



P R E S E N T S

POWER OF INCLUSION 5.0

THE JOURNEY WITHIN, THE IMPACT BEYOND

LE POUVOIR DE L'INCLUSION 5.0

LE VOYAGE INTÉRIEUR, L'IMPACT AU-DELÀ

JOIN US

For Our 5th Edition!
September 2025

"REJOIGNEZ-NOUS"

Pour notre 5^e édition
September 2025

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Artist - Abiola Idowu

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POWER OF INCLUSION
The Journey Within, The Impact Beyond



COUNCIL OF AFRICAN PROFESSIONALS

&



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COUNCIL OF AFRICAN PROFESSIONALS

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CNP Inc. The Journey Within
The Impact Beyond

Greetings

I would like to convey my warmest greetings to everyone taking part in the Power of Inclusion 5.0.

This event offers a wonderful opportunity for leaders, advocates and changemakers to share their knowledge and experiences with respect to equity, diversity and inclusion. I am certain that everyone in attendance will appreciate this chance to connect with their peers and will benefit from the presentations planned for this year's edition of the conference.

I would like to thank the Council of Nigerian Professionals and Council of African Professionals for hosting this event and for celebrating the diversity that enriches our nation.

I wish you all a memorable experience.



The Right Honourable Mark Carney, P.C., O.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada

Ottawa
2025



Je tiens à saluer chaleureusement toutes les personnes qui prennent part à la conférence Power of Inclusion 5.0.

Cet événement offre une merveilleuse occasion aux dirigeants, aux intervenants et aux acteurs du changement de mettre en commun leurs connaissances et leurs expériences en matière d'équité, de diversité et d'inclusion. Je suis persuadé que toutes les personnes qui participent à cette conférence seront reconnaissantes d'avoir la chance de tisser des liens avec leurs pairs et tireront profit des présentations prévues cette année.



Je remercie le Conseil des professionnels nigériens et le Council of African Professionals d'avoir organisé cet événement et de célébrer la diversité qui enrichit notre pays.

Je vous souhaite une expérience des plus mémorables.



Le très honorable Mark Carney, C.P., O.C., député
Premier ministre du Canada

Ottawa
2025

Greetings



THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF ONTARIO
LA LIEUTENANTE-GOUVERNEURE DE L'ONTARIO

September 6, 2025



I am delighted to extend my warmest greetings to everyone taking part in Power of Inclusion 5.0, organized by the Council of Nigerian Professionals and the Council of African Professionals.

Over the past five years, Power of Inclusion has become much more than an event. It has created a space where voices are heard, stories are shared, and change is sparked. This year's theme — “The Journey Within, The Impact Beyond”—is a powerful reminder that inclusion begins with each of us, but its impact reaches far beyond.

At the heart of this initiative is a belief that reflects Ontario's own values: that everyone deserves to feel seen and at home in their community. When we lift diverse perspectives and recognize the contributions of those who lead with purpose, we help build a province where belonging is not the exception—it is the norm.

À titre de représentante de la Couronne en Ontario, je tiens à souligner l'importance de ces espaces qui favorisent l'écoute, le dialogue et la solidarité. Chaque initiative qui encourage le rapprochement entre les cultures et célèbre les talents dans toute leur diversité façonne des communautés toujours plus équitables et bienveillantes. Je vous souhaite un événement des plus enrichissants!

Salutations cordiales,

Edith Dumont

Greetings



Hon. Rechie Valdez

Member of Parliament
Mississauga—Streetsville

Wednesday, August 20th, 2025



Dear the Council of Nigerian Professionals and Council of African Professionals:

It is my pleasure to extend warm greetings to everyone participating in Power of Inclusion 5.0.

Since their inception, both organizations have championed leadership, cultural celebration, and policy dialogue. Their efforts have created pathways for professionals, youth, entrepreneurs, and families to thrive, while enriching our communities. This year's theme, "The Journey Within, The Impact Beyond," is a powerful reminder that courageous leadership begins with reflection and purpose.

My sincere thanks go to the organizers, partners, volunteers, and sponsors whose dedication has made this celebration possible. May Power of Inclusion 5.0 spark new collaborations that continue to strengthen our shared future.

Wishing everyone a memorable and successful event.

Sincerely,

Signed by the Hon. Rechie Valdez
M.P. for Mississauga—Streetsville

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Greetings



A Message from the Associate Minister of Small Business



SEPTEMBER 5, 2025

Power of Inclusion 5.0 - The Journey Within, The Impact Beyond

I am happy to express my support and best wishes to the Council of Nigerian Professionals (CNP) and the Council of African Professionals (CAP) for a successful Power of Inclusion 2025, and to congratulate CNP on its 7th anniversary.

Led by Premier Doug Ford, our government is committed to protecting and supporting Ontario's small businesses. Despite global economic challenges, Ontario remains dedicated to creating a business-friendly environment that encourages innovation, investment, and job creation.

We appreciate the important work of the councils in empowering professionals and entrepreneurs from African, Caribbean, and Black communities. Events like this are vital to building a province where everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

As you enjoy this landmark celebration of community and business, you're contributing to a stronger, more inclusive economy that fully reflects Ontario's potential.

Thank you for your continued efforts and dedication to supporting small business and entrepreneurship in our province. I wish all participants a memorable and engaging time at the event.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nina Tangri".

Nina Tangri
Associate Minister

Greetings



SANDY SHAW

Member of Provincial Parliament / Députée
Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas

Greetings on the occasion of the 5th Anniversary of the Power of Inclusion Conference, Awards and Gala Event

September 6, 2025

Dear members of the Council of Nigerian Professionals, members of the Council of African Professionals, and all other attendees.

Congratulations on another successful year of promoting equity, leadership, and community among African Professionals. This year's theme: **"The Journey Within, The Impact Beyond"** is a great reminder of the power within each of us to influence our community, Ontario, and Canada!

Best wishes on a successful event that inspires bold, inclusive leadership and transformative change.

Sincerely,

Sandy Shaw
MPP Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas



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Greetings

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MPP - Milton



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July 12th, 2025

Office of Zee Hamid, MPP
Member of Provincial Parliament for Milton
159 Main Street East
Milton, Ontario L9T 1N7

To the Council of Nigerian Professionals and the Council of African Professionals,

It is with great admiration and sincere appreciation that I extend my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of Power of Inclusion 5.0, taking place on September 5 and 6, 2025.

This year's theme, "The Journey Within, The Impact Beyond," is a powerful reminder that lasting change begins with introspection and grows through collective action. Your commitment to advancing leadership, equity, and inclusion is not only commendable—it is vital to the progress and well-being of our diverse communities across Canada.

The Council of Nigerian Professionals and the Council of African Professionals have established Power of Inclusion as a national platform for dialogue, empowerment, and transformation. Your work continues to inspire emerging leaders and affirm the value of every voice and story. I applaud your dedication to fostering belonging, opportunity, and resilience in all you do.

As your Member of Provincial Parliament, I celebrate with you and thank you for your ongoing contributions to a more inclusive and united society. Please accept my best wishes for a successful, impactful, and memorable event.

Warm regards,
Zee Hamid

Greetings



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MAYOR PATRICK BROWN

September 6, 2025

Council of Nigerian Professionals & Council of African Professionals

Power of Inclusion Conference, Awards and Gala Event

Dear Friends,

It is my great honour to extend warm congratulations on the 5th anniversary of the *Power of Inclusion* Conference, Awards and Gala. This milestone reflects years of dedication to advancing equity, leadership, and community—a commitment that has inspired and empowered countless Canadians.

This year's theme, "*The Journey Within, The Impact Beyond*," is a powerful reminder that meaningful change begins with self-reflection and the courage to lead with authenticity. By fostering spaces for dialogue, understanding, and action, the Council of Nigerian Professionals and the Council of African Professionals are helping shape a Canada where inclusion is not just an aspiration, but a lived reality.

I am deeply humbled to be nominated for the POI Catalyst Award. To be recognized among such passionate changemakers is both a privilege and a motivation to continue striving for systemic change that uplifts every member of our diverse society.

On behalf of the City of Brampton, I congratulate all award nominees and recipients, and I thank you for your tireless work in transforming obstacles into opportunities for justice and progress. May the next chapter of your journey be as impactful as the last.

Please accept my warmest wishes for a memorable celebration and continued success in all your endeavours.

Sincerely,

Mayor Patrick Brown, Brampton



brampton.ca

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF BRAMPTON



OFFICE of the MAYOR
CITY of BURLINGTON

Message from Mayor Meed Ward

Good evening, everyone! I wish I were with you to celebrate the 5th anniversary of the Power of Inclusion Conference, Awards and Gala.

This evening is not just a celebration – it is a powerful statement of purpose. The 2025 theme, “The Journey Within, The Impact Beyond,” reminds us that lasting, transformative leadership begins with deep self-reflection.

This gathering reflects a shared vision: to promote equity and empowerment for individuals of diverse cultural backgrounds within Burlington and even Canada.

This is a vision that the City of Burlington deeply values and continues to support. Our collective future depends on breaking down barriers and building systems where every individual can grow, lead, and make an impact.

Tonight, we are doing just that – changemakers who are not only succeeding in their fields but paving the way for others.

Thank you to the Council of Nigerian Professionals and the Council of African Professionals for championing this vital work. Your leadership is shaping a more inclusive and powerful tomorrow. One that honours every journey and amplifies every voice.

Thank you, and congratulations to all the honourees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Marianne Meed Ward".

Mayor Marianne Meed Ward
City of Burlington



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G.A. (GORD) KRANTZ
Mayor

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Mayor's Message

On behalf of the Town of Milton, I am pleased to congratulate the Council of Nigerian Professionals and the Council of African Professionals on the fifth year of your successful event, Power of Inclusion.

This conference and gala are meaningful ways you continue to empower Canadian professionals, entrepreneurs, and youth of African heritage.

This year's theme — “The Journey Within, The Impact Beyond” — reminds us of how self-reflection can inspire bold leadership and transformational change. It embodies the values of equity, leadership, and community that you champion.

Congratulations on your continued success. I hope you enjoy this important event.

Sincerely,

Gord Krantz
Mayor, Town of Milton



The Journey Within,
The Impact Beyond

Message from
the Founder &
President

THE POWER OF INCLUSION:
A CALL TO
**REFLECT,
RISE, &
REDEFINE**
LEADERSHIP



Inclusion is not an accessory to leadership — it is its lifeblood.

When we launched the **Power of Inclusion (POI)** five years ago under the Council of Nigerian Professionals (CNP), we were driven by a burning question: *What would our communities look like if every voice mattered — not as a box to be checked, but as a story to be heard, a hand to be held, a mind to be engaged?*

POI was never meant to be just another event. It was — and remains — a **movement born of necessity**, a response to the silent gaps that have existed far too long in the leadership and social fabric of our nation. For too many, inclusion had been cosmetic. Diversity had become a buzzword. Representation was inconsistent at best.

We knew we needed a space that would not only *see* people — but **center** them. A space where Black, African, Caribbean,

Indigenous, and racialized voices weren't tokens, but torchbearers. Where youth were not sidelined, but spotlighted. Where difference wasn't managed — it was celebrated.

In our first year, we shook the table. In year two, we built new ones. By the third, we created seats where none existed. And by the fourth, we began to **redefine the very structure** of who leads and who listens.

This year, as **POI marks its fifth anniversary**, we stand taller than ever — not just because of what we've built, but because of the **inner work** that has made the outer impact possible.

The Journey Within, The Impact Beyond

Our 2025 theme isn't just poetic — it's prophetic.

True change doesn't begin on stages or in boardrooms. It begins **within**. It begins in the quiet moments where we confront our fears, examine our values, and recommit to the kind of

leader we dare to become. That's what this year is about — a celebration of those who have **dared to reflect**, so they can **rise with clarity and courage**.

When youth discover their voice, communities shift. When professionals examine their bias, organizations evolve. When leaders heal, nations transform.

This is the heartbeat of POI 5.0.

Our two-day gathering — featuring speakers, visionaries, cultural performances, and changemakers from all walks of life — is not simply a conference. It is a **mirror and a megaphone**. A mirror to look inward, and a megaphone to project our truth, values, and aspirations to the nation.

Not Just for Us — But for All of Us

Though birthed from African and Caribbean roots, POI was never meant to exist in a silo. It is a reflection of the **Canadian mosaic** — one where Indigenous wisdom, Asian brilliance, Latinx resilience, Middle Eastern heritage, and every cultural identity

find common ground in the fight for equity and belonging.

Inclusion is not charity. It is character.

It is not about inviting people into the room — it is about rebuilding the room entirely.

And this is why I extend this message not just as a founder or Chair, but as a fellow citizen — *to all leaders, allies, and bridge-builders across this country:*

Do not stand on the sidelines of inclusion. Stand within it.

Be intentional. Be uncomfortable. Be transformed.

Join us. Share your story. Hold space

for another.

The Power of Inclusion is not just a platform — it is a promise.

A promise that if we journey inward together, we will impact the world beyond us — together.

By HRH. Adejisola Atiba (Lady ABHA)

Obaantapaa Nana Akosua

Mpontuemaa 1

*Founder & President, CNP + CAP |
Chair, Power of Inclusion 5.0*

Breaking Barriers: Advancing Inclusivity in Mental Health Services for Racialized Communities in Canada

Olayinka Oguntuase, MEd, MSW, RSW

Mental health is an essential part of overall well-being, yet access to culturally appropriate and inclusive care remains a pressing challenge for racialized communities across Canada. As the population becomes increasingly diverse, with over one in five Canadians identifying as a visible minority, it is critical to recognize and address the unique mental health struggles these communities face; struggles often rooted in systemic inequities, migration stress, and cultural disconnection. Racialized individuals, including immigrants, refugees, and second-generation Canadians, commonly grapple with mental health issues that are both complex and compounded. Among them are depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, and racial trauma, often worsened by experiences of discrimination, economic marginalization, and lack of culturally sensitive services. For many, mental health support is not just under-accessed, it is actively distrusted due to previous negative encounters or culturally irrelevant models of care.

