&A Advisor–Turnaround Awards for his work at Consolidated Container Company and Solo Cup Company
  - Established endowments at both of his alma maters, Clark-Atlanta University and Purdue University, to reduce the financial hardships of students pursuing STEM and business degrees
  - Earned Six Sigma Black Belt
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# Rudy Juarez

Vice President and General Manager, Mexico, Latin America, Global Export, W.W. Grainger

“Human beings are naturally averse to change; but, change is our greatest challenge and our greatest opportunity.”

Rudy Juarez became Grainger’s vice president of Mexico, Latin America and global export in 2014. He is responsible for the company’s operations in Mexico, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Panama, Peru, and Puerto Rico, and also for the global export sales and marketing team, which works with a network of 500 resellers in over 130 countries.

In 2016, Juarez devised and launched a strategic framework to enable three times growth in operations of a multi-channel distribution model, engaging e-commerce and direct sales channels in Mexico to grow by 14.4 percent. By reorganizing sales and leadership teams, implementing sales effectiveness metrics/methods, and prioritizing sales in high-growth, profitable areas, revenues grew by more than 9 percent and operating earnings by more than 21 percent.

As an expert in international business development, Juarez understands the importance of using technology to enhance business, but emphasizes that it should not detract from human interaction, particularly in a global environment. “You have to figure out how to use technology to scale something like customer service, those people skills. They must go together. The more we rely on technology, the more difficult it is to build interpersonal skills,” he explains.

Juarez is always interested in difficult assignments, seeking out the challenge of fixing something others feel can’t be repaired. “It’s rewarding to take something that was broken, and having the right disposition and the high level of relentlessness, to be able to tackle the business, figure out what was wrong, and put it back on the right track.” He believes that in order to succeed, people need to seek out opportunities to take risks and put themselves forward, rather than waiting to be asked. “I coach Latinos, and I tell them, ‘Hey, raise your hand.’ It doesn’t mean you can’t leverage your hard work and humbleness, but make sure you don’t let humbleness become a weakness.” Even if you don’t get the role, he explains, it provides an opportunity to get in front of leadership and to practice interviewing, so you know what they value.

He advises asserting aggressiveness and being very clear on what you have to do, bringing the team along with you, and motivating the team using interpersonal skills to accomplish what needs to get done. For Juarez, the turning point in becoming a leader is when the real impact you make doesn’t come from your individual effort, but from the contribution your team makes to the company. “That’s how you become an integral part of the business.”

- Former Board director, Howard Brown Health Center (2003-2006), National Latino Education Institute (2004-2006), and Susan G. Komen Foundation (2010-2011)
- Advisory Board member, The Join Foundation (since 2016)
- Former Advisory Board member, Hispanic Scholarship Fund (2010)
- Has advised 22 mentees, some of whom hold key senior roles at Fortune 500 firms
- Illinois Diversity Council, Multicultural Leadership Award (2015)





# Michael Leong

Senior Vice President, PNC Bank

“One of the keys to being an effective leader is to be bold enough to be vulnerable.”



At age 20, Michael Leong was the student body president at Northern Illinois University, when he had the opportunity to introduce Yolanda King, first-born child of civil rights leaders Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King, at the University's Centennial celebration.

“It was a very humbling experience and it inspired me to think about what it means to make a difference.”

In his current role as managing director and group manager of Corporate Finance at PNC Bank, Leong is responsible for more than \$4.4 billion in lending commitments and more than \$60 million in gross revenues.

Through collaboration with fellow marketplace leaders and other PNC stakeholders, Leong led the development and executive management adoption of a comprehensive five-year business strategy with defining elements, including client engagement,

prospect acquisition, market relevance, talent management, capital allocation, and key performance indicators. As a result, annual revenues increased from \$30 million to \$60 million in just four years.

Leong is also chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Council at PNC Bank, where he coordinates employee resource groups, mentors younger associates, and facilitates D&I community outreach. He also promotes hiring guidelines to ensure PNC employees reflect the make-up of the community in which they work.

Leong's experience as the child of Chinese immigrants certainly influenced his career.

He reflects, “Growing up as an Asian American, culturally we don't do a good job of learning a vocabulary that helps us identify our feelings or our strengths and weaknesses. It was hard for me to articulate that.”

The value of humility made Leong a proponent of “servant leadership,” which to Leong means, “having the confidence of knowing that helping those around me enjoy success and recognition is really the reward. I don't need to step in front to be recognized.”

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- Board director, Orchard Village (since 2015)
  - Former Board treasurer, Harkness House for Children (2008-2009); and Former Board treasurer, Commodore Green Briar Condo Association (2002-2006)
  - Chair of PNC's Chicagoland Diversity and Inclusion Council
  - Mentor, Executives Club of Chicago's Leadership Circle Program (since 2012)
  - Panelist and speaker for the national chapter of ASCEND Pan-Asian Leadership and the Chicago chapter of the National Association of Asian American Professionals
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# Marco A. López

Co-Founder & Executive Vice President Brand and Strategy Experience, elemento L2

“If my idea can change a life, disrupt an industry, or create jobs, even if I’m not at the helm, I will partner with people to make it happen.”

Leveraging his innate entrepreneurial agility, Marco López leads the creative and strategic teams at elemento L2, a marketing agency that drives word of mouth and consumer engagement, devoted to strategically assisting clients to reach the evolving and rapidly growing multicultural markets in the country.

With more than 20 years of experience in strategy, brand, sports marketing, experiential, and media, López has an impeccable track record of contributing growth, building trust, and creating value for some of the most admired brands.

His recent projects include growing accounts like Coca-Cola’s sports marketing efforts for the Mexican National Soccer Team, which was so successful his team was allowed to compete for and add the United States National Team as well.

At elemento, López manages a team of 15 colleagues through collaboration and integration to execute effectively at all levels, while the agency itself works

with larger teams for major events, managing groups of 20 to 30 staff members.

López strongly believes that diversity, discipline, and growth are keys to team development, based on his personal history.

Born in Chicago, López spent his childhood in Mexico with his extended family. Returning to Chicago, he honed his advertising and marketing expertise through creating marketing departments, consulting, and marketing director roles at companies such as Matraca Marketing, Hispanic Marketing Consulting, Hoy Newspaper, and Relay Worldwide.

López wears many hats, from being a transformational leader to enhancing the culture of an organization, and managing large teams. He is curious, strategic, and creative, always seeking how to best solve clients’ problems. A believer in the power of live and digital experiences, his strategy requires keeping his people “fresh.”

The one constant in Marco López’s varied and non-traditional career has been his enthusiasm for making connections through innovation. “We live in the live space,” says López. “We encourage our employees to go out, go to concerts, go to events, and test technology to make sure that we come back with fresh ideas and use them to our best advantage.”

- Board director, Urban Initiatives (since 2015) and Advisory Board member, AHAA (since 2014)
- Founded TourisTeen, a social enterprise where teens can learn soft and social skills for college and beyond
- Oversaw and developed the 2010 World Cup Trophy Tour by Coca-Cola initiative in the United States
- Speaker on Experiential Marketing in Colombia, Panama, and Mexico
- Currently working towards his Executive MBA at Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University





# Mike Maali

Midwest Regional Leader, Risk Assurance, PwC

“Measure the strength of your work relationships in terms of how comfortable your people are with you.”



As the oldest child of Palestinian immigrants, Mike Maali says, “My entire life, I’ve done everything first in my family. That is really what has carried out through my entire career.”

Being first means entering new and, often, uncomfortable waters. For Maali, this led him to develop strong capabilities to adapt to change and assess risk – perfect for his role as Midwest regional leader of Risk Assurance at PwC.

Because the rate of change is steadily accelerating, companies face new and emerging risks as they combat challenges and capitalize on new opportunities, and they need guidance. Maali and his team serve as experts who leverage advanced technologies, artificial intelligence, and data analytics to develop truly disruptive, innovative, and transformational solutions.

Maali takes a critical look at the working practices of his clients’ internal audit functions and identifies opportunities for improvement. He combines his 29+ years’ experience in the industry with his appreciation of risk and change, as well as his ability to get the most out of his diverse teams and clients, to create a roadmap. This ensures his client’s internal audit functions have comprehensive data analytics goals and execution plans in place.

These practices help his clients tighten their strategic plans to better compete in the ever-changing marketplace, whether it’s entering new markets, reducing costs, and/or managing increasingly complex risks.

Maali believes in embedding the discussion of risk into the corporate strategic planning process rather than seeing it as an incremental activity.

“A more structured approach to enterprise risk management allows you to have a holistic view of your organizational risk, to see the interdependencies between those risks and factors like resource allocation, risk appetite, and risk tolerance, and then make decisions in that context.”

Maali’s success can be attested by sheer growth in numbers. Since becoming the Risk Assurance Midwest Region leader six years ago, Maali has doubled the business, while continuing to directly serve and build tight relationships with his national and international clients.

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- Board director, World Sport Chicago and Accounting Advisory Board member, University of Illinois at Chicago (since 2010)
  - SEC certified as a financial expert
  - PwC Chicago Marketing Diversity Council
  - Serves as a mentor within the PwC network, offering career guidance to over 800 employees
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# Christopher C. Melvin, Jr.

Managing Member, Melvin & Company

“When you run into the limits of your own understanding, you need to turn to somebody who has a different perspective. The need for mentoring never stops.”



Christopher Melvin believes it is important for people of color to be able to tell their stories. Fortunately, he has quite the story to tell.

“In my family mythology, Chicago had always been a place of tremendous possibilities,” Melvin explains. It was no surprise then that after college, he made the move to Chicago.

Melvin had family in the city and they had a better life. He begins, “My great uncle James Knight left his plow in the ground in Nansemond County, Virginia. He never finished sixth grade, but he knew he had to get out of there. He went to the shipyard in Newport News and asked around, ‘Where does an ambitious black guy go?’

The answer was: Pullman Porter. He made his way to the railroads, and that’s how he got to Chicago. He became the first Mayor of Bronzeville, and founded Metropolitan Life and Metropolitan Funeral Home.”

Melvin was soon pulled into Uncle Jimmy’s orbit. “I kept hearing what a great stock market guy he was. Then I met Mr. Dibble, an advisor and investment banker to Muhammad Ali.” They both had Uncle Jimmy in common. “Mr. Dibble said, ‘I was the first black stock broker on LaSalle Street, and your uncle was a hell of a stock man. He gave me my first great trade.’”

Inspired by the story, Melvin got a job on the stock exchange in Chicago, and found that he loved it. Like Uncle Jimmy, he was also good at it. Melvin eventually began trading for himself, founding a number of firms that traded at different exchanges throughout his career. He is currently founder and CEO, Chicago River Capital LLC, and founder and CEO, Melvin and Company LLC.

Just as Uncle Jimmy’s legacy loomed large and gave him opportunity, Melvin hopes to do the same for other young people in Chicago. He works with Mentor

Illinois to help kids from difficult backgrounds get re-engaged and prepared for success.

- Board director, Regional Transportation Authority (since 2012); Board director, Chicago Symphony Orchestra (since 2012)
- Former Board director, Illinois Sports Facility Authority (2011-2012)
- Former Board of Trustee member, RS Investments (2007-2016); Former Board of Governors member, Boston Stock Exchange (2004-2007); Former Board director, SIFMA, (2000-20003); Former Board director, Chicago Stock Exchange (1993-1996)
- Member, National Advisory Council on Minority Business Enterprises, appointed by Department of Commerce Secretary Gary Locke and reappointed by Secretary Penny Pritzker
- Former Member of the Illinois Economic Recovery Commission (2010-2011), appointed by Governor Pat Quinn
- Member, Gubernatorial Transition Team, Financial Services and Regulation Committee, Governor Ryan (1999)

# Carey Mendes

Regional Business Leader Global Oil Americas, BP America Inc.

“A job where you don’t control everything forces you to develop emotional intelligence. You have to be an influencer. You have to build networks and relationships.”



Carey Mendes epitomizes the global outlook.

Born in Pakistan to a family from Goa, India, Mendes moved to Calgary in junior high school. After joining BP out of college, he moved to Houston and then London, before arriving in Chicago.

Mendes is currently responsible for BP’s Integrated Supply & Trading business including Global Crude, Global Environmental Products, and Global Derivative Marketing & Structured Products. In the Americas, he oversees the Distillate, Residual Fuels, Gasoline, Chemicals, and Diluent portfolio of trading activity. In this complex and highly regulated business, he ensures all Integrated Supply & Trade and regional activities are compliant with the BP Code of Conduct, the Integrated Supply & Trade Global Trading Guidelines, applicable standards and processes, and all relevant laws and regulation. He manages employees in Chicago, Singapore, and Europe.