Isolation and identity loss are particularly prevalent, especially among immigrant and refugee populations. Individuals who leave behind familiar languages, customs, support systems, and professions often experience profound disorientation. For youth and young adults, navigating bicultural identities can lead to internal conflicts, strained family relationships,



and identity confusion. For older adults, the impact of migration may be even more severe. Many experience deep social isolation, language barriers, and a lack of community engagement, all contributing to depression, loneliness, and cognitive decline. These concerns often go unspoken due to stigma or cultural norms that discourage open discussion of emotional or psychological distress.

Women from racialized communities may face gender-specific stressors, such as trauma from domestic violence, care giving burdens, and socio-economic dependency, while men may suppress emotional struggles due to cultural expectations around masculinity, leading to under diagnosis or misdiagnosis.

To move toward truly inclusive mental health care, Canada must go beyond surface-level multiculturalism. Inclusivity means ensuring that services are designed with and for racialized communities. It requires training practitioners in cultural humility and cultural safety, expanding the mental health workforce to reflect the populations it serves, and embedding anti-racist, anti-oppressive frameworks into practice .

Encouragingly, some progress is being made. Culturally grounded, community-based programs, many led by racialized practitioners and elders are emerging as safe, healing spaces. These initiatives integrate traditional practices, language, and spirituality, offering support that feels relevant and respectful

However, these efforts cannot stand alone.

Governments, institutions, and policy makers must invest in equitable funding, culturally responsive research, and sustained outreach. Data collection must become more inclusive, capturing the diverse realities within Black, Indigenous, and other racialized groups to inform policy and practice meaningfully.

Mental health care in Canada must reflect the people it seeks to serve. For racialized communities, healing begins with being heard, seen, and understood, not only as individuals, but as holders of rich cultural histories, resilience, and strength. Advancing inclusive mental health services is not only a matter of health equity, it is a moral imperative.

Olayinka Oguntuase, MEd, MSW, RSW is a passionate and dedicated social worker with over a decade of experience in community service, including school administration, community development, day programming, and hospital social work. She holds a Master of Education in Community Development and Social Work from the University of Lagos, Nigeria, and a Master of Social Work from the University of Manitoba. As a Registered Social Worker with the Manitoba College of Social Workers, Olayinka currently serves as a Medicine Social Worker with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. She is committed to delivering culturally responsive, client-centered care rooted in compassion, advocacy, and social justice. Outside of her professional role, she is a proud mother of three daughters who are each inspired to pursue careers in human services.

There are no perfect conditions to act for inclusion

By: Tamunodienye Meshileya



I've come to learn that inclusion isn't a project or a policy. Nor is it a catchy hashtag or a trendy training session. I strongly believe it is a deeply personal journey. A journey that begins inside us, long before it shows up in org charts or townhalls.

When I think of the **Power of Inclusion**, I think of the quiet choices we make when no one is watching. When we advocate for others and have nothing personal to gain. The times we speak up when silence would've been safer. The moments we feel the tension...the tension between belonging and bravery, and still choose to lean in.

This year's theme; **"The Journey Within, The Impact Beyond"**, resonates deeply with me. Because before inclusion can be an organizational value, it has to be first a human value. And the "within" part? That's where the real work is. That's where I've had to confront my own biases, unlearn inherited norms, and sit in discomfort.

But here's the fact for me; discomfort is not the enemy. Indifference is.

Indifference looks away. It whispers, "not my problem". Indifference is a BIG problem. Because, it's subtle. Because, it often comes dressed as "neutrality" or "professionalism." Because, people don't see it as a

problem, which is exactly the problem.

Indifference is dangerous because it allows systems of exclusion to survive unchecked. It lets biases fester under the radar. And worst of all? It drains the courage of those who do care, by making them feel like they're pushing a boulder up a hill alone.

I've come to believe that inclusion is about building systems where people are not just present, but powerful, they can influence. Not just welcomed, but wanted. Not just hired, but heard.

Everyone is responsible for inclusion. We all have a role to play. Our roles on inclusion cannot be delegated and only clap from the sidelines. It must be built into performance expectations, leadership competencies, and daily decision-making. If people feel accountable, they'll act accountable. We must shift to action from empathy. It is not enough to feel bad. Action is the antidote to indifference. That can be as small as correcting a microaggression, or as bold as redesigning a hiring process to reduce bias. It all counts.

Care enough to try. This is the journey within. Inclusion isn't charity, it is strategy. It's sustainability. That's how we go beyond!

TAIWO
JULIUS
MBA

MC

SUB-THHEME: GENDER
& INTERSECTIONALITY



Taiwo Julius, popularly known as MC Teejay, has over a decade of experience emceeing various corporate and social events, and he's known for giving only 5-star events! He has emceed for notable organizations, including the Council of Nigerian Professionals (CNP), Nigerian IT Professionals in Canada (NIPCA), the African-Caribbean Food Festival (AFRICAR), and the RBC Evolve Seminar, among others. He has hosted the Mayors of Mississauga, Brampton and Oakville at several events.

Taiwo is a distinguished Change Management and Human Resources figure with nearly two decades of leadership expertise. Armed with a BSc. in Industrial Relations and Personnel Management from Lagos State University, Nigeria. Taiwo further honed his skills through the esteemed Executive MBA program at the Ivey Business School, Western University of Ontario. He holds many certifications from globally recognized institutions, including Prosci Canada, CPHR Canada and SPHR-I USA which indicates his commitment to excellence.

With a career spanning North America and Africa, Taiwo has significantly contributed to various industries such as media, oil & gas, CPG, e-commerce, consulting, medical and insurance sectors. His proficiency lies in strategic change management, human resources consulting, BIPOC recruitment, leadership development, and performance enhancement.

As the Co-founder and Principal Consultant of Thami Wales Canada Inc., a management consulting firm, Taiwo provides invaluable counsel to businesses and individuals, guiding them through intricate transitions involving people, processes, and technology.

Dr.
AYODELE
ADEYEMI

MC



SUB-THEME: GENDER
& INTERSECTIONALITY

Dr. Ayoade Adeyemi is a renowned international trainer, speaker, strategist, and consultant with over two decades of experience in Business Process Management, Stock Broking, Project Management, Marketing, and Human Resources Management. He has consistently delivered quality support services to various businesses across multiple sectors.

With a strong background in facilitating training sessions and strategy development, Dr Adeyemi consults for local and multinational organizations in areas such as Business Analysis and Strategy, Marketing, Information Management, Business Analysis, Human Resources, Leadership, and Enterprise Development.

His professional experience includes roles such as Customer Manager at the United African Company of Nigeria (UACN), Head of Operations at Tower Security and Investment, and Registrar at the National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria. Currently, he serves as the Managing Partner of Lorache Consulting Limited.

In academia, Dr. Adeyemi has taught at several institutions, including St. Clair College, Canadore

College, CDI College, and Pure College. He is currently the Director of Programs at the Workplace Leadership Institute.

Dr. Adeyemi holds various board positions, including Executive Director and Board Member in several organizations. He has also served as a Governing Council member of the Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State, Nigeria, and former Board Vice Chairman of Black-CAP, the largest Black non-governmental and non-profit organization in Canada.

As a seasoned facilitator and resource person, Dr. Adeyemi has worked with institutions such as the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), AMCON, Daystar Leadership Academy (DLA), Philip Consulting, Chartered Institute of Personnel Management (CIPM), Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria (NIMN), and the Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF).



DAY 1 & DAY 2

Friday
September 5th,
2025

Saturday
September 6th,
2025



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

His Royal Highness, King Nana Yaw Osam I

*Manwirehen of the Enyan Denkyira
Traditional Area*

SUB-THEME:
**TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP
IN A CHANGING WORLD**



With the dignity of tradition and the vision of a global statesman, **His Royal Majesty King Nana Yaw Osam I** stands as a pillar of leadership, service, and compassion. As the esteemed **Manwirehen of the Enyan Denkyira Traditional Area**, His Majesty has dedicated his reign to advancing humanitarian causes and fostering unity among nations.

For many years, King Nana Yaw Osam I has served as a **Distinguished Ambassador for the United Nations**, advocating tirelessly for initiatives that uplift the marginalized, empower communities, and promote sustainable peace. His influence resonates across continents, where he has been a steadfast voice for **dialogue, reconciliation, and mutual respect** among diverse cultures. Guided by an unwavering commitment to service, His Majesty works to bridge divides, strengthen communities, and inspire positive

transformation. Whether engaging with world leaders or championing grassroots initiatives, King Nana Yaw Osam I exemplifies the noble ideals of duty, humility, and global stewardship.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

DR WENDY CUKIER

Professor of Entrepreneurship
and Innovation at the Ted Rogers School
of Management

SUB-THEME:
**GENDER &
INTERSECTIONALITY**



Dr. Wendy Cukier is a professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the Ted Rogers School of Management, Founder and Academic Director of the Diversity Institute at Toronto Metropolitan University, Academic Director of the Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub (WEKH) and Academic Research Director of the Future Skills Centre. She is the former Vice President of Research and Innovation. She co-authored the bestseller "Innovation Nation: Canadian Leadership from Java to Jurassic Park" and is a leader in disruptive technologies and innovation with more than 200 publications. Launched in 1999, the Diversity Institute now has 80 full time research staff, 10 hubs across the country, and 300 partners, undertaking research and programs to advance growth, sustainability, innovation and inclusion. She serves on the Board of the Lifelong Leadership Institute (focused on high performing Black

youth) as well as the Federation of African Canadian Economics (FACE) committed to building intergenerational wealth in the Black community and charged with administering \$260M in loans for Black entrepreneurs. Her extensive qualifications, numerous publications and impactful research projects, including the State of Black Economics Report (SOBER) 2025, which highlights key areas of economic advancement for Black Canadians, have cemented her status as a leading EDI expert in Canada. Wendy has received many academic, industry and community awards for her work and was named one of the "100 alumni who shaped the century" by the University of Toronto. She holds an MA, MBA (Toronto), a PhD in Information Systems (Schulich, York) and two honorary doctorates (Concordia, Laval).

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

PATRICIA BEBIA

President, Diamond Plus Media
and the co-owner of Afroglobal Television

SUB-THEME:
**THE MESSAGE & THE MEDIUM:
BUILDING INCLUSIVE MEDIA**



Patricia Bebia is an award-winning filmmaker, media executive, and storyteller whose work spans television, film, publishing, and public speaking. She is the president of Diamond Plus Media and the co-owner of Afroglobal Television, Canada's 24-hour Black-owned media channel.

Patricia is the writer and director of the multiple award-winning feature film *The Life Coach*, which has won 12 international awards, including in London, Paris, Milan, India, and New York, and recently completed a successful theatrical run across Canada.

With a career rooted in purpose, Patricia has created and produced over 15 television programs, including *The Visionaries*, *Standing Ovation*, and *Omobella Palace*. She is also the associate publisher of *Excellence*, *Destiny*, and *Envision* magazines. Her storytelling boldly explores identity, resilience, and

transformation—often drawing from her own journey and commitment to uplifting underrepresented voices.

Named in *Who's Who in Black Canada*, Patricia is a recipient of numerous accolades, including the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal and the Harry Jerome Award for Media. She has served as chair of the Reelworld Screen Institute and Foundation. Patricia currently sits on the advisory board of Trebas College. Her acclaimed leadership and mentorship programs continue to inspire the next generation of creatives and changemakers.

From being inspired by Oprah Winfrey to become a talk show host to being involved with launching a 24-hour TV channel, Patricia is a testament to the power of vision, faith, and perseverance.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

COURTNEY BETTY

BA, JD

Principal, Betty's Law Office

SUB-THEME:

**BEYOND THE BENCH: THE LAWYER'S ROLE
IN SHAPING EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES**



Courtney Betty is a distinguished lawyer, advocate, and diversity champion with nearly 30 years of experience navigating the intersections of law, equity, and public policy. His journey began in Jamaica and continued in Canada, where he developed a deep-rooted commitment to fairness and human rights.

As a graduate of Osgoode Hall Law School and a former counsel at the Department of Justice, Courtney gained unparalleled insight into Canada's legal system—before boldly stepping outside it to represent those most affected by systemic discrimination. His work today includes leading one of the most significant civil rights cases in Canadian history: a landmark class action representing Black public servants facing workplace racism.

Courtney is not only a legal strategist but a visionary speaker and advisor who has shaped

some of Canada's most inclusive initiatives—from Toronto's Equity and Diversity Procurement Policy to the Pan Am Games' diversity efforts. He believes that Canada has the potential to be a global beacon of multiculturalism—and through his advocacy, he's helping us realize that promise.

Dapo Bankole

President, Mopheth Systems Corp.

SUB-THEME:
**THE INSIDE JOB: THE PRIVATE VICTORY
THAT POWERS PUBLIC IMPACT**

A tech-savvy visionary with a poet's heart, Dapo builds platforms that move people forward. From Mentorfy to MentorWorld to CranePortal, he's turning mentorship, integration, and experiential learning into scalable digital ecosystems that empower immigrants, professionals, and communities across Canada. Dapo Bankole is the President of Mopheth Systems Corp., an immigrant-owned technology company headquartered in Calgary, Alberta. With 24+ years in tech and a doctorate in progress, Dapo fuses research, strategy, and storytelling into leadership that inspires.

Drawing from his own challenges of integrating into Canada, he transformed adversity into a mission for change—promoting immigrant life education and helping newcomers navigate the complexities of building successful careers. He's the founder of Mopheth Systems Corp., a boardroom thought leader, and the voice behind The Immigrant Life Podcast—heard in over 100 Canadian cities and 112 countries.

Dapo is a recipient of the *CNP Power of Inclusion Community Leader's Award* and the *Royal Roads University Alumni Community Changemaker Achievement Award*. He has been featured in prominent national and international media networks such as [CBC](#), [Business Insider](#), [TEDx](#), [The Walrus](#), [Canadian Immigrant](#), [ChatterthatMatters](#) and [New Canadians](#).



He currently serves on the Strategic Planning committee and is Chair of the Risk Management committee at Momentum Community Economic Development Society. Dapo is a 2013 alumnus of Windmill Microlending, joined the Windmill Board in February 2021 and is a current member of the Client Success and Growth Committee. He has served on the boards of the Project Management Institute (PMI) Nigeria as Vice-President of Administration and Communication, and Heritage Christian Academy (HCA) Calgary as Technology Chair.

Dapo holds a Master of Arts in Leadership from Royal Roads University, where his leadership excellence earned him the prestigious *Royal Roads University Founders' Award* in 2018. As a current doctoral student at the same institution, he was honored with the *Doctoral Entrance Award* in 2024. He lives in the beautiful, energetic, and Blue-Sky city of Calgary with his wife Buki and three wonderful boys.

Mr. **Mario** Zenteno

Director, **RolPlay** AI

SUB-THEME:

**LEADING THROUGH COMPLEXITY: INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES
FOR ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP**

Mario Zenteno is a visionary entrepreneur and immigrant tech founder dedicated to transforming professional growth through artificial intelligence. Originally from Mexico and now based in Toronto, he leads **RolPlay** AI, an innovative platform that enhances communication, sales, and leadership skills through AI-powered roleplay simulations and personalized feedback.

With a background in industrial engineering and over two decades of experience in North and Latin America, Mario has a proven track record of launching impactful solutions that address cultural and linguistic challenges in business. His journey as an immigrant entrepreneur has been marked by resilience and a strong belief in people's potential.



Today, **RolPlay** AI empowers companies across the Americas to train more effectively by integrating AI, emotional intelligence, and human connection. Mario is passionate about helping professionals from diverse backgrounds thrive in multicultural environments and values the creativity that immigrant entrepreneurs bring to Canada's innovation economy.

Phylomène Zangio

Founder, New Brunswick Provincial
Council of People of African Descent

SUB-THEME:

**FROM MARGINS TO MOVEMENTS: THE POWER OF VOICE
AND ADVOCACY**

Phylomène Zangio is a visionary leader, bridge-builder, and tireless advocate for human rights who has transformed New Brunswick's social, political, and cultural landscape for more than three decades. Originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, she has lived in New Brunswick since the late 1980s, blending resilience, academic excellence, and activism to advance justice and inclusion.



A graduate of Université de Moncton with degrees in Business Administration and Information Technology, Phylomène has founded and shaped cornerstone organizations. She established the New Brunswick Provincial Council of People of African Descent (CPPAANB), co-chaired the New Brunswick Women's Council, and helped found both the Francophone Ethnocultural Women's Collective and CAFI, supporting immigrant and minority women. Her motion recognizing the contributions of Black Acadians, introduced at the 2014 Convention of Acadie, culminated in official recognition at the 2019 World Acadian Congress.

As Chair of the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission, she spearheaded initiatives to combat systemic racism, promote municipal inclusion, and strengthen intersectional protections. In 2023, her leadership secured the unanimous adoption of a provincial motion recognizing the International Decade for People of African Descent.

Internationally, Phylomène has worked with the United Nations, contributing to CERD, CEDAW, and the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent. She has spoken at global forums in Geneva and New York, advocating for racial minorities and immigrant rights, while championing data-driven equity measures.

Her intergenerational leadership extends to education, where she helped revise Francophone Social Studies curricula to include Black and Indigenous histories. Recognized with multiple awards—including the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal, Canada's Top 100 Black Women, and the Top 25 Immigrants in the Maritimes—Phylomène remains a trailblazer. She is the first Black woman to chair the province's Human Rights Commission and continues to forge enduring pathways for justice, equity, and intercultural dialogue.

Michelle Christmann

Education Manager, Ontario Co-operative
Association

SUB-THEME:
**EDUCATION FOR EQUITY: VALUES
OF GROWTH & CHANCE**

Michelle Christmann is the Education Manager at the Ontario Co-operative Association, with over 13 years of experience in the co-operative and credit union sector. She has held roles such as Community Relations Manager at a credit union in Eastern Ontario where she was honoured with the Ontario Co-operative Association's Co-operative Spirit Award, and Coordinator at Gay Lea Foods Co-operative's Dairy Museum and Co-operative Education Centre, where she focused on youth education and worked closely with the Co-operative Young Leaders program.

Michelle has introduced thousands of high school students to the co-operative business model and regularly develops and delivers co-operative education, training, and awareness sessions to



students, the public, and co-op staff, directors, and members. Her passion for co-operative values also extends to writing, she is the co-author of several children's books set in the fictional town of "Co-operNation," which explore themes of community, collaboration, and shared success.

Pauline Danquah

Inspirational Speaker | Social Policy Officer |
Wedding Planner

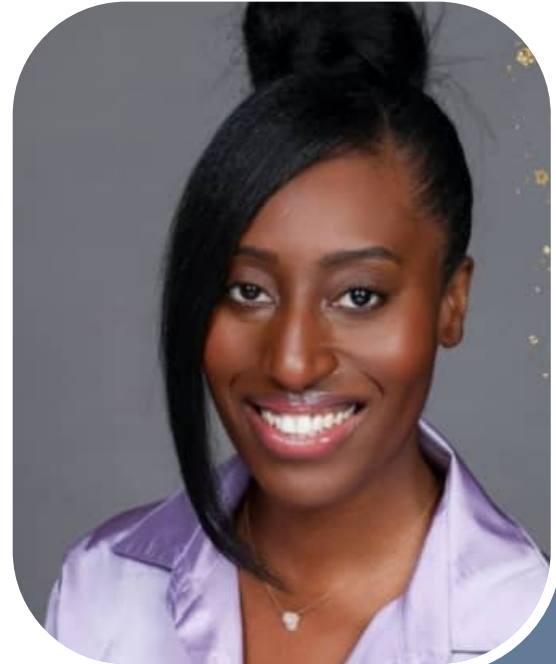
SUB-THEME:

**OWNING THE MIC: YOUTH LEADERSHIP, IDENTITY
& IMPACT IN A CHANGING WORLD**

Pauline Danquah is a passionate advocate for social justice, human rights, and the empowerment of marginalized communities. Of Ghanaian descent and born and raised in Canada, she is deeply committed to uplifting others and driving meaningful change.

Originally from Brampton, ON, Pauline made history at Algoma University (AU) as one of the first students to complete a double major in Law & Justice and Political Science, and as the first Black female President of the Algoma University Students' Union at the Sault Ste. Marie campus. She is also the founder of AU's first-ever Black Graduation. An initiative that celebrates the achievements of Black students. It was created to amplify Black voices, brilliance, and stories in their full, unapologetic truth. This 2025, marks its seventh year in existence and this milestone represents a legacy she strives to preserve for generations of Black students to come.

Pauline currently serves as a Social Policy Officer in the Evaluation Branch at Indigenous Services Canada, where she contributes to improving federal services for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities. Her work centers on advancing equity and self-



determination for Indigenous populations.

Outside her professional role, Pauline is a dynamic public speaker, dedicated to Black excellence, anti-racism, equity, and inclusive education. She frequently speaks on faith, resilience, and equity, encouraging others to overcome adversity and create inclusive spaces. She is also a co-author for the book *Pursued by Purpose*, an Amazon #1 bestseller in Christian Theism, and looks forward to publishing her own book in the future.

In her free time, Pauline leads a multifaceted life as a wedding planner, church youth leader, and music enthusiast; singing in a professional choir and playing the clarinet. With every endeavor, she remains rooted in her mission: *to uplift, educate, and inspire future generations through faith, purpose, and community empowerment.*

Diksha Pal Narayan

Founder, *South Asian Mommies of Milton*

SUB-THEME:

**VOICES THAT BRIDGE WORLDS: STORYTELLING
AS A TOOL FOR CULTURAL CONNECTION**

Diksha Pal Narayan is a Canadian writer, arts advocate, and community leader whose work bridges cultures, generations, and creative mediums. A former journalist and television producer, Diksha brings over two decades of experience in storytelling, communication, and public engagement to her work in community-building and the arts.

She is the founder of *South Asian Mommies of Milton (SAMM)*, a grassroots initiative that has empowered **over 45 visual artists** and **more than 100 performing artists** by creating space for cultural expression, collaboration, and public recognition. Under her leadership, SAMM has become a catalyst for inclusion and creativity in the local arts ecosystem.

As Program Coordinator at *Arts Milton*, Diksha curates programming that reflects the region's growing cultural diversity. She has served on numerous arts and cultural boards, bringing her voice and vision to local and regional decision-making tables.



Diksha is also a published children's author whose books reflect the experiences, imagination, and challenges of kids growing up in immigrant households. Her work contributes to a more inclusive Canadian literary landscape, offering stories that resonate with young readers from diverse backgrounds.

Across her career—in media, literature, and community service—Diksha's mission has remained consistent: to amplify marginalized voices, build bridges across difference, and create lasting impact through the power of storytelling and representation.

Sisi Akhigbe

DEIA Manager, Girl Guides of Canada

SUB-THEME:

**FROM ACCESS TO ACTION: REDESIGNING ECONOMIC
SYSTEMS THAT WORK FOR EVERYONE**

Sisi Akhigbe is a dynamic Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) leader with over a decade of experience driving equity-focused initiatives across the public, nonprofit, and healthcare sectors in both Canada and the United States. She currently serves as the DEIA Manager at Girl Guides of Canada, where she leads the organization's national DEIA strategy and drives systems-level transformation rooted in belonging, intersectionality, and organizational accountability.

With a background in law and a strong foundation in social services and project management, Sisi specializes in designing and implementing enterprise-wide DEIA programs that are bold, measurable, and sustainable. She has held leadership roles in child welfare, developmental services, and community health, advancing accessibility, inclusive hiring, and anti-racism practices across diverse teams and complex institutions.

Sisi holds a Bachelor of Arts in Law (Honours) from Carleton University and is known for her



ability to blend strategic thinking with cultural humility and lived experience. Her leadership style is grounded in collaboration, empathy, strategy, and a deep commitment to equity and justice.

Beyond her professional work, Sisi is a faith-driven creative, praise and worship leader, and advocate for healing-centered spaces. She is passionate about empowering individuals to lead authentically and equipping organizations to embed inclusion into their core values, operations, and culture.

Whether she's facilitating courageous conversations or building out national frameworks, Sisi leads with vision, integrity, and purpose.

Carlos Paz-Soldan

Founder, Techmien Corp

SUB-THEME:

**TECH FOR GOOD: BUILDING INCLUSIVE INNOVATION
THAT SERVES EVERYONE**

Carlos Paz-Soldan is an IT professional and entrepreneur originally from Lima, Perú. Over the course of his career, he has collaborated with organizations of all sizes across South America, Africa, and North America.

He holds a degree in Industrial & Systems Engineering from the Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería in Lima and an MBA from the University of Toronto. In 1984, shortly after completing his MBA, he founded Tenet Computer Group Inc., a Toronto-based IT solutions provider with offices in Ontario, Québec, and West Africa.

In 2016, after a successful exit from Tenet, Carlos retained the company's software division to establish Techmien Corp. — a venture focused on building AI-enhanced enterprise workflow solutions for governments and corporations.

Beyond his professional endeavors, Carlos is deeply engaged in community service. He serves as a Director of the Alma Foundation, which



supports education in remote areas of Perú and Bolivia, and as Director and President Emeritus of Hispanotech.ca, an association aiding the integration of immigrant professionals in Canada. He is also the founder and President of Canada Welcome Hub, which provides shared services to professional immigrant networks. Additionally, Carlos has volunteered on Technology and Innovation Advisory Boards for both corporations and colleges across Ontario.

Dr. Yetunde Banjo

Executive Pastor at King's Court, RCCG, Brampton

SUB-THEME:

**FROM TRIALS TO TRIUMPH: AFRICAN IMMIGRANT WOMEN
REDEFINING BLACK WOMANHOOD**

Yetunde Banjo is a mother, mentor, and coach. For over two decades, she has served as Executive Pastor at King's Court, RCCG, Brampton; coaching and mentoring women and young ladies, counselling couples and families as well as coordinating community events.

She created and hosted *Princess Talk* for 11 years; a weekly program aired on Joy Radio (formerly Joy1250) with the purpose of inspiring and empowering women to embrace their uniqueness and walk in their God-given purpose. She is the Editor in Chief and publisher of a quarterly women's magazine - *The Princess* which aims to inspire, empower, and celebrate women. She is the convener of the annual **Princess Conference** for women and **Esteemed by God Girl Conference** for girls from ages 10 – 18. She also leads an annual 30-day prayer event for mothers to intercede for their children called, **Take 30 for 30 for Your Child**.



Yetunde recently completed a PhD in Social Justice Education with a collaboration in Workplace Learning and Social Change at the University of Toronto (Ontario Institute of Studies in Education). She is passionate about women's issues and women fulfilling their God-given potential. She speaks at women's conferences and events.

She is married and a mother of all boys. Her hobbies are reading, writing, and watching action movies with her sons.

Dienye Meshileya

Certified Human Resources Leader

MODERATOR

Tamunodienye (Dienye) Meshileya is a certified Human Resources Leader with about 20 years' experience across industries such as Oil and Gas, Engineering, Manufacturing, Technology, Mining, and Non-profit sectors. Throughout her career, she has been instrumental in fostering positive employee relations, enhancing talent management practices, and driving initiatives that strengthen workplace culture and performance. She has a holistic approach to HR that balances operational excellence with employee well-being and is known for her adaptive and strong business acumen, which is instrumental in her building partnerships across business units, solving complex HR challenges and delivering results that align with broader business goals.

As a proud Nigerian, who immigrated to Canada in 2016, Dienye is deeply committed to both professional excellence and community service. As an active community volunteer, she has been recognized for her ongoing support and empowering of children, youth, women and families, earning multiple commendations from Members of Parliament, receiving the Ontario Volunteer Service Award for her contributions, and CAP & CNP's Community Leadership Award. Whether through organizing community outreach programs or supporting initiatives aimed at



diversity, equity, and inclusion, Dienye has continuously demonstrated a passion for making a difference and fostering positive change in the community.

Beyond her professional and community work, Dienye is known for her infectious sense of joy and her love for capturing life's moments – often found laughing out loud and taking pictures to preserve memories. This unique blend of passion and professionalism has made her a standout leader both in the workplace and in the community.

Dienye's leadership philosophy revolves around creating inclusive, engaged environments where people and organizations can thrive, and her continued commitment to making a meaningful difference and community impact wherever she goes.

Citlalli Rios

President, Hispanotech

SUB-THEME: **TURNING POINTS & TRUTH-TELLING: MOMENTS THAT MAKE LEADERS**

Citlalli is a Mexican-Canadian, trilingual professional in social innovation, business strategy and product management. She is passionate about diversity, equity, women empowerment, and sustainability. In her current role, Citlalli is promoting digital transformation for businesses in Ontario through innovation and collaboration. In addition, she loves networking, mentoring, and supporting the immigrant community in Canada



through Hispanotech as President, and a few other associations.