Mendes knows that one size doesn’t fit all in global business. He adapts his operations style to meet the situation on the ground, whether it be in Columbia, the United Kingdom, or New York.

As a leader, Mendes does not believe you need to know everything, but that you need to let others, even those who report to you, have a chance to be the teacher. “Rather than you being the expert,” he says, “you have to learn from others.”

Mendes is also a big proponent of giving people stretch assignments to help them learn as they lead. Often just putting someone in a different situation, such as working with a multi-cultural team or leading a team from a different country, expands their cultural boundaries. It’s an idea he applies to his mentoring efforts. “The more you expose people to, the more they reduce their biases and increase their cultural fluency.”

As a member of BP America’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Mendes is committed to increasing the number of women and minorities at BP. Often that means taking a leap of faith. “I pride myself on taking chances on people who, on the face of it, might not look like they are fully equipped for a job. If we’re going to break the glass ceiling for women, and for other minorities, sometimes you have to take a chance on people that don’t fit the traditional mold.”

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- Board director, Working in the Schools (since 2016)
  - Earned his B.A. and MBA from University of Calgary, Canada; attended the University of Strathclyde’s (Glasgow) Graduate Program specializing in Safety and Operations Risk Management; and Completed Harvard’s Advanced Management Program
  - Chartered Financial Analyst (2001-2004)
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# Juan Gabriel Moreno

President, JGMA

“Architecture can be an art form that makes people’s lives better.”

Juan Gabriel Moreno is the president and founder of JGMA, an architecture firm whose mission is to improve life in Chicago’s communities of need through architecture.

Since the firm’s inception, JGMA has worked for more than 30 nonprofit organizations throughout the region, offering design visions pro bono. Moreno also works with the nonprofit organizations to identify funding resources for things like the LEED aspects of their projects.

Moreno was born in Bogota, Colombia, and educated in California, United States, and Florence, Italy, where he studied under Superstudio founders Christiano Toraldo di Francia and Gianni Pettena.

Moreno feels the key to his success as an architect is focusing on the people side of architecture. “‘Better, faster, smarter’ sometimes forgets about the ‘better.’ Firms are so busy trying to do it quickly that they forget that people live in and use those spaces. I work on schools, housing, community centers, and health

centers, so ‘better’ means to really ask ourselves, ‘How do people live?’”

He gives the example of a project to build affordable housing for senior artists. He knew it had to be economical, but before deciding on materials, he met with the artists themselves. He learned they cared most about natural light. Instead of using low-cost brick with conventional windows, he explored using glass for the exterior walls, which ended up cutting costs as well as providing the desired light.

Moreno and JGMA have won more than 20 design awards in the past three years, including the 2016 Richard H. Driehaus Award for Architectural Excellence in Community Design, 2015 Architect Magazine’s Top 50 in Design, and 3 design awards at the 2015 AIA Chicago Designnight Gala.

In college, Moreno took advantage of a study-abroad program in Italy. “Spending significant time in Italy transformed this Colombian architect of very humble roots,” he notes. “When you walk in a building and

have an emotional reaction, that’s when I knew this architecture thing was for me.” To help other students enjoy a similarly rewarding experience, Moreno started an endowment at Northeastern Illinois University, which provides a scholarship each year for a Latino student to study abroad.

- Board director, Cristo Rey High School (since 2014); Board director, Loyola University Health System (since 2017); Board director, National Museum of Mexican Art (since 2016); Board director, Metropolitan Planning Council (since 2016)
- Former Board president, Arquitectos (2002-2013) and Former Advisory Board member, Roosevelt University (2013-2016)
- Committee member, Chicago Sister Cities Bogota
- Moreno is a Leadership Greater Chicago Fellow and an Appointee to the Chicago Landmarks Panel
- Recognized in 2013 by Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos as one of the “100 COLOMBIANOS”
- Received the 2013 “PIECE” Award for International Excellence, which recognizes Colombians working outside of the country who make a difference in the lives of children and communities



# Raj V. Nagarajan

Senior Vice President, Chief Audit Executive, Wintrust Financial Corporation

“We have different types of people with different strengths and weaknesses. My job is show them how they can advance their weaknesses into strengths, to make them into the leaders of tomorrow.”

Raj Nagarajan is the chief audit executive and senior vice president at Wintrust Financial Corporation, a diversified Bank Holding Company with \$26 billion in assets and 165 community banks. He is responsible to the boards of directors for how the company's controls are working. He sums it up this way, “My job is to protect the bank from the regulators.” His goal is to ensure regulators don't haunt the bank with allegations that they did something wrong.

The company has 15 bank charters, with 15 different boards, plus 2 others. “I participate in about 68 board meetings throughout the year, says Nagarajan. There are about 220 directors that I have direct contact with and I know each one of them by name.” His role requires a unique balance of comfort and assertiveness.

On the one hand, it is important for people to trust him, even though they may be afraid of what the audit might uncover. “I'm there to show you what is wrong and how to fix it.” If people are afraid of

him, they might hide problems instead of addressing them. On the other hand, he needs to be tenacious in persuading people to fix any identified problems. He adds, “Even if it takes 10 years for them to see that risk and make that change.”

To get that message across, Nagarajan follows the advice of a colleague who told him not just to focus on the positive side when talking to the board of directors. He remembers, “My colleague advised, ‘You have a wealth of knowledge and you have a lot of ideas of how to fix things, but at the same time you need to give the board a view of what will go wrong if management does not follow your advice.’” He explained that the potential negative impact of not addressing risk sometimes motivates change more than just providing solutions, especially if it might affect the bottom line.

Nagarajan thinks one of the biggest risks in business today is cyber security. “Your information is accessible from anywhere. Financial institutions, in particular,

have lots of confidential information about their customers. Protecting that information is the number one concern for the board.”

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- Trustee, Village of Lisle (since 2012)
  - Certified Financial Services Auditor (CFSA); Certified in Risk and Information Systems Controls (CRISC); V-Certified in Risk Management and Assurance (CRMA); and Certified Information Systems Professional (CISP)
  - Earned an MBA from Kellogg Graduate School of Business, Northwestern University; and a Master of Science from Annamalai University, Chidambaram, and TN State, India
  - Increased business opportunities for minority owned businesses by introducing an affirmative action plan for banking units and their subsidiaries who are federal contractors
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# David C. Namkung

Managing Partner, Clarity Partners, LLC

“We have to be very good at developing skill sets in the technology field because the educational system hasn’t caught up to the demand.”



David Namkung is the founder and managing partner of Clarity Partners LLC, a Chicago-based minority business enterprise (MBE) management, technology, and trial consulting firm. Born in Seoul, South Korea, Namkung grew up in Boston. He worked as an IT consultant for Accenture, a job that eventually led him to Chicago. He fell in love with the city and relocated here, founding Clarity Partners in 2004.

Clarity now has over 140 employees with annual revenue of \$24 million, and has been on the Inc. 5000 for four consecutive years, as well as on the Crain's Fast 50 for two years. Clarity's employees comprise 50 percent minority and 45 percent female workers. The firm serves a broad range of clients from Fortune 500 companies in the financial services and insurance industries, as well as state and local governments and transit agencies.

If you live and work in Chicago, you have probably been impacted by Namkung's efforts. His firm is working with the Chicago Police Department on analytics for crime data, trying to forecast and predict what

kind of future crime may occur. Clarity revamped the registration system for classes offered by the Chicago Park District, making it easier for people to access the activities offered by the city. For Metra, they built a new website that included routes, scheduling, and train tracking to improve the customer experience and access to information for commuters.

Namkung led a team that worked with the City of Chicago Office of the City Clerk to transform its vehicle sticker program from a single cycle selling model to a year-round selling model with two-year stickers. This program, with additional innovations around enforcement and compliance, has yielded an additional \$20+ million in revenues for Chicago with no change to the price of the sticker.

Improving the convenience of the purchase process has also increased both customer satisfaction and compliance with the ordinance. “By implementing the right technology, people can buy a city sticker on their laptop while lying in bed. That makes it easier to buy, and thus they actually comply with the ordinance.”

Prior to launching Clarity Partners, Namkung was a partner at Vector Strategic Services, LP, as well as an equity options market maker on the American Stock Exchange.

- Board director, Hanul Family Alliance (since 2011) and Board director, Asian American Action Fund of Greater Chicago (since 2008)
- Former Board director, Council on Korean Americans (2012-2013)
- Former Advisory Board member, Waterguard Technologies (2002-2004); former Advisory Board member, Service Interactive (2001-2003); and former Advisory Board member, Applied Training Resources (2001-2002)
- Holds Series 7 and 63 NASD certifications
- Former co-chair, Asian American Advisory Council, Cook County, IL, and a member of the transition team for Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle
- Namkung was a founding member of one of the largest professional blackjack teams in the world. His team was featured in *Johnny Magic and the Card Shark Kids*, a book about professional Magic: The Gathering player John Finkle, who was also a member of the team

# Seema Pajula

Vice Chairman and U.S. Consumer & Industrial Products Leader, Deloitte & Touche LLP

“The environment today is driven by disruption, innovation, and change. Organizations must focus on a mission, engagement, diversity of thought, and constantly learning to drive success.”

Seema Pajula puts her mother at the top in terms of influence on her success. “My mom instilled very powerful morals and values around education and working hard. As an immigrant from India, she had little education so she struggled to support us financially. She showed me the definition of hard work.”

Her early experiences drive her passion to give back to society through volunteering and forming her strong work ethic. She now leads Deloitte’s largest industry, US Consumer & Industrial Products, serving 75 percent of the Fortune 1000 companies, with \$3.5 billion in revenue and more than 13,000 employees.

“Our clients expect us to provide counsel on what it takes for them to win. We have to be ahead of business trends to help clients navigate through regulation, operations, strategy, or even exponential innovation,” describes Pajula. When Pajula became a partner in 2008, she was young, female, and the only Indian partner at the firm appointed to lead a practice

in a male-dominated auto industry. She quickly realized that receiving alignment from a group of senior leaders takes a different approach compared to leading a team comprised of junior colleagues.

As part of her strategy to prove herself, she decided to take on one of the firm’s largest and most difficult clients. She also focused on relationships. “I sat down with every single partner in the practice and had a discussion about strategy. I built relationships with every partner.”

As a member of Deloitte’s Board of Directors, Pajula applies her focus on relationships to her strategic thinking around the impact of technology on manufacturing. She asks, “How do we take artificial intelligence, analytics, and additive manufacturing, these technologies that Deloitte has worked so hard on, and think about alliances that we could make with GE or with other great companies to really make a difference in the market place?” She believes alliances and cooperation are the best ways to innovate, and to

effectively tackle some of the city’s and the world’s biggest challenges.

In her previous role as the office audit leader for the Chicago Commercial Audit Practice, Pajula was responsible for all aspects of financial, operational, human resource, people development, and retention matters for one of Deloitte’s largest audit practices. Through her work in both client roles and the leadership roles, she has gained strong finance, mergers and acquisitions, risk management, and strategy experience.

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- Board treasurer, Leadership Greater Chicago (since 2016); Board, vice president, Chicago Scholars (since 2013); and Board director, The Executives’ Club (since 2015)
  - Former Board director, Emerald City Theatre (2008-2012), and Former Board director, Goddard (2005-2012)
  - Served as keynote speaker at the National Association of Manufacturers board meeting (2017)
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# José Paz Peña, Jr.

Senior Vice President, Head of Retail Banking for Illinois and Indiana, Fifth Third Bank

“Seeing small businesses prosper as we inject capital into the communities that we serve is exciting to me. It benefits not only the individual and their family, but also the employees they are hiring and their vendors.”

As Head of Retail Banking for Fifth Third Bank for the Chicago market, José Peña is responsible for the oversight of 170 retail branch locations with \$100 million in revenue and more than 1,000 employees. He leads retail strategy, customer experience, operations, community involvement, and processes for the market, managing a \$10 billion budget that will generate \$100 million in revenue.

Responsible for 1000 retail team members, he sees developing employees and enhancing succession planning within the organization as one of his primary responsibilities. Peña works hard to place them in the right roles for their abilities, and to help them develop a career map so they can proactively prepare for their next role. As a result, he has achieved an impressively high rate of internal promotions.

Peña grew up on the South Side of Chicago. His father worked in a steel mill and his mother was a welder, and he looks at them both as role models for the possibilities of what people can accomplish with hard work and strong core values. He hopes that his own experiences will encourage other young people to be optimistic about their future and to think big, no matter what kind of a neighborhood they grew up in.

As someone who knows that Chicago's neighborhoods can be very different, he is very happy with the approach taken by Fifth Third. He says, “I really like the autonomy and the empowerment that the bank gives us to run the business based on the communities that we are serving. Each community is unique in its own ways.”

Peña believes in partnering with other organizations to maximize the positive impact a bank can have on a community, whether it is providing technical assistance to small businesses in Pilsen or hosting informative sessions about financial literacy and home ownership in Little Village.

He also believes part of being a responsible corporation is for local bank leadership to participate on local boards. “If we have a business there, it's a great way for us to give back. Our involvement in those particular communities can be very valuable.”

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- Advisory Board member for the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (since 2014) and Advisory Board member, Stonier School of Banking (since 2015)
  - Former trustee, Junior Achievement (2009-2015); former Board director, Chicago YMCA; former Board director, Neighborhood Housing Services; and former Board director, Accion Chicago
  - Holds Series 24, 7, and 63 SEC certifications
  - Graduated from the Wharton Leadership Executive Program from University of Pennsylvania
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# Sergio Pereira

President, Quill Corporation

“Innovation is vital. If you stay in place you die.”



As the president of Quill.com, the most profitable business unit for parent company Staples, Sergio Pereira is responsible for guiding a \$1.3 billion business, where he oversees marketing, merchandising, finance, sales, human resources, customer service, e-commerce, and global technology.

Pereira's experience at Quill.com has been about transforming a catalog production company into a full-fledged e-commerce and digital player. As the industry evolved away from printed catalogs to Google paid search and SEO, including Amazon shopping, they had to quickly adapt to survive and thrive.

You might think imposing narrow guiding principles would impede innovation and creativity, but Pereira emphasizes just two words to everybody in the company: effortless and friendly. “That’s the filter we look through for every action. When you narrow things down for people, you actually get more ideas than if you allow everyone to be thinking about every facet of the business.”

To encourage people to contribute to innovation, he has instituted a suggestion wall and an idea roundtable where anyone in the company can make suggestions that make interacting with Quill.com more effortless and friendlier for customers.

After spending most of his career in traditional consumer package goods, the move to E-commerce was a leap for Pereira, but he quickly adapted to his new environment. Using the expertise that made Barilla and WASA household names in the US, he negotiated a licensing deal from NBC Universal, the producers of the hit TV series “The Office,” to launch Dunder Mifflin Copy Paper, which became a top seller in just a week.

As a global marketer, Pereira knows the importance of understanding your customers, and he believes the demographics of the U.S. have reached a tipping point. “The diverse population has achieved a mass level that can no longer be ignored.” His team exemplifies diversity: 900 people across the

world, with diversity of age, gender, education and experience, as well as culture.

“Homogeneous teams can lead you to quicker answers, but not necessarily better answers, because when you are all looking at a problem the same way you come up with the same answer. When you have teams with people from different backgrounds, and different cultures, you get more nuanced answers to a lot of questions. You get better answers that way.”

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- Advisory Board member, Nielsen (since 2001)
  - Former Board director, Staples Foundation (2009-2010); and former Board trustee, Lake Zurich District 95 Educational Foundation
  - Other civic involvements include Junior Achievement (since 1987) and Bear Necessities (since 2007)
  - Guest lecturer at The Kellogg School, and at IULM in Milan, Italy
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# Jose Luis Prado

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Evans Food

“Learn to lead through empowerment. It is very difficult, but once you master it, it is a huge builder of your teams, your company, your career, and your success.”

Jose Prado retired from PepsiCo in 2014 after a distinguished career spanning 30 years in multiple countries. He has a proven ability to drive growth, core, and breakthrough innovations, business transformation, successful mergers and acquisitions, and talent building.

In his last role, Prado served as president of Quaker Oats North America where he led a \$4 billion business with more than 10,000 associates, becoming the first Mexican American to lead a major PepsiCo Division in North America. In this role, Prado led a business turnaround that reversed declining trends to become the fastest growing, most profitable, most innovative, and most trusted brand in CPG food companies. He also generated market share growth in all key business lines causing an increase in employee engagement.

Before coming to Chicago, Prado served for eight years as president and CEO of Gamesa Quaker Mexico, the leading cookies and crackers company in Mexico, and the third largest food operation for PepsiCo International with over 15,000 associates. He led a major company transformation that led to an increase in sales from \$900 million to \$1.5 billion, an increase in market shares from 50 percent to 55 percent, expanded margin from 12 percent to 17 percent and reached the highest associates' engagement scores in the PepsiCo world. Following these achievements, he became an academy for talent winning all top company accolades. Prado also led the creation of a new line of Quaker Cookies and Bars that became larger than the oatmeal business in just three years and was rolled out to 25 countries under his direct leadership.

Prado was born in Mexico City and trained to be an engineer, starting his career with PepsiCo as an IT director. He had the acumen to excel in IT, “But brains can take you only so far. The next thing you need is courage to make choices and to take risks.” Making the move from engineering to sales meant changing the way he related to his team. He remembers, “You have to put yourself in their shoes, and instead of brainy dissertations, you have to be very focused on the three things that the team needed to achieve in the next four weeks.” By seeing himself as more of a facilitator than a boss, he was able to empower his team. He also found that teams didn't always respond well to financial targets as motivation. “To galvanize a diverse team, you need a vision that everybody believes in.”

In April 2016, Prado partnered with the private equity firm Wind Point Partners to acquire Evans Food Group, the global leader of pork rind snacks, based in Chicago, and currently serves as chairman and CEO.

- Board director Northern Trust Bank Corporation (since 2012); Brinker International (since 2015); Chicago Council on Global Affairs; World Business Chicago; Chicago Symphony Orchestra; Lyric Opera; and One Goal; Founding member, Latino Corporate Directors Association; and Board secretary, National Museum of Mexican Art
- Advisory Board member Kellogg School at Northwestern University and the Mexico Institute at the Woodrow Wilson Institute in Washington
- Prado has U.S. and Mexico dual citizenship



# Maria de J. Prado

Partner, Prado & Renteria CPAs, Prof.Corp.

“What I find invigorating is being part of creating something new and then monitoring, evaluating, and looking at whether it’s going in the direction we intended it to go. That all comes from accounting.”



Maria Prado has more than thirty years of auditing and consulting experience in the governmental, nonprofit, and commercial sectors, and more than twenty-seven years of experience in the public accounting industry. In her current role as managing partner and co-founder of Prado & Renteria CPAs, she is accountable for oversight of consulting engagements and provides the technical review function for audit and attestation services.

Prado spent her childhood in a small town in Michoacán Mexico before immigrating to Chicago with her family at age 12. Prado began her career working for First National Bank, but when the opportunity to form a partnership arose, she took it.

After forming a new firm, Prado quickly learned that running a business requires far more than accounting skills. She recalls, “I remember thinking back to when I was in college taking a marketing course and feeling as though I would never have to use that course in my life. Little did I know that being a business owner I would need every single course I ever had.”

Prado engages in continuous learning and practices the theory that a leader is one who follows her passion. She developed the firm’s leadership program based on transformational leadership concepts consisting of conversational domains presented on a weekly basis. Through these conversational domains, the possibility of being a leader and exercising leadership effectively as a natural self-expression is open for each of the participants.

As a leader in the minority business community she feels it is important to be able to share real-world best practices with owners of comparable businesses without worrying about competition, so everyone can learn from each other and accelerate growth.

Her passion for consulting led Prado to work as a pro-bono facilitator for a five-year administrative re-engineering project and strategic planning process for the Asociación Obras Sociales del Santo Hermano Pedro, a nonprofit organization serving people with severe physical and mental disabilities and providing specialized medical services for the underserved

and indigenous communities in Guatemala. Her counselling helped them to promote self-sufficiency and make the most of limited resources, just as she does every day in her own successful business.

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- Board director, The Illinois CPA Society (since 2016); Board chairwoman, Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (since 2012); Board director, The Resurrection Project (since 2012); Board director, Institute for Growth & Development (since 2014); Secretary/Treasurer, Prado & Renteria Foundation (since 2014); and Board president, V&C Leasing Company
  - Former Board treasurer, Chicago United (2008-2012)
  - Other civic involvements include Universidad Panamericana, Guadalajara, Mexico; Asociación Obras Sociales del Santo Hermano Pedro, Antigua Guatemala, Central América (2010-2015); and Federal Reserve Bank, Money Smart Week (2010)
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# Anjoo Rai-Marchant

Chief Customer and Technology Officer, HighGround

“When you’re trying to validate a business idea, talk to people who are not your friends. We all have hidden biases, especially when it’s our own project. Ask key questions, receive independent objective feedback, and pivot along the way.”

Finding Women of color in top technology roles is rare. Yet, you’d never know that from watching Anjoo Rai-Marchant. She makes it look easy. She has built her career by launching start-up and entrepreneurial technology companies and revamping existing, or developing new, practices within corporations.

Rai-Marchant is currently the chief customer and technology officer at HighGround, a technology start-up providing a SaaS/Cloud platform for talent management serving customers in the U.S., Canada, Europe, New Zealand, and Australia. She handles client implementations and support, and manages the product team that designs software solutions and the engineering team that builds the products. “It is a unique role in that rarely are these functions combined due to the diverse skills required,” acknowledges Rai-Marchant.

Before joining HighGround, Rai-Marchant launched two businesses, ShopRock.it, an office productivity technology start-up, and Super Spices, a health supplement packaged food company. Prior to that,

she led the successful revamp of the technology and operations at Reyes Holdings, a privately held, \$20 billion, international food and alcohol distributor, which supported the business tripling in size.

Rai-Marchant was recruited by Barclays Capital in London, the investment banking arm of Barclays PLC, during a time of hyper growth, to help bring structure, process, and overall discipline in the IT organization.

Despite the differences in industry and size, the organization faced many of the same challenges as Macromedia, now Adobe Systems, her role immediately prior, where she provided leadership transitioning the firm through the technology bust, leaving the company recovered and stabilized.

At the beginning of her career, she had her first entrepreneurial opportunity to build EY’s risk practice in India and also their PeopleSoft security practice for the Pacific Northwest Region in the United States, serving clients in the United States, the United Kingdom, and India.

As someone in a cutting-edge industry, Rai-Marchant believes engagement is a key business trend, especially when it comes to millennials. “They think it’s not just that I get a paycheck, but I spend a majority of my time doing this thing called my job, so how does that job fit into my overall life, my purpose, and my values and my beliefs?”

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- Alumni Club Board president, University of Chicago’s Booth School of Business (since 2015)
  - Former Board member, Gilda’s Club (2010-2012)
  - Advisory Board member, Social Life Chicago (since 2016)
  - Adjunct Professor, Elmhurst College
  - Other involvements include Shivalya Cultural Center and Hyde Park Angels
  - Moderator: Women and Leadership, with Alice Eagly, author of “Through the Labyrinth”  
Moderator: Q&A with Eugene Fama, 2013 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences
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# Terika Richardson

President, Advocate Trinity Hospital

“I believe that it is important to guard the culture of our organization feverishly. We are taking care of people in their most vulnerable state. Knowing what is right, knowing what we stand for, and making sure that everybody feels those things are critical to success.”

Terika Richardson developed her passion for healthcare at an early age. “My father was a fireman for the city of Detroit, and he fell from a roof onto his back. He was in and out of doctors’ offices, chiropractic care, and physical therapy. As a young child, I spent a lot of time in those settings and I really became enamored with healthcare.”

Advocate Trinity Hospital is a 263 bed, acute care facility with 1,100 employees, serving 90,000 patients each year on the Southeast side of Chicago. As president, Richardson is responsible for the strategic direction and execution of the hospital operations. She believes having the understanding of different worlds affords her a great platform. “I sit here today recognizing that my experience and what I bring to the table is unique in so many ways. I am a servant leader. I believe in community, I believe in people, and I believe in ensuring that we have a world that is open for all.”

In her prior role as chief executive officer of HCA-Retreat Doctor’s Hospital in Richmond, Virginia, she

guided the facility to positive earnings within the first two quarters gaining more than a 25 percent margin. Employee satisfaction improved 7 percent in the senior leadership category and 6 percent overall from the prior year.

She executed a patient engagement structure that resulted in top quartile performance, grew outpatient surgery 48 percent, and implemented a robotic surgical program that drove inpatient volume growth by 212 incremental cases year one.