Adejisola Atiba

Founder and President, **Council of Nigerian Professionals (CNP)**
and the **Council of African Professionals (CAP)**

SUB-THEME: **TURNING POINTS & TRUTH-TELLING: MOMENTS
THAT MAKE LEADERS**

Adejisola Atiba (Lady ABHA) is a purpose-driven trailblazer whose life's work embodies the perfect intersection of professional excellence, cultural advocacy, and community transformation. With over 32 years in the banking industry—including 19 years in various roles and leadership at one of Canada's top 5 banks—she rose through the ranks with grace, grit, and a tireless commitment to empowering others. Her legacy in finance is matched only by her passion for uplifting Black and immigrant communities across Canada.

Adejisola is the Founder and President of the **Council of Nigerian Professionals (CNP)** and the **Council of African Professionals (CAP)**—community-led organizations dedicated to mentorship, policy dialogue,



youth empowerment, and cultural celebration. Under her leadership, programs such as the *Power of Inclusion* have become national platforms for equity and excellence.

She served as the **President of the Rotary Club of Milton (2023–2024)**, leading with service above self, and continues to mentor young people through Junior Achievement, Knights Table, and countless grassroots initiatives.

Efuange Khumbah

Senior Environmental Engineer

SUB-THEME: **TURNING POINTS & TRUTH-TELLING: MOMENTS THAT MAKE LEADERS**

Efuange Khumbah is a committed community leader, seasoned engineer, and dedicated mentor. Since 2009, he has held executive board roles with various organizations across Canada, contributing to civic engagement and cultural advancement.

He founded Camer SC, a soccer initiative for people of diverse backgrounds to share experiences and build connection.

As a Senior Environmental Engineer, Efuange pairs professional excellence with purpose. He volunteers as a mentor to aspiring Black engineers across North America.

He currently serves on the boards of both the Council of African Professionals and the African Heritage Centre, working to unite and empower people of African heritage through celebration,



community, and career development.

A proud father of three, Efuange's vision is rooted in equity, representation, and the belief that with encouragement and opportunity, every child can rise to meet their potential, especially in fields like science and engineering where visibility still matters.

Derrick Amo Anim

Entrepreneurship Relationship Manager
at the Federation of African Canadian Economics

SUB-THHEME: **TURNING POINTS & TRUTH-TELLING: MOMENTS THAT MAKE LEADERS**

Derrick Amo Anim is a Chartered Banker and inclusive finance leader committed to economic empowerment and systemic change. Currently serving as the Entrepreneurship Relationship Manager at the Federation of African Canadian Economics (FACE), Derrick supports Black-owned businesses across Canada through strategic advisory, access to capital, and tailored financial coaching—driving FACE's mission to build sustainable generational wealth in the Black community.

Derrick's leadership journey began in Ghana, where he became the youngest Chartered Banker in 2009 and started his career in transformative roles in credit risk management and post-merger integration in the Ghana's banking sector, rising to lead Credit Origination and Monitoring at Consolidated Bank Ghana before relocating to Canada.

His career has been shaped by pivotal moments of courage and transition—leaving familiarity behind to serve a broader mission of equity and inclusion. At FACE, Derrick leverages both lived experience and technical expertise to advocate for fair access to capital, challenging traditional financial frameworks to center underserved voices.

He currently serves as the VP, Finance, for Council of Nigerian Professionals, now Council of African



Professionals, a hub to empower professionals, youth, entrepreneurs and families of African descent, and he leads the People's Experience Directorate of Transforming Life Center, a faith based ministry with a vision of transforming lives and raising leaders.

He is the founder and host of Wealth Hacks 360, a movement established to fuel growing of a new generation of wealth builders and changemakers.

Derrick's approach to leadership is grounded in authenticity, vulnerability, and impact. He believes that inner transformation precedes outer change and that true leadership emerges when individuals embrace their turning points with clarity and purpose.

As a speaker, Derrick shares his story of resilience and redefinition to inspire others to lead with intention—bridging finance, equity, and lived experience to empower communities and reshape systems from within.

Somadina Muojeke

Experienced emcee

MODERATOR

Somadina Muojeke is a passionate community builder with a deep interest in history and the evolution of society. He is a seasoned professional in the technology and finance industries, with broad experience spanning software development, product management, research, and customer support. Beyond his professional work, Somadina has held leadership roles in various community organizations, where he has driven initiatives focused on engagement,



empowerment, and development. He is also an experienced emcee, regularly hosting events such as conferences, weddings, birthdays, festivals, and other social gatherings.

Immanuel Okoroafor

Entrepreneur | Aspiring Lawyer

SUB-THEME: **ROOTED & RISING: YOUTH VOICES SHAPING
TOMORROW'S CANADA**

Immanuel A. Okoroafor is an International Law Graduate with academic training in Canada and the UK, specializing in litigation support, legal research, and case management. He currently serves as a Law Clerk at the Law Office of Olayinka Ekenkwo and as Business Development Manager with the Council of Nigerian Professionals, where he drives community engagement, events, and organizational growth. His past experiences include legal research and document drafting with OgaTawa Inc. and client-focused support at Esther Abraham Law Office.

Immanuel holds an LLB from the University of Dundee and a BA (Honours) in Law & Justice



and Political Science from Algoma University. Adept at research, document drafting, and problem-solving, he is committed to advancing legal practice and community development. His creative portfolio demonstrates a strong balance between analytical precision and innovative thinking, positioning him as a rising professional in law, governance, and policy.

Jasmine Uboma

Founder, Beyond Math Foundation

SUB-THEME: **ROOTED & RISING: YOUTH VOICES SHAPING TOMORROW'S CANADA**

Jasmine Uboma is a recent Honours Statistics graduate from Western University and will be pursuing her master's degree at Columbia University in New York City. She is the founder of the Beyond Math Foundation, where she authored analytical math books and successfully raised over \$15,000 through grants and crowdfunding, establishing partnerships with organizations such as WagJag and the Government of Canada.

Jasmine has also gained industry experience as a Finance Data Analytics Intern at Bell Canada, where she developed data-driven solutions to support business decisions. Her work and advocacy in education and STEM



have earned her recognition, including the Actuarial Foundation of Canada's Equality of Opportunity Scholarship and the Youth Change Leader Award. She remains committed to driving positive change in education and empowering future generations through mathematics and analytics

Samira Ewongkeng

Leader within her school's Student Government and SLICE

SUB-THEME: **ROOTED & RISING: YOUTH VOICES SHAPING TOMORROW'S CANADA**

Samira Ewongkeng is a Grade 12 student based in Toronto, known for her passion for leadership, community impact, and youth empowerment. She currently serves as a leader within her school's Student Government and SLICE (Student Leadership in Catholic Education), where she leads with empathy and intention to foster a more connected and inclusive school environment.

Since 2022, Samira has taken on over 25 volunteer roles across the Greater Toronto Area, contributing more than 100 hours to events, cultural programs, and youth-focused initiatives. Her diverse experiences include serving as a STEM program facilitator, children's mentor, event planner, tour guide, MC, and sports coach—roles she approaches with energy, compassion, and a deep commitment to service.

Her volunteer journey began with the **Council of Nigerian Professionals**, where she supported major events as an usher,



receptionist, and food assistant.

Samira is deeply committed to creating safe, welcoming spaces where all individuals feel seen and supported. Whether leading school programs, mentoring children with complex needs, or assisting at community centres and soup kitchens, she shows up with integrity, responsibility, and heart.

Looking ahead, Samira plans to pursue a dual path in **business and computer science**, with the goal of building systems and initiatives that uplift underrepresented communities and drive lasting change. For her, service isn't just an activity—it's a core part of her identity.

Naomi Ogunjobi

Aspiring lawyer

SUB-THEME: **ROOTED & RISING: YOUTH VOICES SHAPING
TOMORROW'S CANADA**

Naomi Ogunjobi is a passionate advocate, aspiring lawyer, and inspiring voice in youth leadership and social change. Named a **2023 You Go Girl Award** recipient, she has demonstrated her commitment to empowering her peers and advocating for inclusive progress. Known as a **Fierce Advocate** and **Black Youth Leader**, Naomi excels in public speaking, using her platform to elevate critical conversations about equity and representation.

Although early in her journey, Naomi's



leadership and activism have already marked her as a remarkable change-maker. With aspirations to enter the legal profession, she continues to harness her energy, empathy, and drive to foster justice and amplify underrepresented voices—proving that age is no barrier to impact.

POWER OF INCLUSION

AWARD

CATEGORIES

- YOUTH LEADERSHIP
- VOLUNTEER
- ENTREPRENEUR
- COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP
- LUMINARY ARTIST AND MEDIA
- HARRIET THORNHILL LEADERSHIP
- PUBLIC LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE
- CATALYST

POWER OF INCLUSION

POI25 AWARD

TYPES AND RECIPIENTS

Youth Leadership

- Oreofe Oluwa Dimeji
- Sophia Philbert
- Charlie Ochu
- Lilainie Adjei-Addo

Volunteer

- Tinu Akhere
- Sunita Mandi
- Samira Ewongkeng
- Olusegun Stephen Akinfemi

Entrepreneur

- Mercy Adeyanju
- Maxine Willocks
- Kim Leacock Ambrose
- Charles Adeniji
- Chance Faida
- Ms. Tomilola Ogundipe
- Rafiat Ayobami Sabiu - Inside Lagos Kitchen
- Jane Ekeh

Community Leadership

- Shruti Desai
- Dr. Olufemi Adegun
- Nene Judy Akintan
- Nekpen Obasogie
- Dr. Anyanwu Reginald
- Diksha Pal Narayan
- Debra M Wright
- Ashmeed Khan
- Christine Eruokwu

- Peace Udoka Anyira
- Ms. Elizabeth Dami Omosebi-Falana
- Pastor Adebola Banjo
- Esther Enyolu
- Ogechukwu Okolo

Luminary Artist and Media

- Ukela Prince
- Titi Kuti
- Hailey Verrall
- Esther Ijewere
- Maurice Imadu

Harriet Thornhill Leadership

- Raliat Owolabi
- Pauline Danquah
- Halima Ngasa
- Elvira Sánchez de Malicki
- Dr Yetunde Banjo
- Alma Arzate
- Tunde Bakare

Public Leadership Excellence

- Ayo Owodunni
- Prof. Akolisa Ufodike.

Catalyst

- King Nana Yaw Osam
- Mayor Patrick Brown
- Phylomene Zangio
- Patricia Bebia

The Journey Within,
The Impact Beyond

POI 5.0

Youth Leadership Award

Celebrating the Power, Passion, and Promise of Young Changemakers

The POI Youth Leadership Award honours a young individual (aged 16–30) who is boldly shaping the future through advocacy, innovation, or community service. This emerging leader brings vision, energy, and authenticity to every space they enter—proving that age is no barrier to impact.

Whether speaking truth to power, launching social initiatives, or inspiring peers, the recipient of this award demonstrates the bold promise of tomorrow's leadership—rooted in identity, purpose, and courage.

“Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person.”

— **Mother Teresa**

A powerful call to young changemakers to take initiative and lead from wherever they stand.

OreofeOluwa Dimeji

Young Leader in Service

OreofeOluwa Abraham Dimeji is a recent graduate of Craig Kielburger Secondary School and a remarkable young leader whose heart for service sets him apart. A proud member of the Milton community, OreofeOluwa has consistently demonstrated a deep commitment to giving back — embodying the spirit of servant leadership from an early age.

Whether volunteering with the Rotary Club of Milton, the Council of African Professionals (formerly the Council of Nigerian Professionals), or the African Caribbean Council of Halton, OreofeOluwa brings dedication, humility, and excellence to everything he does. His volunteerism spans diverse areas — from helping at unhoused shelters and cleaning tables at the Knights Table, to supporting Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY) walks and leading behind-the-scenes tech support for community events.

He is known for stepping up whenever needed — managing contacts, creating presentation



slides, preparing the national anthem, and reading land acknowledgements. This commitment is more than a personal choice — it's a family tradition of service, which OreofeOluwa proudly carries forward.

As he prepares to pursue a degree in Computer Science at university, his future shines bright — fueled by a foundation of compassion, responsibility, and impact.

“Service is not just what I do — it's who I am.”

Sophia Philbert

Student Trustee

Sophia Philbert is a determined and forward-thinking student leader passionate about advocacy, inclusion, and student empowerment. In her most recent role as North Halton Student Trustee for the Halton Catholic District School Board during the 2024 to 2025 school year, she served as the voice of over 36,000 students at the board level, contributing to important policy discussions and ensuring student perspectives were involved in Board decision-making. Known as being an empathetic and proactive leader, Sophia works to create environments where every student's voice is heard and valued. She has enthusiastically embraced her role as Student Trustee in both her school and beyond, utilizing her various experiences and skills to create meaningful change in her community. Through positions such as Senior Girls Volleyball Team Captain, St. Francis Xavier CSS DECA Chapter President, Black Student Union Member, 2x DECA International Competitor and Provincial Champion, Volunteer Soccer Coach, and 4-year HCDSB Student Senator, Sophia understands that



leadership, especially for students, is never one size fits all. She believes that as students, voices are powerful vehicles of change and recognizes the privileges of being in a leadership position that works to bring about both meaningful changes and valuable student input. Above all, Sophia is passionate about youth making a difference — by empowering others, championing for change, and leading with values of respect, compassion, and courage.

Charlie Ochu

2024-25 Student Trustee of the
Halton District School Board

Charlie Ochu is a Grade 12 student currently attending Oakville Trafalgar High School. His passions include science, learning, and leadership. From a young age, Charlie demonstrated a strong interest in leadership, which led to his nomination as his elementary school's Valedictorian and recipient of the Principal's Award for Student Leadership.

In high school, Charlie maintained his commitment to improving the educational environment for his peers and discovered that one of the most effective ways to make a positive impact was through the role of a Student Trustee. Initially hesitant when he learned about the position, Charlie pushed past his doubts, completed the application process, and proudly stepped into the role as the Halton District School Board (HDSB) Student Trustee for the 2024-25 school year.