For a large hospital in an even larger healthcare system, at a time when the demands on healthcare are greater and more complex than ever, Richardson sees advancements in technology as an opportunity. “In healthcare we are trying to enhance the patient experience. One of the ways that we are doing that here at Trinity is allowing patients to have more of a mobile experience when interfacing with doctors.”

Richardson has patterned her leadership style after great examples. “I have had the blessing of amazing

mentors, people who allowed me to shadow them early in my career and see leadership through their lens. These people treated their employees well, and cared about the mission and the greater community. I’ve had mentors inside the healthcare field and outside as well, in the corporate setting, and in my home.”

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- Board director, American College of Healthcare Executives (since 2015); and Board director, Fan District Association (since 2014)
  - Former Board treasurer, Northern Virginia Hospital Alliance (2009-2014); and former Board director, Germanna Community College Foundation (2012-2014)
  - Advisory Board member, American College of Health Care Executives (since 2008)
  - Awards include the Fredericksburg Chamber of Commerce Executive award (2012); the Modern Healthcare Up and Comer award (2007), and the Roy J. Zuckerberg Award Administrative Fellow of the Year (2004)
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# Debbie Roberts

President, East Zone, McDonald's USA, LLC

"I'm a big data person. If you follow the data around the consumer and the financials, it will lead you to the white space. Then you can work to fill that white space. That's how I identify opportunities for innovation."



Early in her career, Debbie Roberts took a big risk: she decided to make a jump from accounting to the drastically different world of marketing. "My coworkers in accounting thought I was crazy, but I wanted to learn more about the customer and what drives purchase behavior."

She was able to excel in her new field, eventually becoming senior marketing director. She was then accepted into McDonald's Accelerated Operations Program, where she rose through the ranks from crewperson to her current role.

Presently, Roberts is president of the East Zone, where she leads strategy, talent, and brand development to drive long-term growth, including full profit and loss responsibility for more than 7,300 McDonald's restaurants across the Eastern United States.

Immediately prior, she was senior vice president/restaurant support officer of the East Division of McDonald's USA, responsible for building business

through restaurant operations in partnership with the division president.

During her trajectory, Roberts has seen the culture at McDonald's change to become more fast-paced and "customer obsessed." She also became attuned to the power that corporate culture has in an organization. "The culture has to feel right for people. It doesn't matter how much money you are paying people or how quickly they can move through an organization. If they don't believe in the organization, it's very challenging for people to stay."

In a franchise organization, the franchisees are both customers and partners. Roberts focuses on building and maintaining strong relationships with franchisees while taking a data-driven approach to understanding what drives the consumer and fosters growth.

Recognizing the "rare air" of being a woman and person of color at her level at McDonald's, Roberts

believes she has a responsibility to give back. She is an executive sponsor of the McDonald's Women's Leadership Network, and is a mentor to women both inside and outside of the organization. She believes it is important to provide coaching and to be a role model for young girls who may not have that in their community.

"I think there is still a gap in corporate America, but we are working very hard to move women forward."

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- Former Board director, Ronald McDonald House Charities (2011-2012)
  - Advisory Board member of Chicago Urban League (since 2016), University of Illinois Alumni Association (since 2016), and Catalyst (since 2013)
  - Other involvements include Women's Food Service Forum (since 2009) and Executive Leadership Council (since 2014)
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# Dee M. Robinson

President and Chief Executive Officer, Robinson Hill, Inc.

“Honor, courage, faith, and commitment, these are the core tenants that guide me.”

Dee Robinson is an entrepreneurial leader with a solutions-focused management approach and a strong track record of successful results, growth, initiative, financial performance, creativity, and team building.

Drawing on her varied experience in advertising, consumer products, and banking, she founded Robinson Hill, Inc., a concessions management firm specializing in airports and other non-traditional locations across the U.S. Focusing on core competencies of driving for results, conceptual thinking and innovation, and planning and decision making, Robinson manages and operates news and gift stores and restaurants in strategic locations across the country including brands such as Ben and Jerry's Super Premium Ice Cream, Einstein Bros Bagels, and Potbelly Sandwich Shop. Locally, Robinson Hill partners with the Hudson Group at both O'Hare and Midway airports and with Areas USA at the O'Hare Terminal 5 operating Rick Bayless' Frontera Grill, and many other restaurant concepts.

Learning early the value of putting yourself forward and seeking out opportunities, she volunteered to assist

her economics professor in a project where not only was her research credited in his book, but she was featured in *BusinessWeek*. Now she volunteers for speaking engagements to encourage young people to believe in their potential and create their own opportunities.

Robinson counts developing “a sea of people” over the 20 years that her firm has been in business as one of her greatest successes. “I love the fact that I hire people and create jobs. Even more importantly, that I develop energetic people to accomplish greater things than they may have thought they could and that they are still doing just that with Robinson Hill today.” She also believes that you have to be tenacious. In business, she says that “...people have to understand that ‘no’ doesn't always mean ‘no,’ at least not forever.” She explains that perhaps the timing isn't right for now, but that doesn't mean there won't be an opportunity, later, if you can present the right value proposition.

Robinson has used that persistence to help others find opportunities. In conjunction with the Illinois Gaming Board, she developed a directory to connect minority

vendors to business opportunities for the riverboats industry, with the goal of leveling the playing field for minority companies and creating a win-win strategy for the Illinois business community.

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- Board director, Wintrust Bank, Risk Management and Audit Committees (since 2016); Illinois Gaming Board (since 2015)
  - Advisory Board member, Meridian Healthcare (since 2014) and Kendall College (since 2014)
  - Former Board member of LaRabida Children's Hospital, Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship, and Fetzer Institute Business Advisory Council
  - Member of The Chicago Network, Business Leadership Council, and Executive Club's Mentorship Initiative
  - Extensive Awards include Hedy Ratner & Carol Dougal Legacy Award, WBDC's Entrepreneur of the Year Award, ETA Creative Arts Foundation's *Giving Honor to Those Who Give* Award, Kellogg Graduate School of Business BMA Entrepreneur of the Year Alumni Award, and Woman of the Year Award from the Coalition for United Community Action-ORTC
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# Levoyd E. Robinson

Managing Principal, CFI Partners

“Responsible leadership at the corporate and board levels requires that you tell truth to power, or you risk ethical lapses. “

Levoyd Robinson has spent his 28-year career successfully predicting and managing risk. But when he started out, as one of the few African Americans on Wall Street, he played it safe. He reflects, “I always felt like I was one mistake away from being kicked out the door. You’ve come this far, so you don’t want to screw it up.” Then he was put in charge of trading for a portfolio, when he had never even traded before. Terrified, he asked another trader for advice. “He sat there calmly drinking his scotch, and he said, ‘Well, all they can do is fire you; they can’t eat you!’ And, I was just like, he’s right!” In that one moment, Robinson’s job-related stress melted away.

Robinson’s clear-eyed and objective approach to risk management allows him to see angles that others miss and more accurately assign probabilities. This helped Chicago Fundamental Investment Partners (CFIP) navigate through the 2008 recession and outperform the overwhelming majority of credit hedge funds in the U.S. CFIP is a fundamental research-driven, credit focused, alternative investment management firm founded with over \$800 million of regulatory assets under management and up to \$1.1 billion of undrawn capital commitments. Immediately prior, Robinson was managing director and head of Global Private Debt for Citadel Investment Group, LLC. While at Citadel, Robinson was responsible for managing teams in the United States and London that managed over \$6 billion of assets.

Now he is applying his skills to addressing risk in American society, particularly in education. With the loss of manufacturing jobs, people need higher-level critical thinking skills, and inner-city schools aren’t preparing children for that.

To address the problem, in 2016, CFIP helped establish The Academy Group, Inc., a strategic partnership whose mission is to invest in youth from under-resourced communities nationwide, and give them the skills, exposure, and expectations they need to succeed. “A lot of these less fortunate inner-city kids would make extraordinary investment managers. We often speak about business using war metaphors, but these kids are literally living in war zones. If they can survive that, and we can teach them critical thinking and analytical skills, they will crush this industry.” The pilot program begins this summer with 35 3rd graders and a dozen 11th graders, with the full program rolling out at the start of school year with a goal of getting 1,000 children into the program.

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- Chairman-elect of the Board, Chicago Academy for the Arts (since 2012) and Board director, Bottom Line (since 2016)
  - Previous Board director, Teach for America (2007-2016); Previous Board treasurer, Loretto Hospital Foundation (2000-2011); and Board director, HCH NuWorld Marketing Limited (1999-2000)
  - Advisory Board member, Howard University School of Business (since 2015) and Blue Print Capital Advisors (since 2015), and Bottom Line-Chicago
  - Other involvements include Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago’s Working Group on Financial Markets and Heard Capital
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# Robert Rodriguez

President, DRR Advisors

“Many leaders feel they get paid to have the answer. Your job as a leader is getting to the answer, not having that answer.”

Robert Rodriguez is founder and president of DRR Advisors LLC (DRR), a diversity consulting firm that helps business leaders elevate the impact and effectiveness of their workplace inclusion initiatives. More than 200 corporations have sought his expertise and consultation to develop proactive diversity initiatives. He is author of *Latino Talent: Effective Strategies to Recruit, Retain and Develop Hispanic Professionals*, a columnist for *Diversity Executive* magazine, and has served as a guest editor to the two leading Hispanic professional publications, *Latino Leaders* and *Hispanic Executive* magazines.

Prior to starting DRR Advisors, Rodriguez held non-profit, academic, and corporate leadership roles. He most recently was the senior vice president Association of Latino Professionals for America, the nation's leading Latino professional nonprofit business association where he lead their diversity consulting practice called the ALPFA Institute. Rodriguez also held faculty roles at Kaplan University and also previously taught in the MBA program at the Kellstadt School of Business at DePaul University. He has also held several human resource leadership roles

at Fortune 500 firms, including Target Corporation, 3M Company, Amoco, and The Washington Post.

It took Rodriguez some time and effort to find his voice in business. He grew up in Minnesota and didn't have many Latino friends. “Things changed for me when I was about 25, and my employer moved me to Chicago. It was my first exposure to a much larger city and Hispanic community, as well as a professional Hispanic community. Since I struggled with my issues of identity in corporate America, I knew there might be others who were struggling as well.”

Now, at DRR, he stresses the importance of listening to different voices, especially when it comes to innovation. “Innovation and creativity tend to come from voices on the margins, because if it is common, it's not really innovative.” Rodriguez advises clients from a wide range of industries. The first thing he tries to do with leaders is convey that diversity and inclusion is a competence, a skill that we can all be better at. “Not just White males, but African American females and Latino males too. And when they ask for clarifying, I bring up the issues of unconscious biases

and that we all have them. That helps some leaders to say, ‘OK. Whew! It's not just me!’” Admitting they have biases allows them to see how bias gets in the way of good leadership and decision-making, allowing for change.

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- Former chairman and vice chairman, Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement (2000-2016)
  - Advisory Board member, Latino Leadership Institute at Southern Methodist University (since 2015)
  - Former Advisory Board member, New Futuro LLC (2010-2013); and Adelante Education Fund (2010)
  - Other Community Involvements include serving as chairman of the Consortium of Latino Employee Organizations (since 2009); serving as an advisor to the Association of Latinos in Finance and Accounting (since 2013); Latino Leadership Institute at UCLA; the Rising Latino Leaders program at SMU; and the Latina Leadership Academy at USC
  - Named one of the Top 100 Most Influential Latinos in Corporate America by *Hispanic Business* magazine
  - Named to Top 100 Most Influential Latinos in Corporate America by *Hispanic Business* magazine
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# Emma L. Rodriguez-Ayala

Former General Counsel and Senior Managing Director, Mesirow Financial

“You need to be a pleasant person to work with and you need to listen to people in order to understand their needs, even if they are not telling you those needs. They can get technical data from a computer. They are coming to you for the relationship.”



When it comes to giving career advice, Emma Rodriguez-Ayala's philosophy is direct. “Own your career, and you have to work hard.” She counsels that emerging leaders should find opportunities that will get them noticed. And, she practices what she preaches.

Rodriguez-Ayala was most recently the former general counsel, senior managing director, and Operating Committee member of Mesirow Financial–Advanced Strategies. Even though she started off practicing law “...I think of myself first as a business person whose specialty is legal, rather than a lawyer.”

Hired by Mesirow as assistant general counsel during a transition period with the goal of becoming general counsel, she remembers thinking, “I have to show that I am already doing this job. It was very important for me to act like I am already the general counsel and make decisions that were valid and workable, even though I wasn't yet.” By the end of that year, Rodriguez-Ayala was not only promoted to general counsel, but was also made managing director.

During her time at Mesirow, she completely revamped the legal and compliance function from being a service role supporting internal teams to being a client-facing role integral to all aspects of the business.

She also led a two-year restructuring of Mesirow's hedge fund offering platform, which produced annual savings in excess of \$1.5 million to their investors.

Her knowledge of complex legal and fund structuring made her an asset in pitching business to prospects and in servicing current clients. She had been singled out multiple times by investors and sales personnel as being key to mandate wins because of her problem-solving and business-friendly legal advice. She stood out internally as one of the only employees in an operational role to have had such bottom-line impact to the business.

Prior to Mesirow, Rodriguez-Ayala was a legal associate in Sidley Austin LLP's Investment Funds, Advisers, and Derivatives Group, where she advised registered and

unregistered investment advisers on securities and derivatives, legal, regulatory, and corporate matters.

Rodriguez-Ayala believes the colleagues she has worked with are an integral part of her career success. “I've accomplished things with people. Whether it was through my managers, who helped open the right doors, or my team members, who've helped me every day, Mesirow and Sidley have been a foundation of my career.

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- Board director, Mesirow–Branded Private Funds, Cayman Islands, 14 hedge funds for U.S. and non-U.S. institutional investors (since 2015)
  - Former Board director, Every Future (2009-2016)
  - Advisory Board member, iMentor (since 2016) and Senior Leadership Committee Member, Association for Latino Professionals for America, Inc. (since 2016)
  - Faculty member, Practicing Law Institute
  - Recipient of Mesirow Financial's Norman Award for superior support service (2015)
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# Jacobo Schatz

Chief Operating Officer - Wealth Management, Northern Trust

“The expectations of technology transcend industries. It now doesn’t matter what you want or where you go to get it, you expect that same experience. For financial services that has huge implications.”

Jacobo Schatz was born and raised in Mexico City. In junior high, he had an opportunity to go to Israel, spending a half year there working part time and going to school before returning to Mexico. The experience sparked an interest in having an international career.

After earning his Bachelor of Science degree, he took a position working in IT for Quaker Oats in Mexico, but soon moved to financial and strategic planning. Quaker offered him the chance to come to the U.S. to do his MBA at Northwestern, and he jumped at the opportunity.

He served as director of strategy and financial planning for PepsiCo’s Quaker, Tropicana and Gatorade Division based in Chicago. While at PepsiCo, Schatz was responsible for the strategic planning, financial planning, and analysis of the \$8 billion revenue division.

After working in different roles supporting the Gatorade and Quaker brands with responsibilities for domestic and international projects including

Latin America, Europe, and Asia, Schatz was recruited by Northern Trust as chief financial officer for their Wealth Management business, where he now is senior vice president and chief operating officer.

In this role, Schatz is responsible for the five-year strategic plan, mergers and acquisitions, and leading the execution of key value-added initiatives.

In his prior role, he served as the Wealth Management lead for the Driving Performance Business Unit led initiative that resulted in a significant increase in pre-tax profitability for the corporation, more than \$100 million of annual, recurring pre-tax income.

Schatz likes to take on difficult challenges, and he feels that a key element of success is to surround yourself with a team that works well together, and to mentor them. He appreciates his mentor and felt that he benefitted greatly from having a mentor early in his career. “I always felt that I had to find a way to give back and to help people around me the way that he helped me.”

As he works with his team, he identifies the areas where they excel, then looks for the areas where there are opportunities for growth. Then they work together to figure out which projects or roles will leverage their “hip pocket skills” to add value, while also allowing them to stretch and grow.

Schatz believes a “holistic approach” to life is important. In addition to his professional work, he puts a great emphasis on family. His wife is a pediatric occupational therapist, and when they started their family, he moved from the international side of Quaker to the domestic side, so that he could keep the family together in Chicago.

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- Executive Council member, the Cara Program which prepares and inspires motivated individuals to break the cycle of homelessness
  - Advisory Board member, FTV Capital Advisory Board
  - He enjoys art and particularly, Renaissance and Impressionist painters
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# Stacy Sharpe

Senior Vice President, Corporate Relations, Allstate Insurance Company

“Everyone has their personal mission. My mission is to bring diverse people, with unique minds, perspectives, and energies, together to do what others think is impossible.”

You could say that Allstate is a family business for Stacy Sharpe. Her mother worked at Allstate for 28 years in underwriting and technology, pioneering roles for women of color. When it came time to get a job in high school, an internship in college, and then a job after college, naturally Sharpe went to Allstate. Now, 21 years later, she is senior vice president of Corporate Relations, responsible for internal and external communications for the Allstate family of companies and oversees a budget of approximately \$48 million.

Leading the communication strategy for an enterprise wide culture shift, Sharpe is repositioning the agency force as trusted advisors who help customers prepare for all the risks in their lives. She has guided this initiative in a broad, strategic, and highly effective way. This change is transformational – it’s not a program or initiative; it’s a way of doing business.

Despite remaining at one company, Sharpe has not had a linear career path. As she points out, “Many of my counterparts have not been a federal lobbyist, run sales and business operations, or worked in customer service centers.” Succeeding at these very different roles has enabled her to excel at big picture thinking and have the ability to make meaningful connections between seemingly disparate topics.

She brings this insight to CEO positioning, looking beyond goals and metrics to considering the potential effects of every decision on every stakeholder group.

Once she identifies a problem, she is tenacious in her pursuit of a solution. As a lobbyist, with goal of decreasing the death rate of teen drivers, she worked to create federal legislation mandating graduated licensing. “Not only did we know that the deaths were occurring, we knew exactly what to do to reduce them,” said Sharpe. Despite facing a legislative headwind after the financial crisis, Sharpe was able to convince legislators of the importance of the issue and get the law passed.

Sharpe also believes people should be persistent in promoting civil rights, which is why she is active with Facing History and Ourselves and with the Aspen Institute. She engaged Allstate to be a sponsor for the latter organization’s citizenship and American Identity program, which facilitates community conversations about civil rights and societal issues. These important conversations occur across the country, as well as within Allstate itself.

“I am so proud that we can have these tough conversations in a Fortune 100 company. Employees tell me, ‘I cannot believe I was engaged in conversations that I don’t even feel comfortable having at home.’”

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- Vice chairwoman, Chicago Urban League (since 2014)
  - Leadership Council member, Facing History (since 2014)
  - Former Board trustee, Episcopal Charities and Community Services, Chicago, IL; former vice chair, Catalogue for Philanthropy Greater Washington D.C.
  - Fellow, Leadership Greater Chicago (2007)
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# Luther E. Siebert

Vice President, Global Head of Core Map, Regional Map & Content, HERE Technologies

“When you are able to develop teams in ways that are, at some points, redundant, that’s when you have really exerted leadership.”



Luther Siebert was an Air Force baby. Born in Germany, he spent his childhood moving every few years to different bases around the world. This upbringing made him very comfortable building new relationships in international settings, which has proven valuable as he is currently responsible for more than 1,000 personnel in over 90 offices globally.

After earning his electrical engineering degree, Siebert worked as a General Motors engineer while doing his MBA at University of Detroit. He then moved to Chicago to work for Motorola Automotive. There he assumed increasing responsibilities from sales account manager, to senior product manager, director of strategic planning, business director of North America Telematics, and, finally, vice president of Quality and Customer Satisfaction, where he defined and led a new quality organization from a new executive staff position of the Motorola Automotive Group. The \$1.6 billion business was formed when the emerging Telematics business was combined with the existing automotive electronics.

Siebert is now vice president of Regional Map & Content at HERE, managing a budget of \$90 million annually as the company develops the data for more than 80 percent of all in-vehicle navigation and mapping applications, including Garmin, Bing, and Yahoo!. Immediately prior, he was vice president of Global Production Operations where he was responsible for managing over 2,500 internal and 1,000 contracted personnel in regionally centralized production centers located in the United States, India, Mexico, Netherlands, and Ukraine.

Siebert believes the team is the centerpiece when it comes to running a successful business or project. When staff is spread across 50 countries with many different backgrounds and experiences, getting to constructive dialogue is imperative, “Not over tactical details, but on strategic points, needed capabilities, and customer and product challenges down the road.” He believes providing a deep and personal orientation for the team helps clarify priorities and frustrations, and clears the path to collaborate more effectively.

Siebert’s goal is to use technology to move human capability to the next level. As an example, he mentions ‘machine learning.’ “That’s the hot skill set that every tech company is battling for, the foundation for how you build artificial intelligence.” HERE applies machine learning to reduce the number of human decisions required to sort through enormous amounts of mapping video. “Humans come into all the inputs necessary to create the algorithms and capabilities, but (machine learning) enables people to scale their work more effectively.”

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- Vice chairman of the Board, Henry Booth House (since 2010)
  - Former president of Young Executives Supporting (YES), La Rabida Hospital (1993-1994)
  - Mentor for HERE Women’s Initiatives Network (WIN) and “Lunch with Leaders” leader participant
  - Lean Six Sigma Black Belt
  - Completed the Motorola Chairman’s Leadership Institute at Northwestern University
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# Srinivas Veeramasuneni

Vice President, Corporate Innovation Center, USG Corporation

“I believe innovation is a team sport.”

Srinivas Veeramasuneni jokes, “I know my name is too long, so I go by Dr. Vas.” Dr. Vas is the leader of the USG Corporate Innovation Center (CIC) in Libertyville, Ill., with a budget responsibility of \$20 million. He has held various research and management positions since joining the company in 1998. USG has been around for 115 years and is at the leading edge of innovation in building materials technologies. The CIC campus is a state-of-the-art workplace with multiple buildings and laboratories utilized in the research, testing and materials analysis, and pilot operations of high-performance products and systems.

Throughout his career, Dr. Vas has been involved in innovation strategy, talent management, change management, technology road mapping, and process improvements. He has been awarded 12 U.S. patents related to building materials and has an extensive background in surface science and related application areas, including crystallization and mineral processing.

Dr. Vas has built a diverse workforce at USG that represents many nations, cultures, religions, languages, educational backgrounds, and research specialties, all of whom work together at the CIC. There are individuals from all basic sciences and engineering disciplines, working next to individuals that don't have a degree, but who have the skill sets around plumbing, or welding or plastering. According to Dr. Vas, “It's not just about the language we speak and the color of our skin, but it's about diversity in thinking and background. That makes us very powerful because people bring different ideas and challenge each other, and the end result is always very rich and rewarding.”

This blended environment allows for more collaboration across specializations and has produced tangible results for USG, following their “innovation to invoice” model. For example, in the materials industry, big transformational ideas normally take eight to 10 years to develop. But USG was able to release Ecosmart, the first specifiable sustainable gypsum board in the industry, in half the normal time. “That is not only coming up with the idea, but conducting feasibility studies, developing it, scaling it up, and conducting market pilots and commercializing. In less than 5 years,” said Dr. Vas

He introduced a more open research collaboration with universities and national labs. There can be big advantages, including dramatically speeding the development process. “Our researchers are more energized, because now they are talking to scientists who have been working in that area for 15 or 30 years.”

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- Board director, Lumity (since 2016)
  - Advisor for Indo American Community Services
  - Published nearly 25 papers in surface science related journals and is currently acting as a reviewer for the *International Journal of Mineral Processing*
  - Received the AIME Rossiter W. Raymond Memorial Award, the SME Industrial Minerals Division Young Scientist Award, and the Robert W. Piekarz Award
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# Lisa W. Wardell

President and Chief Executive Officer, Adtalem Global Education

“Education changed my life. I want as many people as possible to have that experience in our institutions.”



Lisa Wardell is the only African American female CEO in a Fortune 1000 company. Wardell is president and CEO of Adtalem Global Education (formerly DeVry Education Group), a \$1.9 billion education provider of career-focused institutions with nearly 18,000 employees worldwide. It is the parent organization of Adtalem Educacional do Brasil, American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine, Association of Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialists, Becker Professional Education, Carrington College, Chamberlain University, DeVry University, Keller Graduate School of Management, Ross University School of Medicine, and Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine. Wardell was appointed to this role in 2016, having been a member of their Board of Directors since 2008.

Prior to Adtalem, Wardell was executive vice president and chief operating officer for The RLJ Companies, a diversified holding company. With significant experience in structuring and negotiating private equity deals, and mergers and acquisitions, Wardell was a key member of the team that led the formation of RLJ, McLarty Landers Automotive, now RML, which is the largest minority automotive dealership in the U.S. with more than \$1.3 billion in annual revenue. She credits the founder, Bob Johnson, for challenging her with stretch assignments that increased her abilities and confidence.