During his time as a Student Trustee, Charlie has collaborated with charities such as the Halton Learning Foundation, attended conferences with fellow Student Trustees to



discuss advocacy for positive change, co-chaired the HDSB Student Senate, and contributed to several Board-level initiatives.

Among the many lessons Charlie has gained from this experience, the values of perseverance, communication, and time management stand out as key takeaways from his service as the 2024-25 HDSB Student Trustee.

I confirm that my name is Charlie Ochu, and my title could be: 2024-25 Student Trustee of the Halton District School Board.

Lilainie Adjei-Addo

Community Mobilization Worker,
Black Community Access Programs

"Lilainie Adjei-Addo is a 22-year-old recent graduate from McMaster University with a background in Psychology, Neuroscience and Human Behaviour. Originally from Ghana, she moved to Canada in 2019 and has been carving her path ever since, driven by a deep passion for changing lives and creating lasting community impact.

As a proud Black woman, Lilainie brings a unique, intersectional lens to her work in youth engagement, health equity, and social change. Her commitment to uplifting underrepresented voices and building inclusive systems has been the foundation of her journey.

From co-leading mental health peer support programs to coordinating public health initiatives, Lilainie has consistently focused her efforts on supporting the well-being of people especially ones from marginalized



communities. She has worked across sectors including healthcare, higher education, non profits and municipal government, designing and supporting culturally responsive programs, facilitating outreach, and using digital storytelling to amplify diverse experiences."

The Journey Within,
The Impact Beyond

POI 5.0

Volunteer Award

Recognizing Selfless Service That Uplifts Communities

The POI Volunteer Award celebrates an individual whose dedication to service exemplifies compassion, consistency, and community spirit. Through generous contributions of time, skill, and heart, they have made a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

Whether organizing, mentoring, or supporting behind the scenes, the recipient of this award reminds us that leadership is often lived quietly, in acts of service that ripple across generations.

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

— **Mahatma Gandhi**

A timeless tribute to the heart of selfless service.

Tinu Akhere

Founder, Raising the Village

Tinuola Abimbola Akhere is a dedicated and registered Social Service Worker with over 25 years of experience serving the public. Her work is deeply rooted in a passion for health and wellness, and the empowerment of women, children, and families. Guided by the belief that “when you save a woman, you save the village,” she founded Raising the Village—a transformative initiative led by a team of professionals committed to uplifting women and families in Brampton and across Canada.

In 2018, Tinuola established Tinu Ark of Mercy, a not-for-profit organization officially incorporated in 2020. Since its inception, the organization has successfully launched impactful projects that continue to positively shape the community.

Alongside her nonprofit work, Tinuola maintains a vital role as a Social Worker with The Salvation Army, where she supports efforts to end homelessness and assists clients dealing with addiction and mental health challenges. Her unwavering commitment to advocacy and social



support drives her ongoing mission to empower marginalized women and families through tailored programs, resources, and community engagement.

Tinuola also serves on the boards of several charitable and nonprofit organizations. She holds a Certificate in Nonprofit Management from Booth University, a Bachelor of Science in Business Management, and a Diploma in Social Service Work.

Sunita Mandi

Assistant Director, Care in a Long Term Care Home

Sunita Mandi: A Life of Resilience, Advocacy, and Compassion

Born in December 1984 in the Southwest Province of Cameroon. My early education in Cameroon laid the foundation for a persistent pursuit of opportunity, despite the cultural and linguistic obstacles that followed my move to France in 2001.

Due to my limited fluency in French, my mother and I made a brave leap to the United States where I earned my high school diploma and began my professional journey in nursing at Florida State University, securing my Practical Nursing License. But mysterious symptoms of fatigue, recurring high fevers, and chronic pain — made holding a steady job difficult. Undeterred, I relocated to Canada in 2009 and was diagnosed with lupus the following year.

After a period of depression, I refused to let lupus define my future. I found strength in advocacy, joining Lupus Ontario and volunteering with one of Canada's largest community agencies. I then became the Program Coordinator for the innovative Supports for Daily Living program in Mississauga. Which led me into supervisory positions across various Community Nursing



Agencies, eventually serving as Assistant Director of Care in a Long Term Care Home. Today, I am a Nursing Supervisor, Diabetic Educator, Gentle Persuasive Approach for Dementia Educator, and Delirium Educator. Beyond my clinical work, I remain an unwavering advocate for those living with lupus — challenging stigma, advancing education, and championing affordability of medications and vaccines. My effort has gathered support from government officials and major pharmaceutical companies, pushing campaigns for a world with impartial access to care and a “Day Without Lupus.”

Samira Ewongkeng

Leader within her school's Student Government and SLICE

Samira Ewongkeng is a Grade 12 student based in Toronto, known for her passion for leadership, community impact, and youth empowerment. She currently serves as a leader within her school's Student Government and SLICE (Student Leadership in Catholic Education), where she leads with empathy and intention to foster a more connected and inclusive school environment.

Since 2022, Samira has taken on over 25 volunteer roles across the Greater Toronto Area, contributing more than 100 hours to events, cultural programs, and youth-focused initiatives. Her diverse experiences include serving as a STEM program facilitator, children's mentor, event planner, tour guide, MC, and sports coach—roles she approaches with energy, compassion, and a deep commitment to service.

Her volunteer journey began with the **Council of Nigerian Professionals**, where she supported major events as an usher, receptionist, and food assistant.

Samira is deeply committed to creating safe,



welcoming spaces where all individuals feel seen and supported. Whether leading school programs, mentoring children with complex needs, or assisting at community centres and soup kitchens, she shows up with integrity, responsibility, and heart.

Looking ahead, Samira plans to pursue a dual path in **business and computer science**, with the goal of building systems and initiatives that uplift underrepresented communities and drive lasting change. For her, service isn't just an activity—it's a core part of her identity.

Olusegun Stephen Akinfemi

Pmp-Certified Project Manager

Olusegun Stephen Akinfemi is a dynamic Strategic Operations Leader with nearly two decades of experience driving innovation, optimizing operations, and leading digital transformation across the Telecom and IT industries. Currently at TELUS, he leads initiatives in IT modernization, product and project management, and process optimization—aligning operations with strategic goals. His expertise spans cloud technologies, AI integration, and telecom infrastructure, placing him at the forefront of scalable growth and automation.

A PMP-certified project manager for over 14 years, Olusegun holds a B.Sc. and an MBA, complemented by executive education from Harvard Business School Online and the University of Calgary's Haskayne School of Business. He continually pursues learning, earning certifications in Business Analytics, Disruptive Strategy, and Ethical Hacking, among others.

Having led cross-functional teams across Africa, Europe, and North America, Olusegun fosters innovation through data-driven decisions and mission-oriented leadership. He is passionate about mentoring and empowering diverse talent, particularly within immigrant communities



through volunteer work.

Known for his integrity, technical acumen, and collaborative mindset, he has been instrumental in delivering cutting-edge telecom solutions including SIP, PWN, SD-WAN, automation, and cloud transformation. His fluency in project lifecycle tools and commitment to leveraging technology for realworld challenges continue to set him apart.

Whether implementing complex infrastructure or mentoring future professionals, Olusegun remains committed to creating meaningful, lasting impact

The Journey Within,
The Impact Beyond

POI 5.0

Entrepreneur Award

Honoring Innovation, Resilience, and Community Impact

The POI Entrepreneur Award recognizes a bold and visionary business leader whose enterprise reflects both excellence and social impact. This individual has built more than a business—they've built opportunities, empowered others, and elevated their community.

Whether through job creation, mentorship, or industry innovation, the recipient of this award represents the power of entrepreneurship rooted in purpose, inclusion, and legacy.

"Success is not about how much money you make; it's about the difference you make in people's lives."

— **Michelle Obama**

Highlighting purpose-driven entrepreneurship that changes communities.

Mercy Adeyanju

Founder, Creations By Mercy

Creations By Mercy (CBM) began in 2011 as a passion project after founder Mercy Adeyanju volunteered on the Christ Apostolic Church Youth Convention planning team. With a heart for service and a career as a Senior Director in Social Services, Mercy turned her love for helping others into a thriving event planning brand. What started with weddings for friends and family has evolved into a multinational company delivering bespoke, high-end events across Canada, the U.S., and now expanding into Nigeria. CBM specializes in luxury



experiences tailored to elite clientele, offering exceptional service for weddings, milestones, and corporate events—always with ease, elegance, and excellence.

Maxine Willocks

Founder, Omax Skincare & Wellness

Maxine Willocks is a wellness entrepreneur, trauma-informed yoga teacher, and award-winning community leader whose work embodies inclusion, resilience, and cultural healing. With over 25 years of entrepreneurial experience, she rebuilt her life after the Fort McMurray wildfire and turned her journey into a mission to uplift others.

Maxine leads “Aging Gracefully,” a wellness program supporting over 100 seniors weekly in Toronto through chair Kundalini Yoga and Kirtan Kriya meditation, enhancing memory, mobility, and emotional well-being. She founded the North Etobicoke Wellness Collective to expand access to holistic self-care in underserved communities.

As the founder of Omax Skincare & Wellness, Maxine blends Jamaican ancestral healing with clean, magnesium-rich body care. Her



commitment to mentorship includes partnerships with 8+ universities and guiding her Riipen student team to a global first-place win. She's a TEDx speaker and recipient of the “Train of Heroes” award, recognized for her community rebuilding work.

Maxine is devoted to creating spaces where people of all backgrounds—especially women of color—can heal, thrive, and rise.

Kim Leacock Ambrose

Licensed Mutual Funds Agent
and Life Insurance Agent

Kim Leacock-Ambrose is a purpose-driven business leader with a passion for empowering individuals with a special focus on supporting women through education, financial literacy, and community engagement. With a strong foundation in financial services, Kim brings clarity, compassion and confidence to those navigating key life decisions, from long-term wealth growth to estate planning. Her work focuses on helping clients build secure, thriving futures through personalized, value-based financial strategies.

Beyond the office, Kim is deeply rooted in her community. She actively participates in local events, workshops, and outreach initiatives, ensuring financial knowledge is both accessible and inclusive. Known for her ability to connect authentically across diverse cultures and backgrounds, Kim strongly supports initiatives that uplifts under represented voices and create lasting impact.

Whether mentoring women entrepreneurs, participating in community-based events, volunteering at church or leading workshops on financial empowerment, Kim's mission is clear: to make a difference one person, family



and community at a time. Her leadership is guided by purpose, compassion, and an unwavering belief in the power of education to transform lives.

Kim holds professional designations as a licensed Mutual Funds Agent and Life Insurance Agent, and she also serves in volunteer roles such as Church Finance Director and team member for Feeding the Homeless.

Her leadership style is grounded in service, and her impact is seen not just in financial outcomes but in the confidence and hope she helps instill in others.

Charles Adeniji

Founder and CEO, MoCharles Inc

My name is Charles Adeniji, Founder and CEO of MoCharles Inc, a general contracting firm I launched in 2007. What started as a small vision has grown into a respected company known not only for quality craftsmanship but also for integrity, client care, and creating opportunities within the building industry.

With over 15 years of experience, I'm committed to delivering projects that stand the test of time, whether residential or commercial, while building trust and strong relationships with every client. But for me, success goes beyond the structures we create; it's about the positive impact we have on the people and communities we serve.

Giving back is a core part of my journey. I mentor aspiring entrepreneurs, support local job creation, and advocate for diversity and inclusion in the



skilled trades. My faith and cultural roots inspire me to build with purpose and lead with integrity.

I take pride in blending technical expertise with a genuine care for people, creating not just buildings but spaces where communities can thrive. I'm honoured to be nominated for the Power of Inclusion Entrepreneur Award and excited to continue using my work to uplift others and inspire lasting change.

Chance Faida

Founder, Exalt Jewellery

Chance is a strategic program manager and social entrepreneur committed to empowering women and girls through impactful programming and purpose-driven business. She currently leads specialized initiatives at a nonprofit supporting individuals affected by cancer, designing programs that provide meaningful support during life-changing health journeys.

As the founder of Exalt Jewellery, Chance curates pieces that inspire personal storytelling and inner strength. Exalt donates 10% of all proceeds to an organization that supports women and girls rebuilding their lives after trauma—reflecting her deep commitment to lasting social impact.

With a background spanning strategic planning and direct service, Chance brings a rare blend of analytical precision and deep empathy to her work. Whether supporting



over 200 clients through cancer care or building a values-led business, she balances measurable outcomes with a human-centered approach.

Guided by the belief that real empowerment requires both immediate care and long-term systemic change, Chance designs every initiative with people at its core. Her leadership exemplifies how intentional, compassionate strategy can drive sustainable and transformative impact.

Ms. **Tomilola** Ogundipe

CEO, Safari Flavours

My name is Tomilola Ogundipe, and I wear many hats as an entrepreneur, community leader, and connector of people. As the president of The Heritage House-Worship, a registered non-profit organization, I'm dedicated to making a positive impact on my community. I also help people navigate the complex world of insurance as an independent insurance advisor.

My entrepreneurial spirit extends to my two businesses: Posh n Precise, a fashion business where I express my creative side, and my latest venture, Safari Flavours, an African food restaurant that's about to open its doors. I'm passionate about building things, whether it's a business, an organization, or a relationship. I believe that every person has a story to tell, and I love meeting people from all walks of life to hear



their unique perspectives. My diverse interests and experiences are all tied together by a common thread: a love for people and a drive to create, connect, and serve. I'm always looking for new opportunities to learn, grow, and build meaningful connections.

Rafiat Ayobami Sabiu

Founder, Inside Lagos Kitchen

Rafiat Ayobami Sabiu is a highly accomplished chef and culinary entrepreneur with over 20 years of experience, widely respected for her inventive approach to African cuisine and her growing impact in continental culinary arts. Known for her development of patented dishes, she skillfully combines traditional African flavors with global techniques to create innovative menus that resonate with a wide and diverse clientele.

As the creative and operational force behind her restaurant, Rafiat curates culinary experiences that reflect both cultural authenticity and modern sophistication. Her emphasis on fresh, locally sourced ingredients and her commitment to quality have earned her a strong following and recognition in the culinary community.

Rafiat's entrepreneurial vision extends well beyond the kitchen. She brings a strategic mindset to her business, always exploring new ways to elevate the dining experience and expand her brand's reach. Her warm, welcoming presence



enhances the customer experience and builds lasting connections with guests.