Working in the highly regulated education industry has developed her expertise in regulatory risk management. Adtalem is also publicly traded, so she is heavily involved in SEC oversight, investor relations, and board governance.

Wardell believes tiny shifts can go a long way to get people to understand that they want to be a global organization that embraces diversity. “The first thing I did was travel to Brazil and talk to folks about ways for us to collaborate and break the silos. They suggested we added “+1” to each of the cell phone numbers on all our business cards all over the world. The Brazil team and folks in Asia Pacific were thrilled by that very small change. It symbolized to them that everything doesn’t have to come from a U.S.-centric perspective.”

Wardell is focused on using technology to enable academic quality. For example, they leveraged a technology that allows the faculty to take a quick pulse on their effectiveness by initiating a mini three question test in real time. If 90 percent score well, they know immediately that the teaching is effective. But, if only 20 percent got it right, they probably need to re-adjust. “That’s been a game changer for us because, at the end of the day, they all want to be good teachers,” notes Wardell.

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- Board director, Adtalem Global Education (since 2008)
  - Former Board chairwoman, Christopher & Banks Corporation (2011-2017); and former Board trustee, Ross University School of Medicine
  - SEC Series 7 and Series 24 certified
  - Member of The Committee of 200 (C200), an invitation-only membership organization of the world’s most successful women business leaders (since 2017)
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# Alex E. Washington

Managing Director, Wind Point Partners

“The way consumers and businesses are procuring products and materials, and the change in that supply chain, from the last mile of delivery and the use of advanced analytics to drive efficient routes, is impacting every single business in the economy in some way.”



Alex Washington was fascinated by the Private Equity business, but, as a graduate of Morehouse College with a liberal arts degree, he didn't have the desired background. He couldn't even get an interview, let alone a job.

He networked unceasingly, which resulted, in a meeting, opportunities, and a long relationship with renowned investment banker Fred Tyrell.

Now, Washington is managing director at Wind Point Partners, a 30-person middle market Private Equity firm managing over \$2 billion in assets. Wind Point's current portfolio includes 17 companies with global operations in North America, South America, Europe, and Asia.

His principal duties include fundraising, deal sourcing, portfolio management, board oversight, and firm administration. Washington's true hallmark is leadership when transformation is required.

“Many of our deals involve acquisitions of family-held companies that are at an inflection point in their history, with founders that desire to exit from day-to-day activities and to achieve an exit. In those situations, we are required to identify, recruit, and transition a new CEO and often times an entire senior leadership team, into the company. Sensitivity to culture, succession planning, and alignment of incentives are all critical success factors, in addition to establishing the processes, systems, and capabilities to drive growth.”

Washington sees leadership as a combination of hard work, having a level of purpose, and vision, and then a level of charisma that enables them to rally people around any goal. He sees humility as one of the most important attributes for success. “Humility means that they are never satisfied with the status quo.”

He explains that leaders with humility realize there are others who are just as talented and work just

as hard, so they continually push themselves to improve. Humble leaders also appreciate they don't do everything well, so they must surround themselves with others who complement their skills, and challenge them to be even better.

- 
- Board director, Wintrust Bank (since 2016); Paragon Films (since 2016); Evans Food Group (since 2016); Dicom Transportation Group (since 2014); Chicago Urban League (since 2016); and Chicago Foundation for Education (since 2008)
  - Former Board director, Novolex (2012-2016); Argotec (2013-2015); Arr-Maz Custom Chemicals (2003-2006); Vertellus Specialties (2007-2016); and Chicago Children's Museum (2010-2014)
  - Holds an MBA from Harvard University
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# Lynn Watkins-Asiyanbi

Associate General Counsel, John Bean Technologies Corporation

“Being held accountable to something higher, that’s what keeps me grounded.”



Many people take an unconventional path, but far fewer start off with a degree in chemical engineering and end up as a lawyer. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin, Lynn Watkins-Asiyanbi held operations positions at General Mills and M&M Mars, supervising up to 50 people, nearly all of whom had far more years of experience. In the process, she learned to acknowledge that life experiences and on-the-job knowledge is at least as important as degrees and credentials.

With the goal of moving up in plant operations, Watkins-Asiyanbi went back to school to get her MBA, but ended up taking a joint MBA/JD program through Kellogg at Northwestern. She originally thought it would be helpful in terms of understanding regulatory issues, but soon found she was overqualified for plant manager positions. She then started looking into law as a career.

As an associate at Baker & McKenzie, LLP, Watkins-Asiyanbi engaged in a cross-border and domestic practice representing companies in mergers and acquisitions, counseling U.S. multinationals, and implementing multi-country corporate transactions. She transitioned to US Foods, a \$20-billion-dollar national food distributor headquartered in Rosemont, Ill., where she was assistant general counsel acting as the sole legal advisor for supply chain logistics. Increasing her scope and capacity, Watkins-Asiyanbi next became associate general counsel, for the global supply chain at W.W. Grainger, Inc., a \$10-billion-dollar global industrial distributor headquartered in Lake Forest, Ill.

She is now associate general counsel for the Liquid Foods business unit at JBT Corporation, a leading global technology solutions provider to high-value segments of the food, beverage, and air transportation industries headquartered in Chicago, Ill., with revenues around \$1.3 billion.

As someone who knows both the operations and legal side of the business, Watkins-Asiyanbi has developed what she sees as her own “brand.” “I’m being respected because I’ve brought value to the table. I provide timely, sensible advice, and people can definitely trust me if I say it’s going to get done,” says Watkins-Asiyanbi. She counsels that companies should groom talent to fill top-level positions from inside the organization, and, for those aspiring to move upwards internally, building a personal brand can help position them better for that kind of succession planning.

- 
- Executive Committee member of the Board, Women Employed (since 2014); Board trustee, John G. Shedd Aquarium (since 2012); Foundation chairwoman, Jack and Jill of America, Inc. (since 2012); and Board director, Greater Chatham Initiative (since 2017)
  - Former Board secretary, Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana (2003-2008); Former associate Board member, Chicago Committee on Minorities in Large Law Firms (2007-2010)
  - Fellow, Leadership Greater Chicago (2016)
  - Mentor and sponsor, Link Unlimited (2005-2015)
  - Adjunct professor, Northwestern School of Law (Spring 2016)
  - Minority Corporate Counsel Association: *Rising Star* Awardee 2015
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# Paul S. Williams

Partner, Major, Lindsey and Africa/Allegis Partners

“Change doesn’t need to take years or decades. It’s about finding the right leverage points in ourselves. If an organization or individual is motivated enough, they can be transformed instantly.”

After graduating cum laude from Harvard and receiving his Juris Doctor degree from Yale Law School, Paul Williams served as a corporate and securities associate with two large law firms. He also served as general counsel of a computer software company and group counsel for a multinational corporation.

These experiences prepared him for his most recent role as executive vice president, chief legal officer, and secretary of the Board of Cardinal Health, Inc., a Fortune 20 healthcare services company with \$80 billion in revenue and 55,000 employees. There, Williams was responsible for managing legal affairs globally. He also served as the co-chairman of the company’s Diversity Council. His 51-lawyer legal department was recognized for its outstanding diversity, receiving the Minority Corporate Counsel Association’s “Employer of Choice” award.

Williams decided to pursue recruiting to help others make professional leaps. “I’ve always been people oriented and I love professional development. It presented the opportunity to tap more intangible intuitive aspects of who I am.”

Williams is currently a partner at Major, Lindsey & Africa, the largest legal recruiting firm in the country. He conducts in-house searches, particularly general counsel and other senior level positions. He also participates in board recruitment through Allegis Partners, an affiliate to Major, Lindsey & Africa. “I have dual roles; I’m an executive recruiter focused on the legal space, as well as the board space and CEOs.”

When interviewing, Williams looks for attributes he believes are crucial to leadership. “I’m not only looking for the substantive skill set of traditional legal skills or board experience, I’m also looking for EQ and interpersonal savvy.” The other quality he looks for is “nimbleness,” the ability to assess if an approach is successful, and, if not, to quickly pivot onto a new path.

A principal reason for his own pivot to recruiting is his desire to be a change agent for diversity. In his role as director of Global Diversity Search, he is able to work on this part of his legacy. Williams understands the challenge of increasing diversity to be inherent in people who go into practicing law. Lawyers are often rules followers who do things the traditional way.

When you translate that into diversity recruiting, it means that sometimes law firms are slower to adapt. “Many firms are still recruiting the same way they did 20 years ago. Building diversity requires questioning the way things have been traditionally done.”

There is slower change on the law firm side and a faster pace of change on the in-house corporate side of the legal profession. “My firm has placed a number of people of color in very senior legal roles, and those general counsels are very focused on the diversity of their law firms. They’re putting pressure on firms to diversify quickly. Ultimately, that is going to help firms move at a faster pace.”

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- Board director for three multi-billion dollar public companies: Essendant, Inc. Bob Evans Farms, Inc.; and Compass Minerals, Inc.; Board president, National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD) Chicago Chapter
  - Former Board secretary, Cardinal Health, Inc.; and served 12 years as the lead independent Board director of State Auto Financial Corporation
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# Melvin D. Williams

President, Nicor Gas

“Leadership is a calling. I truly believe that this journey has been about being able to share my life, as well as my professional experiences, in a way that will allow others to benefit from them.”

Melvin Williams is president of Nicor Gas, the largest natural gas distributor in Illinois, serving more than 2.2 million homes and businesses in 656 northern Illinois communities. He is responsible for \$1.5 billion in revenue, \$500 million in operating expenses, and \$500 million in capital expenditures. He also serves as senior vice president of Nicor’s parent company, Southern Company Gas (formerly AGL Resources).

Williams moved into that role after serving as senior vice president, Planning and Business Services Operations, where he managed the operational planning and analysis functions of AGL Resources Distribution Operations organization. He was accountable for financial planning, operations technology, resource management, and supply chain functions. He developed and executed direction for the company’s distribution operations by leading the forecast, planning, scheduling, and dispatching of field related resources to support compliance and customer related demand.

Prior to Nicor and AGL, Williams was the vice president and general manager of Atlanta Gas Light and Florida City Gas, where he provided strategic leadership and

direction for utility core operations management and execution of filed service, distribution and meter reading functions. Prior to that, he held positions as director of state regulatory affairs, and director of new business development.

Williams believes that the most effective leaders are those individuals who are really passionate and committed to developing others. “People don’t care who you are, what you do, or what you say, until they really know how much you care about them.”

Promoting a culture of caring stems from his experiences with the Frank Callen Boys and Girls Club in Savannah, Ga, where he was appointed to their Hall of Fame. As the youngest of six children, he recalls, “I grew up in the Boys and Girls Club, and 50 years later, realize that those qualities that were being imparted, are the same things that I really value and bring to bear in terms of leadership; things like understanding what it means to be a part of a team, the team comes first, you are a contributor to the mission and success of that team, and that being a part of that whole doesn’t make you more than the whole.”

In his role as the chairman of Illinois Utilities Business Diversity Council, he is able to promote the growth and utilization of diverse businesses in Illinois.

At Nicor, Williams is a LEAD (Leadership, Empowerment, Acceptance, and Diversity) Council member, fostering a workplace that exemplifies mutual respect and acceptance by educating and empowering all employees to embrace diversity. He has created a number of different employee resource groups, to encourage employees to discuss how they can both support the organization at large while also supporting each other.

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- Board chairman, Illinois Business Utilities Diversity Council (since 2015); Board director, (national) American Association of Blacks in Energy (since 2015); Board director, United Way of Metro Chicago (since 2015); Board trustee, Field Museum (since 2015); and Board director, AGL Resources Foundation
  - Former Board director, Boys & Girls Club of Metro Atlanta (2013-2016)
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# Ann Marie Wright

Chief Operating Officer, N.A. Commercial Banking, BMO Financial Group

“I did not have a defined career plan. I did what the organization needed at the time and I worked really hard. Ultimately, I built the skills along the way that uniquely positioned me for the role that I have today.”

In her 15-year career at BMO Harris Bank, Ann Marie Wright has progressed from vice president roles in the audit and business services divisions to managing director roles in investment banking, business intelligence, and anti-money laundering to head compliance and supervision. Her current role is chief operating officer of North America Commercial Bank.