Looking ahead, Rafiat plans to expand her restaurant footprint across the province, launch a culinary school focused on African and continental cuisine, and publish a customized cookbook showcasing her signature recipes and food philosophy. Through these endeavors, she aims to inspire future chefs, promote cultural appreciation, and preserve the rich culinary heritage that defines her work.

Jane Ekeh

Trusted and experienced Mortgage Agent

Jane Ekeh is a trusted and experienced Mortgage Agent with a proven track record of helping individuals and families achieve their dream of homeownership. With a solid background in the Canadian financial sector — including years of service with two of the Big 5 Canadian banks — Jane brings deep industry knowledge, integrity, and personalized care to every client interaction. Now working independently with M Mortgageville, Jane offers tailored mortgage solutions that reflect her clients' unique financial goals and life circumstances. Whether you're a first-time homebuyer, looking to refinance, or exploring investment opportunities, Jane is committed to guiding you every step of the way. Her passion lies in turning financial aspirations into



reality — empowering clients with the tools, knowledge, and support needed to make informed decisions and build lasting wealth through real estate.

“Helping you live the life you want — one mortgage at a time.”

Community Leadership Award

Honoring Transformational Leadership That Leaves a Legacy

The POI Leadership Award recognizes an exceptional individual whose leadership journey is marked by vision, integrity, and lasting impact. This individual has influenced systems, empowered communities, and driven meaningful progress through their unwavering commitment to equity and excellence.

Whether through civic leadership, professional service, or community building, the recipient exemplifies what it means to lead with purpose, courage, and a heart for transformation. Their legacy uplifts others and sets a powerful example for inclusive leadership across all sectors.

“The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers.”

— **Ralph Nader**

A reminder that great leaders multiply impact by empowering others.

Shruti Desai

President, The Milton and Brampton
Chapter of The Artists and Artisans
Development Network

Shruti Shah Desai needs no introduction. Her journey is a testament to resilience, passion, and dedication. Moved to Canada in 2005 all by herself with big dreams and hopes and began her IT career at Google. Now a Senior Solution Architect at the City of Hamilton, Shruti balances her professional achievements with significant community involvement. She is deeply engaged in community welfare as the President of the Milton and Brampton chapter of the Artists and Artisans Development Network, where she supports local artists.

Additionally, she teaches cybersecurity at Conestoga College, spearheads her own venture, the Canadian College of Health Business and Arts, and counsels newcomers through the New Commerce Center. She also organizes cultural



events, leads swimming classes and badminton groups, and brings the community together. In short, she is a woman of multiple talents and always ready to lend a helping hand. Shruti's story breaks barriers, nurtures communities, and inspires others through her unwavering commitment to service and self-improvement.

Dr. Olufemi Adegun

President, Canadian Institute of Technology,
Entrepreneurship and Management

Dr Olufemi Adegun is the President of Canadian Institute of Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management (**CITEM**). He is a Business Entrepreneur and a Registered member of United Nations Dept of Economic and Social Affairs Sustainable Dept. He is also the President of African Trade Export and Supermarket Canada (**ATESCA**), Integrated Business Consult, Canada (**IBC**) and Integrpreneur Consult International (**ICI**)

He holds a Ph.D in Strategic Management, a Doctorate in Ministry (**D. Min**) with specialization in Leadership and NGO Management, MSc in Mechanical Engineering and an MBA in Finance & Marketing. He is a Project Management Professional (**PMP**) and a Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt (**LSSMBB**). He runs three NGO's in Ontario Canada namely; Senior Empowerment Assistance Centre (**SEAC**); Youth Empowerment



Assistance Centre (**YEAC**) and Centre For Community Engagement and Integrated Health Services (**CCEIHS**).

He is also the Founder / Pastor of International Christian Ambassadors Ministry, a Campus Based Ministry in Canada and Africa.

Dr Olufemi Adegun has more than 40 years experience in Academics and Industry.

Nene Judy Akintan

Award-winning broker with
The E Team and Oakville Living
With Nene

Nene Judy Akintan is God's unique creation, known for unwavering dedication, integrity, and genuine care for others.

With degrees in Sociology & Anthropology, an MBA in Marketing, and an MSc in Management/Human Resources, she has excelled in banking, entrepreneurship, and real estate for over 25 years.

An award-winning broker with The E Team and Oakville Living With Nene, she delivers exceptional real estate services while mentoring and advocating within her community.

Nene serves on the boards of the Canadian Black Chamber of Commerce, the Black Realtors Association of Canada, and Nigerian Community Halton.

She co-founded the family nonprofit, I AM. I CAN. I WILL, with her children Temi, Tife, and niece Olympia, supporting minority women



and children.

Much of what Nene does was shaped growing up in Sapele, Nigeria, in a family of 12 children with parents who were committed volunteers.

Nene is guided by the principle of Ubuntu—"I am because you are, because we are".

Nene loves to read, travel, and embrace joy.

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Nekpen Obasogie

Founder, Nigerian Canadian Multicultural Centre

Nekpen Obasogie is a distinguished author and the visionary founder and manager of the Nigerian Canadian Multicultural Centre (NCMC) in Toronto, as well as the CEO of NEBO TV. Since 2021, she has written three significant books that shed light on the arrival of Europeans in the Benin Kingdom of West Africa, beginning in the late 15th century. She holds two Bachelor's degrees—one in Law and Society and another in Sociology—as well as a Master's in Social Work from York University. Currently, she is pursuing a Ph.D. at OISE, University of Toronto.

In her inaugural book, Nekpen emphasizes the importance of understanding history, stating, “A proper knowledge of history will, no doubt, help to understand the past and the present, as well as define the future.” Her anti-colonial philosophy ardently advocates for decolonization, restitution, and reparations.

In 2022, she founded the Nigerian Canadian Multicultural Centre, a non-profit organization dedicated to producing cultural programs, including festivals, while providing essential settlement services for newcomers and fostering inclusive initiatives in Canada. That same year, she launched the annual Edo Language Day Worldwide, coordinating this event both globally and in Toronto in partnership with the University



of Toronto.

In 2024, she organized a visit for her committee members to the United Nations in New York, showcasing her commitment to global engagement. Additionally, she established the Queen Idia House Art Gallery in Brampton, aimed at both academic researchers and art enthusiasts. This gallery displays significant Benin bronzes, paintings, artworks, and books that inspire art lovers and scholars alike. Nekpen's unique creativity and steadfast dedication have earned her numerous awards and recognition, solidifying the global impact of her work.

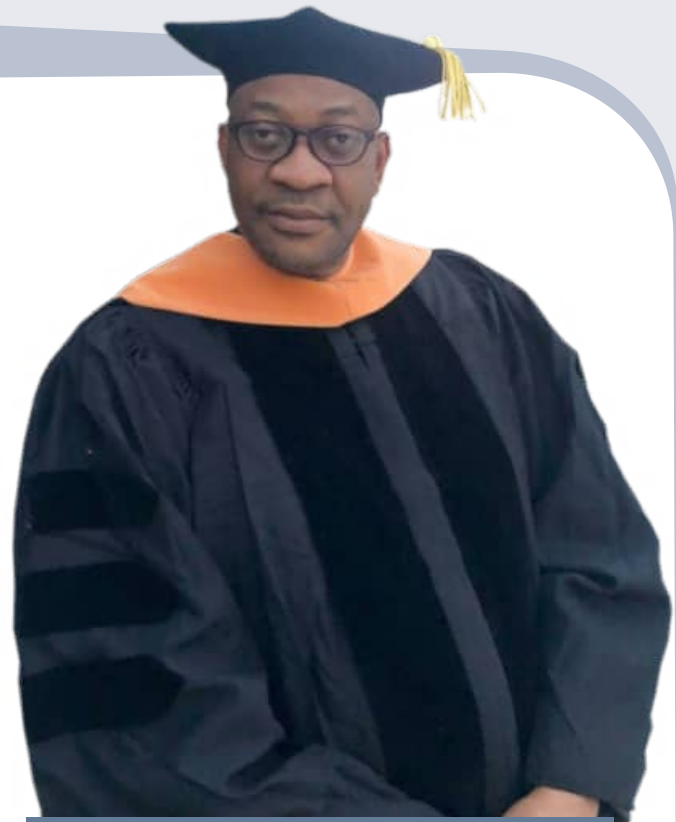
Dr. Anyanwu Reginald

Motivator, Mentor, And Professor

Dr. Reginald C. Anyanwu is a distinguished academic and visionary leader in the field of Occupational Health. Holding a Ph.D. in the discipline, he is an Ontario Joint Health and Safety Certified professional and a recognized World Bank Professor with the African Centre for Oil Field Chemical Research.

A prolific author, Dr. Anyanwu is a royalty holder for 16 academic books, each translated into 8 languages, with over 800,000 copies circulated in bookstores and 3,000 copies sold online. His expertise is sought after internationally, and he is an active member of numerous national and international professional bodies.

His leadership extends beyond academia. Dr. Anyanwu is the President and Team Lead of Canadian Pure Breeds Institutions Inc. and the Founder and Visionary of Saint Martha's College in Vaughan, Ontario, Canada. He is a key organizer and speaker for the upcoming 2nd Canadian Pure Breeds Institutions International Congress and



Expo 2025.

Widely traveled, Dr. Anyanwu is renowned as a motivator, mentor, and professor who creates a profound impact by affirming the uniqueness of everyone he encounters and encouraging the pursuit of new ideas and knowledge.

He attributes all his accomplishments and successes to the blessings and grace of God.

Diksha Pal Narayan

Founder. *South Asian Mommies of Milton*

Diksha Pal Narayan is a Canadian writer, arts advocate, and community leader whose work bridges cultures, generations, and creative mediums. A former journalist and television producer, Diksha brings over two decades of experience in storytelling, communication, and public engagement to her work in community-building and the arts.

She is the founder of *South Asian Mommies of Milton (SAMM)*, a grassroots initiative that has empowered **over 45 visual artists** and **more than 100 performing artists** by creating space for cultural expression, collaboration, and public recognition. Under her leadership, SAMM has become a catalyst for inclusion and creativity in the local arts ecosystem.

As Program Coordinator at *Arts Milton*, Diksha curates programming that reflects the region's growing cultural diversity. She has served on numerous arts and cultural boards, bringing her voice and vision to local and regional decision-making tables.

Diksha is also a published children's author



whose books reflect the experiences, imagination, and challenges of kids growing up in immigrant households. Her work contributes to a more inclusive Canadian literary landscape, offering stories that resonate with young readers from diverse backgrounds.

Across her career—in media, literature, and community service—Diksha's mission has remained consistent: to amplify marginalized voices, build bridges across difference, and create lasting impact through the power of storytelling and representation.

Debra M Wright

Founder, Upward Springs Inc. and
Debra M Wright Coaching & Consulting

Debra M. Wright is a Life Coach, Forgiveness Facilitator, author, and speaker dedicated to helping women heal from trauma, rediscover their identity, and live with purpose. As the founder of Upward Springs Inc. and Debra M Wright Coaching & Consulting, she empowers women to break free from pain, embrace forgiveness, and walk boldly into their God-given destiny. Through retreats, coaching programs, books, and stage productions, Debra uses her voice and lived experience to guide others from heartbreak to healing. Based in Ontario, Canada and deeply rooted in her



Trinidadian heritage, Debra continues to inspire transformation with grace, faith, and authenticity .

Ashmeed Khan

Founder, Men Too Matter

Ashmeed Khan immigrated to Canada from Guyana in 2002 and has lived in Ajax with his family for over two decades. In 2006, he became a local business owner by opening his first printing franchise, eventually acquiring two additional stores in Oshawa and Kingston. These were later merged into a large facility in Pickering, which he owned and operated until selling the business in 2022 after 17 successful years.

Ashmeed has been a long-standing member of the Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade, serving as chair of the Diversity Committee and as an elected director. He was honoured with both the Business Excellence and Business Person of the Year awards. During his second term on the board, he stepped down to run for municipal office and was elected to serve a four-year term as a councillor of Ajax from 2018 to 2022.

Beyond politics and business, Ashmeed has contributed to several community initiatives. He served as an ambassador for the Whitby Chamber of Commerce, an advisor to the Town of Ajax's Recreation and Culture Committee, and participated in the Ajax Community Fund Grants



Task Force. He was also part of a select team that helped establish “The Shoulder Centre” at Lakeridge Health.

Ashmeed has worked with the YMCA and John Howard Society, personally coaching & mentoring challenged individuals including those with criminal records through employment in his print businesses. He now leads the Men Too Matter organization as its founder, CEO, and certified life coach. A father of five and newly minted grandfather, Ashmeed is also the owner of businesses in his homeland of Guyana and internationally. He values family, fitness, and community, and volunteers as a coach at the Ajax Boxing Club.

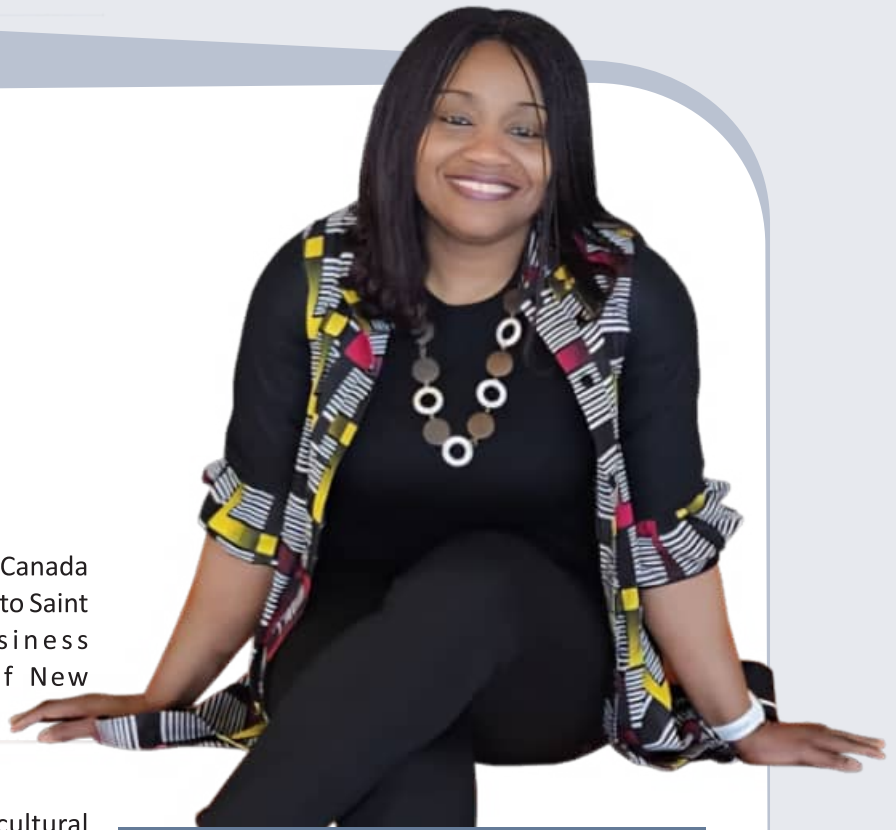
Christine Eruokwu

Co-Founder and Managing Director,
United Colours of Fashion

Christine Eruokwu's journey in Atlantic Canada began over a decade ago when she moved to Saint John to pursue a Master of Business Administration at the University of New Brunswick. Embracing her new home and its opportunities, she founded Kaima Designs in 2017, an African-inspired fashion brand that celebrates vibrant cultural expression while championing education for young girls and empowering women in Africa. The brand reflects her core values of faith, hope, and community care.