When Wright started in banking and finance, she became known as someone who could get things done. “At the bank, I was ‘volunt-told’ or ‘volunt-asked’ to do some of the harder projects that no one else wanted,” said Wright. She dug into them and found sometimes the jobs you don’t want are the ones that end up making you successful.

For example, she led a regulatory remediation for BMO’s global capital markets business, supervising more than 250 people, while dealing with worldwide regulators and implementing BMO Capital Market’s Anti-Money Laundering Program, a difficult and complicated project with over 100 milestones, two major technology builds, and a multimillion-dollar technology spend, all completed ahead of plan. To meet the challenge, Wright had to create a strategy, build an organization, gain alignment with all the resources, integrate supporting technology, and ensure senior leadership was completely informed and engaged. She recalls, “It was a job that I did not want, but it was the best job I ever had, because it pushed me. I gained a lot of executive support because I was delivering and I built a really good team of people who were smarter than me, who I trusted empirically to do with what they said.”

North America Commercial Bank is a high performing, well-diversified business contributing approximately 20 percent of revenue and one third of net income to BMO Financial Group. As chief operating officer, she is accountable for defining and implementing the bank’s strategy while focusing on delivering a consistent, integrated customer experience, streamlining processes, and identifying and creating synergies.

Wright was able to align the non-sales/support functions into one team to empower the strategic priorities of the bank, while also resulting in a \$4 million cost reduction. In addition, within the first six months of taking the role, she developed the bank’s first integrated North America Commercial Banking strategy.

One of Wright’s focus areas is on team development and performance. While she believes people respond to results when it comes to advancement, she also realizes that reviews can sometimes be subjectively color- and gender-biased, despite objective metrics. She believes corporations need to create environments where managers challenge themselves to be conscious of potential biases, and actively focus on measuring performance on a consistent and equal basis. According to Wright, only then can they provide all employees with the kinds of opportunities that she was afforded.

- Board, director, Children’s Home and Aid (since 2016)
- Former Board director, Volunteers of America of Illinois (2012-2014)
- Community involvements include The Links, Incorporated (since 2000) and Jack and Jill of America (since 2009)



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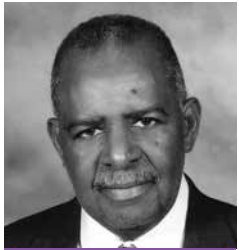
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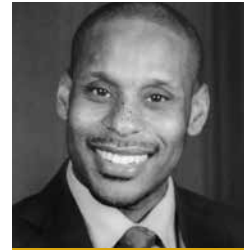
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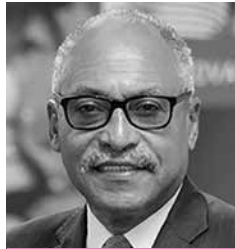
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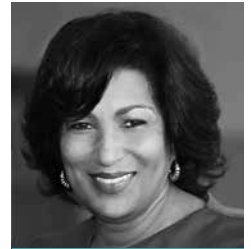
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Diversity Sourcing &  
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Aon



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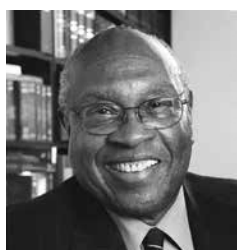
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Associate Attorney  
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Assistant Vice President  
Office of Business Diversity  
The University of Chicago



**David P. Radelet**

Partner  
Franczek Radelet P.C.



**Nazneen Razi**

Senior Vice President &  
Chief HR Officer  
Health Care Service  
Corporation



**Hilda S. Renteria**

Partner  
Prado & Renteria CPA's,  
Prof. Corp



**James Reynolds**

Chairman & CEO  
Loop Capital



**John C. Robak**

President  
Greeley and Hansen



**Jacki Robinson-Ivy**

Vice President, Public Affairs  
and Government Relations  
Northern Trust



**John W. Rogers, Jr.**

Chairman, CEO & Chief  
Investment Officer  
Ariel Investments



**Hipolito (Paul) Roldan**

President and CEO  
Hispanic Housing  
Development Corporation



**James Rozsypal**

Partner, Financial Services  
Practice Leader  
EY



**David C. Rudd**

Director, Corporate and  
Community Communications  
The University of Chicago  
Medicine & Biological Sciences



**Gary Rudnick**

CEO  
Golin



**Shari Runner**

President and CEO  
Chicago Urban League



**Perika J. Sampson**

Vice President  
Morgan Stanley Wealth  
Management

# Chicago United Members



**Manuel Sanchez**

Founder & Managing Partner  
Sanchez Daniels & Hoffman LLP



**Kenneth Sandeno**

President  
"D" Construction, Inc.



**Clarita Santos**

Senior Director  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois



**William Santulli**

Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer  
Advocate Health Care



**Jennifer Scanlon**

President and CEO  
USG Corporation



**Stephanie Scharf**

Counsel  
Scharf Banks Marmor



**Andrea Schwartz**

VP, Media Relations & Cause Marketing for Macy's North and Midwest Regions  
Macy's



**Jennifer Schwarz Ballard**

Vice President, Education & Community Programs  
Chicago Botanic Garden



**Sandra Sciulli**

Development Manager  
CSMI



**Vincent A.F. Sergi**

Chairman Emeritus  
Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP



**Dipak S. Shah**

President  
RME | Rubinos & Mesia Engineers, Inc.



**Rick Shapren**

HR Director, East Region  
Cushman & Wakefield, Inc.



**Frederick Siegman**

President  
Siegman Consulting Services



**John Silmon**

Director, Advisory  
KPMG LLP



**Kevin Slaughter**

Partner  
Quarles & Brady LLP



**Tristan Slemmons**

Senior Manager,  
Community Relations  
Deloitte



**Maurice Smith**

Divisional Senior Vice President,  
Business Development and Subsidiary  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois



**Cristina Sotelino**

Vice President of Communications and Community Engagement  
Access Community Health Network



**Holly Spears**

Client Manager  
SEEL LLC



**Farah Speer**

Executive Director, North American Healthcare Lead  
Golin



**Gilda Spencer**

Senior Vice President and Deputy General Counsel  
Allstate Insurance Company



**Toyia K. Stewart**

Associate Vice President of Human Resources  
Roosevelt University



**Tyrone Stoudemire**

Vice President of Global Diversity & Inclusion  
Hyatt Hotels Corporation



**Stuart D. Strahl**

President and Chief Executive Officer  
The Chicago Zoological Society



**Lynn Sutton**

Managing Principal  
Kairos Consulting Worldwide



**Scott C. Swanson**

President, Illinois  
PNC Bank



**Sahr Sweiss**

Business Analyst  
Greeley and Hansen



**Rick Syens**

Manager, Human Resources  
Cushman & Wakefield, Inc.



**Collette Taylor**

Senior Vice President,  
Human Resources  
Astellas Pharma US, LLC



**Lyndon Taylor**

Regional Leader, Americas  
Heidrick & Struggles





**Donna J. Thompson**

Chief Executive Officer  
Access Community Health  
Network



**Mary E. Toomey**

Senior Vice President of HR,  
Chicago Market HR Partner  
Bank of America



**Manika M. Turnbull**

Vice President & Chief  
Diversity Officer  
Health Care Service  
Corporation



**Jessica Turner**

Manager, Supplier Diversity  
BMO Harris Bank



**Zuly R. Vargas**

Compliance Manager  
Johnson, Blumberg &  
Associates, LLC



**Emmett Vaughn**

Director, Diverse Business  
Empowerment  
ComEd, An Exelon Company



**Marisabel Villanueva-Hucker**

Managing Director  
KPMG LLP



**Frederick H. Waddell**

Chairman & CEO  
Northern Trust Corporation



**Monica Walker**

CEO & Chief Investment  
Officer - Equity  
Holland Capital  
Management LLC



**Jamie Walters**

Senior Director Diversity  
and Inclusion  
AbbVie



**Stephanie Wang**

Director, Transaction  
Procurement for Southern  
Company Gas  
Nicor Gas



**Pamela G. Wedgeworth**

President and Senior  
Creative Director  
Wedgeworth Business  
Communications



**Kristen Weirick**

Vice President, Global Talent  
Acquisition and Diversity  
and Inclusion  
AbbVie



**Anise Wiley Little**

Chief Human Capital and  
Diversity Officer  
Northwestern University



**George A. Williams**

President & CEO  
PMI Energy Solutions, LLC



**James S. Williams**

Director, Diversity, Inclusion  
and Equity  
The University of  
Chicago Medicine



**Melvin Williams**

President  
Nicor Gas



**Norma J. Williams**

CEO  
NJW Consulting



**Nokihomis Willis**

Senior VP HR, Internal  
Communications & D&I  
Federal Reserve Bank  
of Chicago



**Ami Wynne**

Partner  
Sidley Austin LLP



**Namrata Yadav**

Vice President, Learning &  
Leadership Development  
Bank of America

# Chicago United Members

Photographs not available:

**Salvador Arana**  
Director Construction  
Peoples Gas & North  
Shore Gas

**James Austin**  
Regional Director,  
Midwest Region  
Morgan Stanley

**Myrna Bell**  
Senior Director, Global  
Inclusion & Community  
Engagement  
McDonald's Corporation

**Catherine Campbell**  
Associate Dean  
Roosevelt University

**Frank Cesario**  
President  
Financial Executives  
International

**Molly Cook**  
Central Region Community  
Engagement Leader,  
Talent Team  
EY

**David P. Conrad**  
Managing Director, Merrill  
Lynch Wealth Management  
Market Executive  
Bank of America Merrill Lynch

**Stephen R. Cornejo  
Garcia**  
Director, Inclusive Diversity  
and HR Business Partner  
Allstate Insurance Company

**Jerry Czaja**  
Director of Finance  
& Contracts  
LSL Healthcare, Inc.

**Beth Dunn**  
Director, Government Affairs  
& Coordinator, Supplier  
Diversity Program  
Chicago Botanic Garden

**Mark Evans**  
Managing Director, Wealth  
Manager Complex Manager  
Morgan Stanley

**Jim Flowers**  
Partner  
Clarity Partners, LLC

**Kevin Forman**  
Managing Director  
Morgan Stanley

**Claudia Fortuna**  
HR Recruitment & Staffing  
The University of Chicago  
Medicine

**Torrey Foster**  
Regional Leader, Americas  
Heidrick & Struggles

**Pedro Antonio Guerrero**  
CEO  
Guerrero Howe Custom  
Media

**Mike Harr**  
Sr. Utility Programs Manager  
"D" Construction, Inc.

**Bill Hawthorne**  
Senior VP, Diversity &  
Inclusion Strategies  
Macy's, Inc.

**Andy Hesselbach**  
Vice President, Construction  
Peoples Gas & North  
Shore Gas

**Stephanie Hickman**  
President & CEO  
Trice Construction Company

**Torrence Hinton**  
Director Operations  
& Maintenance  
Peoples Gas & North  
Shore Gas

**Yvonne Judice**  
Community Engagement  
Manager  
McDonald's Corporation

**Jason Kang**  
Senior Manager  
Deloitte Tax LLP

**Jim Konrad**  
Executive Director Financial  
Operations Procurement and  
Payment Services  
Northwestern University

**Ivan Lopez**  
Managing Director  
elemento L2

**Terra Martire**  
Vice President  
Northern Trust

**Christopher Nash**  
President  
Nash Brothers  
Construction Co., Inc.

**Stephanie Nash-Hart**  
Executive Vice President  
Nash Brothers  
Construction Co., Inc.

**Antonio Olivo**  
Director of Assurance  
& Regulatory Affairs  
LSL Healthcare, Inc.

**Tamara Page**  
D&I Leader  
BP America Inc.

**Linda Petty**  
Chief Legal Officer  
SDI Presence LLC

**Jamica Quillin**  
Diversity & Inclusion Mgr,  
Strategic Partnerships  
Program Manager  
Federal Reserve Bank  
of Chicago

**Marisol Ramirez**  
HR Employee Relations  
Bank of America

**Jodi Residori**  
Program Administrator  
"D" Construction, Inc.

**Charles Rice**  
Executive Director  
Morgan Stanley

**Michelle L. Rindt**  
VP Customer Service  
Peoples Gas & North  
Shore Gas

**Agustin Rizzo**  
Vice President  
Bank of America Merrill Lynch

**Meaghan Sweeney**  
Vice President/Community  
Outreach  
Nash Brothers  
Construction Co., Inc.

**Lorenza A. Taylor**  
Vice President,  
Relationship Manager  
Bank of America Merrill Lynch

**Gwendolyn F. Turner**  
Director of Procurement  
Diversity  
Northwestern University

**Doreen Vilorio**  
Vice President  
Bank of America

**Chuck Wagner**  
Manager, HR Business  
Strategy  
Peoples Gas & North Shore  
Gas

**Patrick Wallace**  
Regional Vice President  
Sodexo

**Royce Wills**  
Director of National Key  
Accounts  
MillerCoors





## EXHIBITING LEADERSHIP

**THE BUSINESS LEADERS OF COLOR** publication was conceived through fierce discussion that has become a trademark of Chicago United.