As Co-Founder and Managing Director of United Colours of Fashion (UCOF), Christine leads a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering immigrants and visible minority communities through training, mentorship, and exposure in the fashion industry. Her visionary leadership continues to shape UCOF's strategic direction and impact across Atlantic Canada.

Beyond her work with UCOF, Christine wears many hats. She is a leadership coach and mentor to international students through various programs, including UNBSJ MBA Mentorship program, the Hunter Centre for Entrepreneurship & Innovation at the University of Calgary, and a committed board member for two local nonprofits in Saint John.



Christine's dedication to community building and empowerment has earned her several prestigious accolades, including the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal, recognition as one of Atlantic Canada's Most Inspiring Immigrants, and co-winner of the ApplyBoard 2024 International Alumni of Impact award.

She currently resides in Saint John with her family, where she continues to inspire and uplift through her work, leadership, and unwavering commitment to making a difference.

Peace Udoka Anyira

Founder, Global Impact Empowerment Hub

Peace Udoka Anyira is a dedicated advocate for change and empowerment, and her unwavering commitment to the well-being of others has shaped her life's work.

Peace is on a mission to make a positive difference in the world by fostering collaboration and offering community support to all, aiming to address the diverse challenges they encounter.

As Founder of Global Impact Empowerment Hub (Non-profit Organisation), Udopeny Network Limited (Consulting), "Girls Time Out"- (A haven, collaboration space, a support group for women), and Book Club. As well as the President of the Rotary Club of Brampton South. Peace extends her encouragement to people to uplift one another and chase their dreams.

Peace has also made significant contributions to



her community through various endeavors. She is actively engaged in training, coaching, and mentorship programs, assisting individuals in their professional and personal development journeys. Her relentless passion for helping individuals achieve their dreams has earned her the endearing moniker of "**Mother of Nations.**"

Her mission is to create a better world for all!

Ms. **Elizabeth** Dami Omosebi-Falana

Managing Director, DAMAKIN
Incorporation

Elizabeth Dami Omosebi-Falana was born in the mid-1980s to the family of Dr. (Pastor) and Pastor Mrs. Julius Folorunso Omosebi. She is the third child in a vibrant family of eight.

Elizabeth Dami began her early education in Nigeria, attending nursery and primary school before moving to the United Kingdom, where she pursued higher education. She holds a degree in Social Work and furthered her academic journey with a second degree in Business Management. She is currently completing her Master's in Social Work.

Elizabeth Dami is happily married to her supportive husband, Noah Akintunde Falana, and together they are blessed with two wonderful sons in Ottawa, Ontario.

She is the Managing Director of DAMAKIN



Incorporation [ottawa] and the Founder of Immigrant at Large Canada, a nonprofit organization committed to empowering and advocating for immigrants. Her unwavering passion for humanity continues to drive her work in promoting inclusion, integration, and support for newcomers in Canada.

Pastor **Adebola** Banjo

Senior Business and IT Consultant with
the Ontario Government

Adebola Banjo is a distinguished Senior Business and IT Consultant with the Ontario Government. With a focus on Project Management, he holds a PMP certification and a Master's Certificate in Project Management from George Washington University, USA. In addition, he also holds an MBA from IESE Business School in Barcelona.

Adebola's career began in Nigeria as a Software Developer at the Kaduna Refinery, later transitioning to NCR, where he specialized in ATMs and cash registers as a Software Engineer. He later joined Total Oil Company as a Project Manager and IT Manager. Following his migration to Canada, he has held positions at Microsoft, The City of Toronto and currently serves the Ontario Public Service, contributing to numerous natable Provincial projects benefiting Ontarions

Adebola's passion lies in advocating for the Black and African community in Ontario, fighting for their emancipation, racial equality, and promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace. He is the



leader for the Anti-Black Racism Initiative in his ministry and, he is committed to driving positive change. His hobbies include fitness and promoting natural healthy living.

In the future, Adebola aspires to utilize community activism and technology leadership to eradicate racial biases against people of color and foster an environment of equality and inclusivity in the workplace. Vocationally, Adebola is the Pastor of Kings Court, a Parish of RCCG in Brampton, where he supports the Christian community serving people of color.

Esther Enyolu

Advisory Member, Black Health Matters,
Dalla Lama, School of Public Health,
University of Toronto

Esther is a trauma informed care counsellor, a guest lecturer and a trainer on gender-based violence, diversity, equity, inclusion, human rights and social justice. Her work is grounded in an integrated anti-racist/anti-oppression, and feminist analysis, a holistic approach in which a person's lived experience and realities of life are not fragmented and divided. Esther has been working in the human services field for over 30 years. She is a mentor and mother to many. She has a BA (Hons) in Sociology/Anthropology and Women's Studies, Trauma Informed Care Counselling Certification, and an MBA.

Esther is one of the founding members of the Redwood Shelter for Assaulted Women and Children, Toronto, the former past Vice President of the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses (OAITH). She co-authored "Creating Inclusive Spaces for Women; a Feminist, Anti-racist/Anti-oppression Training Manual", for organizations working in the field of gender-based violence. As the VP of OAITH, she and some directors delivered intersectionality of gender-based, anti-racist and anti-oppression training to all OAITH member agencies across Ontario. Esther



is a Provincial Resource Group Member for the Western University Violence Against Women Learning Network; Past Seneca College Social Service Workers, Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee Member, Advisory Member Black Health Matters, Dalla Lama, School of Public Health, University of Toronto, Co-Chair, City of Barrie Anti-Racism Task Force, Advisory Committee Member, Metroland Media, Member Banker Ladies Council, Collective Diaspora Steering Committee Member, and many others. She is a recipient of several professional and Community services awards. She is married to Prof. Evans Enyolu with three adult children.

Ogechukwu Okolo

Advocate for Cultural Inclusion

Ogechukwu Okolo (Oge) is a passionate community builder, cancer survivor, and transformational leader whose work spans borders and generations. Her journey is rooted in compassion and resilience - qualities that shine through her fundraising efforts for cancer research, educational advocacy, and hands-on community support. With a passion for service and empowerment, she has dedicated her life to creating inclusive spaces where women and families can thrive.

Oge is a dedicated advocate for cultural inclusion and the preservation of heritage. Through her leadership and sustained engagement, she successfully advanced the integration of Nigerian languages, Igbo and Yoruba into the local School curriculum. This significant achievement fosters cultural identity, representation, and a sense of belonging for Nigerian diaspora students within the Canadian education system.

Her work is rooted in grassroots advocacy, supporting immigrant families and underserved communities. Oge has initiated and led charity outreaches, providing essential resources to low-income families and newcomers. She is also a



passionate fundraiser, championing initiatives that raise funds for cancer research and patient care - work that holds deep personal meaning as a cancer survivor.

Her impact extends beyond Canada's borders, with outreach efforts supporting vulnerable communities in Nigeria and beyond. As a mother of four, Oge continues to serve with purpose, humility, and a deep sense of responsibility to her community. She continues to be a voice for the voiceless and a bridge-builder across cultures, leaving a legacy of love, impact, and transformative service.

Her leadership is bold, people-focused, and profoundly impactful.

Luminary Artist & Media Award

Honoring Excellence in Storytelling, Culture, and Creative Advocacy

The POI Luminary Artist and Media Award celebrates a creative visionary in media, performance, or the arts whose work challenges narratives, uplifts underrepresented voices, and fosters cultural pride.

Through powerful storytelling—whether on stage, screen, canvas, or digital platforms—the recipient inspires dialogue, bridges communities, and advances inclusion through their artistic influence and social impact.

“If your dreams do not scare you, they are not big enough.”

— **Ellen Johnson Sirleaf**

Inspiring creatives to dream boldly and use their art to challenge and change.

Ukela Prince

Production Manager, Black Community
Canada Television

Ukela Prince is a multifaceted Canada-based Nigerian gospel singer, author, songwriter, recording artist, and pastor. With a passion for spreading the message of hope and redemption, he has collaborated with notable gospel artists such as Samsong and Carlos Morgan. His academic background in English has honed his lyrical prowess, making his music repertoire boast an array of inspiring tracks, including:

Notable Songs

- "I Never See This Kind God"
- "Grace" (feat. Samsong)
- "You Are God (Bigger)" (feat. Papa K & Deola)
- "Uwuma Ejale" (with various versions, including a remix)
- "My Call"
- "Favour"

Ukela Prince's music is widely accessible on various platforms, including:

Music Platforms

- Boomplay: Offers his songs for download and streaming
- Spotify: Boasts a significant following with numerous monthly listeners

Beyond his music, Ukela Prince is a TV talk show host, currently hosting the Brampton Rising Stars



Talent Show. He also serves as the production manager at Black Community Canada Television, further solidifying his influence in the Canadian gospel music scene. As a pastor, Ukela Prince's ministry extends beyond music, touching the lives of many through his spiritual leadership. Through his work, Ukela Prince continues to inspire and uplift the Nigerian-Canadian community and beyond.

Titi Kuti

Special Duties Envoy on Civic Diplomatic Missions

Titi Kuti is a Nigerian-born actor, film producer/director, author, and United Nations Humanitarian Ambassador with over 15 years of professional experience. Renowned in both Nigerian and North American entertainment spheres, he has starred in several major productions including three Netflix Originals: *King of Boys*, *King of Boys: The Return of the King* (as the iconic “Ade Tiger”), and *Anikulapo: Rise of the Spectre* (as “Adigun”). His work also includes popular series like *Flawsome* (DSTV Showmax) and *Realm2* (Amazon Prime). As a producer, Titi's most recent project, *Color of Love*—filmed entirely in Toronto—promotes diversity and cultural acceptance, contributing to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The film is currently touring 12 international festivals across North America and Europe, having won five awards and received multiple nominations. He has earned over 20 awards in the past three years, including a special recognition from the City of Brampton by Mayor Patrick Brown, and a UN peacebuilding honour from MPP David W. Smith of Ontario. Titi currently



serves as a Special Duties Envoy on Civic Diplomatic Missions under the UN-IPGC, championing grassroots engagement and immigrant empowerment across Canada. His humanitarian work includes NGO support in Nigeria, global speaking engagements, and mentorship programs for emerging creatives. With a mission to use film and storytelling to foster peace, promote inclusion, and inspire the next generation, Titi continues to leave an indelible mark—shaping narratives, connecting cultures, and building bridges through media.

Hailey Verrall

Pop Country Artist

Hayley Verrall is a rising pop country artist from Burlington, Ontario. Inspired by legends like Dolly Parton and Shania Twain and modern stars like Miranda Lambert and Gabby Barrett, Hayley blends classic country roots with a fresh, heartfelt sound that's all her own.

With over 450,000 streams and growing recognition in the music scene, Hayley is captivating listeners with her clear voice and emotional songwriting. Her latest single "Dear Dolly" is a touching tribute to her musical hero Dolly Parton, mixing nostalgic country tones with personal storytelling that reflects her journey and growth as an artist.

Hayley's talent has led her to share the stage with Canadian music icons such as Dan Hill and Burton Cummings. She's also a local favorite, performing at major events like the Burlington Sound of Music Festival and Burlington's Largest Ribfest. Her



accomplishments have earned her a spot in the Burlington Performing Arts Centre Hall of Fame 2020 and the 2022 Silver Award for International Female Emerging Artist from the International Singer Songwriters Association.

Known for her warm presence and engaging performances, Hayley brings stories of life and love to the stage with energy and sincerity. Whether you're a longtime country fan or new to the genre, Hayley Verrall is a name to watch.

Esther Ijewere

Host, #GetTalkingWithEsther

Esther Ijewere is a Media Strategist, Social Impact Leader, and the Founder of Women of Rubies; a global platform spotlighting the stories of inspiring women and amplifying their voices. With a dynamic career spanning over a decade, Esther has used the power of storytelling and advocacy to drive inclusion, gender equity, and representation in media.

She is the host of #GetTalkingWithEsther, a digital talk series that explores media trends, personal branding, and societal change. As a columnist for The Guardian Nigeria and the visionary behind the Rubies Collective, she consistently creates platforms that foster visibility for changemakers, particularly underrepresented voices.

Esther's work has earned her numerous recognitions, including Canada's Top 100 Black Women to Watch (2023) and MIPAD Global 100 Under 40.



Through her advocacy, media coaching programs, and public speaking, Esther empowers others to own their narratives and lead with authenticity. She believes in challenging stereotypes, building communities, and using digital media as a force for good.

Her journey is a testament to resilience, service, and visionary leadership traits that continue to shape her impact across Canada, Nigeria, and beyond.

Maurice Imadu

Community Engagement Specialist
with the City of Brampton

Maurice Imadu, widely known as *Mc Morris*, is a Nigerian-Canadian comedian, event consultant, and the **Community Engagement Specialist** with the City of Brampton. His appointment marks a proud milestone, reflecting not only his exceptional talent in the entertainment industry but also his unwavering dedication to community service.