In 2001, Chicago United launched *The Corporate Diversity Profile Survey*. The study was the first national survey of its kind to measure racial diversity specifically in leadership ranks, on corporate boards, and in executive level management of large corporations. It serves as a benchmark for corporations to measure their progress in this area. When examined from a leadership perspective, the study continually finds corporations visibly lacking in racial diversity in corporate governance and senior management. In 2014, the study found that if the rate of increase in minority representation in the leadership ranks of large corporations remains the same, it will take 64 years for leaders of color to reach parity.

The 2016 report found that, at a national level and compared to White males, most minorities experience significantly reduced work-life earnings regardless of their level of educational achievement. Over their work-life, African-American men will earn 74 percent of their White male counterparts' earnings. African American females will earn 67 percent, and White females will earn 68 percent, and of what White males earn. Latino males will earn 71 percent, and Latinas will earn only 55 percent, of their White male counterparts' lifetime earnings.

At the same time, human capital and innovation remain at the top the list of business challenges, not only here in the United States, but globally. One untapped resource that addresses both of these issues is diversity. According to a 2015 McKinsey & Company report titled *Diversity Matters*, it is 35 percent more likely companies with ethnically diverse leadership will outperform those that are less diverse. The study found companies in the top quartile for racially and ethnically diverse leadership are 35 percent more likely to have financial returns above their respective national industry median. Particularly, in the United States, the study found a linear relationship between diverse leadership and better financial performance: for every 10 percent increase in racial and ethnic diversity on the senior-executive team, earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) rise 0.8 percent.

After the first study was conducted, Chicago United viewed the results as an opportunity to understand resistance to greater board diversity. The debate uncovered a widespread call for the need to identify diverse talent for the Fortune 100, 500, and 1000. In response, Chicago United's leadership acted to create a highly visible publication that demonstrates the level of diverse talent available in Chicago and the *Business Leaders of Color* publication was born.

We see the *Business Leaders of Color* publication used often as a reference. It also serves as inspiration, as was envisioned by the Chicago United thought leaders. The publication is a resource for those seeking to increase inclusion of diverse candidates in their boardrooms and business networks.

**CHICAGO UNITED** is an advocacy organization with a mission to achieve parity in economic opportunity for people of color by advancing multiracial leadership on corporate boards, in executive management, and in business diversity.

Our initiatives and research provide Chicago's business community with the tangible data, tools, and insights they need to help us further transform Chicago into one of the most inclusive business ecosystems in the nation.

Through our initiatives and programming, we hope to enhance the long-term viability of Chicago-based corporations and secure the growth and opportunities for the various communities of our city.

# Business Leaders of **COLOR**

## 2017

Shradha Agarwal	Stephen Davis	Michael Leong	Sergio Pereira	Jacobo Schatz
Luis A. Avila	Billy Dec	Marco A. López	Maria de J. Prado	Stacy Sharpe
Nichole Barnes Marshall	Peter M. Ellis	Mike Maali	Jose Luis Prado	Luther E. Siebert
Pat Auveek Basu	Opella F. Ernest	Christopher C. Melvin, Jr.	Anjoo Rai-Marchant	Srinivas Veerasaneni
Cecelia Bolden	Verónica Gómez	Carey Mendes	Terika Richardson	Lisa W. Wardell
Joseph Malik Bradley	Craig A. Griffith	Juan Gabriel Moreno	Debbie Roberts	Alex E. Washington
George Burciaga	Pedro Antonio Guerrero	Raj V. Nagarajan	Dee M. Robinson	Lynn Watkins-Asiyanbi
Louis Carr	Steven V. Hunter	David C. Namkung	Levoyd E. Robinson	Paul S. Williams
Guoxing Chai	Ted Jackson	Seema Pajula	Robert Rodriguez	Melvin D. Williams
Eduardo Conrado	Rudy Juarez	José Paz Peña, Jr.	Emma L. Rodriguez-Ayala	Ann Marie Wright

## 2015

D'Andrea M. Anderson	Yang Chao	Thomas L. Fisher	Michael J. McMurray	Lucino Sotelo
Jose Armario	Posh M. Charles	Sharon T. Grant	Edgardo A. Navarro	Farah Bulsara Speer
Patricia Arredondo	Eileen Chin	Symeria T. Hudson	David Nichols	Gilda Livingston Spencer
Cynthia Barginere	Michael Chu	Mahrukh Hussain	Ronald V. Redd	Jason Spigner
Brenda A. Battle	Virginia Clarke	Carl A. Jenkins	Max W. Reed	Russell Stokes
Kenneth M. Battle	Roger O. Crockett	Oscar D. Johnson, Jr.	Al B. Reid	Eric Strickland
Alex Bell	Yolanda Daniel	Steve Kim	José R. Sánchez	David S. Tan
M. Michelle Blaise	Angelique Athiena David	S. Raja Krishnamoorthi	Rodrigo Alfonso Sierra	Eduardo Tobon
Lawyer Burks III	Jeffrey Dorsey	Ash Luthra	Gurpreet Singh	Everett S. Ward
Denise R. Cade	Willard S. Evans, Jr.	Leonard McLaughlin	Eric S. Smith	Adrienne White-Faines

## 2013

Leo Alaniz	Marie Carr	Michael J. Hernandez	Kevin Newell	Patrick R. Scotto di Luzio
Paula Allen-Meares	Donna Cooper	Patricia Brown Holmes	Tracey Patterson	Cedric Shaw
Leslie J. Anderson	Kermit R. Crawford	Lisa Haley Huff	Cathy Peng	Donna N. Smith
Anthony A. Armada	Ana Dutra	Miroslava Mejia Krug	Juliette W. Pryor	Maurice S. Smith
Erik D. Barefield	Manny Favela	Jeongling Liu	Ram Raju	Kurt A. Summers, Jr.
Earl J. Barnes II	Guillermo Garcia	Paul E. Martin	Kwame Y. Raoul	John P. Trainor
Stephen W. Beard	Sunil Garg	Joseph Q. McCoy	Sreeram Reddy	Valerie J. Van Meter
Enrique Beckmann	Maurice Grant	Juan J. Mir	Stephen Rhee	Yman Huang Vien
Jerome Byers	Cheryl A. Harris	Jackie Clark Muhammad	Z. Scott	David Wade

## 2011

Robert Aguilar	Calvin G. Butler, Jr.	Jeanna M. Cullins	Deborah Liverett	Jeffery S. Perry
Arabel Alva Rosales	Carlos F. Cata	Richard Gamble	Eddie P. Lou	Kitty Pon
Terrell D. Anderson	Jorge V. Cazares	Michelle J. Gaskill	Wilfred J. Lucas	Cheryl Richardson, Ph.D.
David Arenas	Gary Chan	Graham C. Grady	Maribel Mata Benedict	Lac V. Tran
Jeanna D. Bridges	Hugo Chaviano	Maria C. Green	Anthony R. McCain	Mabel C. Tung
Kevin B. Brookins	Sona Chawla	Brett J. Hart	Henry J. Munez	Monica L. Walker
Julia M. Brown	Michael Chin	Ahmad Islam	Luis Nuñez, Ph.D.	Kimberly L. Waller
Rebecca S. Busch	Nim Chinniah	Nicole Johnson-Scales	Gerald L. Pauling II	Norma J. Williams
Gwendolyn L. Butler	Eric L. Conley	Aylwin B. Lewis	Cheryl Pearson-McNeil	Theodore I. Yi



## 2009

David R. Andalcio	Billy Dexter	Dolores A. Kunda	Quintin E. Primo III	Shundrawn A. Thomas
Nancy Andrade	Sue Ling Gin	Deryl McKissack	Nazneen Razi	Darryl Tom
Andrea G. Barthwell	Quin R. Golden	Dorri C. McWhorter	Eric A. Reeves	Jason Tyler
Linda Boasmond	J. C. Gonzalez-Mendez	Verett Mims	Judith C. Rice	Neli Vazquez-Rowland
Ramón Cepeda	Wallace Harris, Jr.	Ray Mota	Brenda A. Russell	George A. Williams
Pedro Cevallos-Candau	Ted Hawkins	Linda M. Nolan	Gene Saffold	James H. Wooten, Jr.
Johnathan U. Choe	Amy S. Hilliard	Linda O'Bannon	Donna Sims Wilson	
Michele Coleman Mayes	Kym M. Hubbard	Nam Hung Paik	Michael Sutton	
Michelle L. Collins	Robert Johnson	Terry Peterson	Sheila G. Talton	
Nelda J. Connors	Earl Jones	Anita Ponder	Nigel F. Telman	

## 2007

Anthony (Tony) Anderson	Michael F. DeSantiago	Avis LaVelle	J.D. Salazar	David P. Thomas
Adrienne Banks Pitts	Lena Dobbs Johnson	James R. Lewis	Manuel (Manny) Sanchez	Don Thompson
Robert D. Blackwell, Sr.	Karen Eng	Fidel Marquez, Jr.	Deborah M. Sawyer	Donna J. Thompson
Phil Cabrera	Leana Flowers	Michael Mayo	Amir Shahkarami	Joyce E. Tucker
James S. Cabrera	Sarah Garvey	Eugene Morris	Luis Sierra	Mark A. Urquhart
Luz Canino-Baker	Chester A. Gougis	Virginia Ojeda	Melody Spann-Cooper	Sona Wang
Judith Carre Sutfin	Marguerite H. Griffin	Julian G. Posada	Guy Summers	Rufus Williams
Warrick L. Carter, Ph.D.	David A. Gupta	Angela D. Robinson	Nathaniel K. Sutton	Ernest C. Wong
Wheeler Coleman	Darrel Hackett	Allen A. Rodriguez	Andrés T. Tapia	Joset B. Wright

## 2005

Ralph Alvarez	Betty P. Chow	Randall C. Hampton	Renetta McCann	José L. Santillan
Joel Arce	Carolyn H. Clift	Gail D. Hasbrouck	Eric McKissack	Smita N. Shah
James A. Bell	Joy V. Cunningham	Louis Holland, Jr.	Ralph G. Moore	Paula A. Sneed
Carole Brown	Pedro DeJesús, Jr.	John T. Hooker	Clare Muñana	Jorge A. Solis
Todd Brown	Robert Der	Ralph V. Hughes	Michelle Obama	John D. Sterling
Peter C.B. Bynoe	Eduardo Fernandez	Cynthia J. Johnson	Leticia Peralta Davis	John D. Sterling
Adela Cepeda	Venita E. Fields	Michael W. Lewis	Stephen H. Pugh	Christina M. Tchen
Thomas F. Chen	G.A. Finch	Connie Lindsey	Desiree Rogers	Roxanne M. Ward
Gery J. Chico	Raymond Grady	Cheryl Mayberry McKissack	Steven Rogers	Timothy W. Wright III
				Andrea L. Zopp

## 2003

Sanjiv Anand	Alison L. Chung	Melody Hobson	Tom McLeary	Jesse H. Ruiz
Brian Anderson	Frank Clark	David Holly	Francisco Menchaca	Niranjan Shah
Yasmin T. Bates	Lester N. Coney	Tao Huang	Willie Miller	Alejandro Silva
Lester Blair	Ron Daly	Abe Tomás Hughes, II	Bob Nash	Stanley B. Stallworth
William Bonaparte	William McKnight Farrow, III	Darrell Jackson	Lou Nieto	Charles Tribbett
Martin Cabrera	Phil Fuentes	Valerie B. Jarrett	Roderick Palmore	Edward J. Williams
Marty Castro	Brenda J. Gaines	Bernard Loyd	Barbara M. Quintana	Desmond C. Wong
Clarissa Cerda	Michael Gonzalez	Lester McCarroll, Jr.	James Reynolds	
C.W. Chan	James Hill, Jr.	Gary E. McCullough	Mary Richardson-Lowry	



**Chicago United**

Advancing multiracial leadership in business

300 East Randolph Street, Suite CL920, Chicago, IL 60601-5075  
Phone: 312-977-3060 Fax: 312-977-3089 [www.chicago-united.org](http://www.chicago-united.org)