Maurice has built a stellar reputation in both Nigerian and Canadian circles, captivating audiences with his quick wit, relatable humor, and inclusive approach. For years, his annual comedy showcase, *My Hearing*, has drawn diverse crowds, fostering connection through laughter. Beyond the stage, Maurice has consistently invested his time and skills in initiatives that uplift and unite his community, seamlessly blending entertainment with advocacy.

In his current role as Community Engagement Specialist, Maurice brings charisma, cultural insight, and strategic vision to strengthening relationships between Brampton's municipal leadership and its vibrant Nigerian and Afro-Caribbean communities. His work ensures diverse voices are not only heard but actively represented in the city's growth and governance.



Maurice's appointment has been met with resounding praise, with community members celebrating his elevation as a symbol of cultural representation, inclusion, and the power of grassroots leadership. His deep understanding of multicultural dynamics positions him as a bridge-builder, adept at fostering dialogue and unity.

Whether on stage or in the community, Maurice embodies the belief that engagement, humor, and cultural pride can transform relationships and inspire progress. His journey stands as a testament to passion, perseverance, and the limitless possibilities that arise when talent meets purpose.

The Journey Within,
The Impact Beyond

POI 5.0

Harriet Thornhill Leadership Award

Celebrating a Legacy of Excellence, Mentorship, and Empowerment

The POI Harriet Thornhill Leadership Award is named in honor of a trailblazer whose legacy embodies grace, service, and transformative leadership. This prestigious award is presented to an individual whose lifetime of work has empowered others, opened doors, and created enduring impact across communities.

Through mentorship, advocacy, and vision, the recipient exemplifies leadership that is both grounded and generational—leaving a lasting imprint on hearts, institutions, and futures.

“Service is the rent we pay for the privilege of living on this earth.”
— **Shirley Chisholm**

Honoring a legacy of servant leadership and unwavering commitment to uplifting others.

Raliat Owolabi

Researcher, educator, wellness advocate,
and creative storyteller

Raliat Owolabi is a researcher, educator, wellness advocate, and creative storyteller whose work centers Black women's health, lived experience, and systemic access to care. Drawing on her own journey as a caregiver, immigrant, and mother, she founded Styled Soul—a storytelling and wellness platform that celebrates healing, beauty, and community. Raliat is pursuing a PhD in Urban Health, with research examining how immigrant Black women navigate cancer care in Ontario.

Her career encompasses community-based research, policy analysis, teaching in Child and Youth Care, and leading initiatives that amplify



the voices of underrepresented individuals. She is passionate about mentorship, cultural celebration, and supporting Black women and families in their journey toward wellness, visibility, and belonging.

Pauline Danquah

Inspirational Speaker | Social Policy Officer |
Wedding Planner

Pauline Danquah is a passionate advocate for social justice, human rights, and the empowerment of marginalized communities. Of Ghanaian descent and born in Canada, she is deeply committed to uplifting others and driving meaningful change through advocacy, leadership, and faith.

Originally from Brampton, ON, Pauline made history at Algoma University as one of the first students to complete a double major in Law & Justice and Political Science, and as the first Black female President of the Students' Union at the Sault Ste. Marie campus. She is also the visionary founder of Algoma's Black Graduation, an initiative that celebrates Black student excellence and amplifies Black voices. Now in its seventh year, this milestone stands as a powerful legacy of representation and pride; one she strives to preserve for generations of Black students to come. She later earned a Master's degree from Carleton University's Norman Paterson School of International Affairs (NPSIA), specializing in Health, Displacement, and Humanitarian Policy.

Professionally, Pauline serves as a Social Policy Officer in the Evaluation Branch at Indigenous Services Canada. Her work focuses on improving federal services and advancing equity and self-determination for First



Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities.

Beyond her policy work, Pauline is an engaging speaker and storyteller, dedicated to Black excellence, anti-racism, equity, and inclusive education. She frequently speaks on faith, resilience, and equity, encouraging others to overcome adversity and create inclusive spaces. She is also a co-author for the book *Pursued by Purpose*, an Amazon #1 bestseller in Christian Theism, and looks forward to publishing her own book in the future.

In her free time, Pauline is a wedding planner, youth leader, and music enthusiast! Singing in a professional choir and playing the clarinet. Through every platform, she remains grounded in her mission: to uplift, educate, and inspire future generations through faith, purpose, and community empowerment.

Halima Ngasa

Founder, Halibbeb's Parenting Spot

Halima Ngasa is a **Child Development Expert, Parenting Coach, and Facilitator**, who is deeply committed to walking alongside parents, offering guidance rooted in empathy, experience, and cultural relevance.

Through her work with community partners and **Halibbeb's Parenting Spot**, she supports families in navigating the everyday realities of raising children and helps parents understand the 'why' behind behaviour, recognizing that at the heart of every action is a child trying to communicate.

She believes in the **power of family**, that when we nurture, protect, and uplift the family unit, we give children the strongest foundation to thrive. She advocates for parenting practices that keep families together, that strengthen bonds and that equip parents to raise confident, emotionally healthy children within the safety of love, culture, and understanding.

Her mission includes strengthening, empowering, supporting, and contributing to the smooth functioning of family life by



leveraging the strengths already within each household. This allows parents to learn, unlearn, and relearn strategies in a world that is often unfamiliar to our cultural norms and traditions. As she often says, "**keep our children out of the system**" not out of fear, but by equipping families with tools, clarity, and connection, where parents feel supported and children feel understood.

She volunteers with CNP, PEP International and VST. She is a recipient of the Black Excellence Award from the Government of Ontario for her outstanding support in making a difference in our community. Halima is married with two children.

Elvira Sánchez de Malicki

President, Canadian Hispanic-Latin American
Virtual Museum (CHLAVM)

Visionary Cultural Leader | Media Pioneer |
Advocate for Inclusive Governance

- Founder and Executive Director of the Canadian Hispanic-Latin American Virtual Museum (CHLAVM) – a national platform using immersive technologies to preserve and celebrate Hispanic-Latin American heritage. It removes barriers and increases accessibility for marginalized communities and individuals of all abilities.
- Over five decades of leadership in media, culture, law, and public service, advancing equity and inclusion in Canada and beyond.
- Founding President of the Canadian Hispanic Congress (1983) – established Canada's first national umbrella for Hispanic-Latin American organizations.
- Board Member, Telefilm Canada – catalyst for creating its Committee on Linguistic & Cultural Diversity, which led to federal support for multilingual productions.
- Anchor of “Última Hora” (CFMT) and producer/host of “Hispanos en Canadá” (TLN) – pioneering Spanish-language television that brought Hispanic voices to Canadian media.
- Founder and Artistic Director of Open Experience Theatre, one of Canada's earliest Spanish-language theatre companies.
- Business Administrator at Malicki Sanchez Law Firm since 1969.



- Executive MBA graduate, Queen's University – combining cultural vision with strategic leadership.
- Served on boards and tribunals including Harbourfront Centre, the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board, and multicultural advisory councils.

Recognition Highlights

- Governor General's Award of Merit, Citation for Citizenship, Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal – Government of Canada
- Honours from Ecuador's National Assembly and Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Top 10 Most Influential Hispanics in Canada – CHBA
- Woman of the Year (2025) – MIA Golden Wings Awards

Elvira's journey reflects a lifelong commitment to dismantling barriers, improving systems, and creating space for those who follow.

Dr Yetunde Banjo

Executive Pastor at King's Court,
RCCG, Brampton

Yetunde Banjo is a mother, mentor, and coach. For over two decades, she has served as Executive Pastor at King's Court, RCCG, Brampton; coaching and mentoring women and young ladies, counselling couples and families as well as coordinating community events.

She created and hosted *Princess Talk* for 11 years; a weekly program aired on Joy Radio (formerly Joy1250) with the purpose of inspiring and empowering women to embrace their uniqueness and walk in their God-given purpose. She is the Editor in Chief and publisher of a quarterly women's magazine - *The Princess* which aims to inspire, empower, and celebrate women. She is the convener of the annual **Princess Conference** for women and **Esteemed by God Girl Conference** for girls from ages 10–18. She also leads an annual 30-day prayer event for mothers to intercede for their children called, **Take 30 for 30 for Your**



Child.

Yetunde recently completed a PhD in Social Justice Education with a collaboration in Workplace Learning and Social Change at the University of Toronto (Ontario Institute of Studies in Education). She is passionate about women's issues and women fulfilling their God-given potential. She speaks at women's conferences and events.

She is married and a mother of all boys. Her hobbies are reading, writing, and watching action movies with her sons.

Alma Arzate

Senior Director, Global Logistics at Apotex

Born in Mexico, Alma Arzate is a first-generation university graduate. Alma immigrated to Canada in 2007 due to the escalating violence in her hometown of Juarez, Mexico. Alma has built a successful career spanning over 25 years across the Automotive, Electronics, Medical Devices, consumer packaged goods (CPG), and Pharma industries. She is currently a Senior Director, Global Logistics at Apotex, where she leads a diverse team of over 160 professionals located in Canada, India, and USA.

In 2022, Alma became the first female content creator and instructor for LinkedIn Learning's Spanish Library in the topics of Supply Chain and Logistics. Her two courses on Logistics Foundations have reached over 50,000 learners worldwide.

Despite her hectic schedule, Alma has volunteered over 500 hours of her time in the last few years as a mentor, speaker, and panelist for many Universities, Associations, and Canadian Immigrant Settlement Organizations. Due to Alma's numerous business achievements and



altruistic spirit, she has been recognized by many organizations. She was one of the Top 100 Women in Supply Chain globally by IBM and Supply Chain Digital in 2021. Most recently, she was selected as one of the 100 Most Influential Women in Supply Chain in 2023 by B2G Consulting, and was a recipient of the 2024 and 2025 Women in Supply Chain Award and the 2025 Pros to Know Award by the Supply & Demand Chain Executive Magazine.

Alma resides in the Greater Toronto Area with her husband of over 28 years and their three children (ages 17, 20, and 26).

Tunde Bakare

Founder, CANADA IMMIGRANTS

I am a purpose-driven leader whose passion for community empowerment has transformed the lives of hundreds of immigrants in Canada.

As the founder of a thriving Telegram support group named CANADA IMMIGRANTS.

I have guided many newcomers through the Permanent Residency (PR) application process—personally assisting with form completion and creating a space where past applicants share their successful experiences to help others.

My leadership has directly contributed to numerous members attaining PR status and even Canadian citizenship.

My initiative is more than a group—it is a hub of knowledge, encouragement, and peer

mentorship, reflecting my unwavering belief that service to humanity is the best work of life.

Thank you once again for this honour. I look forward to joining you and the wider community in celebration and solidarity at this milestone event.



The Journey Within,
The Impact Beyond

POI 5.0

Public Leadership Excellence Award

Honouring African and Caribbean Trailblazers in Political and Civic Spaces

This award recognizes elected officials, political leaders, or public servants of African or Caribbean heritage who have demonstrated integrity, equity-driven leadership, and a commitment to serving diverse communities with courage and accountability.

"Leadership is not about being in charge. It is about taking care of those in your charge."

— Simon Sinek

Ayo Owodunni

City Councillor for Ward 5 in Kitchener, Ontario

Ayo Owodunni is a City Councillor for Ward 5 in Kitchener, Ontario, a management consultant, and a keynote speaker, with over 13 years of experience in leadership, coaching, training, and strategic consulting. Ayo Owodunni moved to Kitchener with his family from Lagos, Nigeria in 2016. Prior to being elected to Council, he worked as a Consultant, Facilitator, and Learning & Development leader in organizations like Eagles Flight, BPTN, STRIVE! and Farmboy, as well as ran his own training and consulting outfit where he helped clients in Nigeria and Kenya build internal leadership capacity and culture.

He holds a Master of Business, Entrepreneurship, and Technology (MBET) from the University of Waterloo, a Life Coaching Certification, and a Certificate in Adult Education from George Brown College. Ayo is actively involved in his community, sitting on the Board of Governors for St. Jerome's University (University of Waterloo), as well as serving on several organizational boards including KW Multicultural Centre, Immigrant Networks, Brilliant Minds Group International, and



Emergency Response Africa.

Ayo is a devoted husband and father of two lovely children. Ayo is also a respected author, with two influential books: "Values, Culture, Period - Redefining the Value of Values to Drive Business Results" and "Inclusive Leadership: The Immigrant View - Helping Immigrants Thrive and Soar in Your Organization."

Prof. **Akolisa** Ufodike

Associate Professor at York University

Dr. Akolisa Ufodike, FCPA, is an Associate Professor at York University, cross-appointed to the School of Public Policy and Administration. A Chartered Professional Accountant and Certified Fraud Examiner, he made history as the first Black Fellow of the accounting profession (2013) and the first Black certified director with the ICD.D designation (2015) in Alberta's history.

In 2022 he made history again – this time as the first Black Albertan appointed as a Deputy-Minister (permanent secretary). Dr. Ufodike served as Alberta's Deputy Minister of Trade and later, Immigration and Multiculturalism. He is the founder of the John Ware Institute, which has placed more Black professionals on paid boards than any other institution in Canada.

In 2015, he was the first Nigerian in Canada to run for elected provincial office - contesting a nomination for Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) in Alberta. Though unsuccessful, he went on to chair the successful 2019 campaign of the Honourable Kelechi Madu—the first Nigerian elected as an MLA in Canada and the first Black Canadian



appointed as a Justice minister. A former banker and public administration executive, he chaired the Economic Policy Directorate of a Nigerian presidential campaign and contested the gubernatorial primaries of a major political party in Anambra State in 2017. Dr. Ufodike remains deeply committed to building accountable institutions, inclusive economies, and next-generation leadership across Nigeria and Canada. He has been recognized for his distinguished academic and public service contributions with both the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal and the King Charles III Coronation Medal.

Catalyst Award

Honouring Trailblazers Who Rewrite the Rules and Redefine What's Possible

The POI Catalyst Award celebrates an extraordinary individual whose bold and inclusive leadership has ignited systemic transformation. These leaders of leaders are secure in who they are, grounded in their values, and unafraid to extend a helping hand to all—without bias or favoritism. They see people, hear their stories, celebrate their identities, and work alongside everyone to create a better, more equitable world.

In education, policy, health, business, or activism, the honouree has not only challenged entrenched norms but dismantled barriers, reshaped narratives, and built new pathways toward justice and belonging. Their approach is action-oriented, turning ideals into measurable impact, and transforming resistance into lasting momentum.

This is leadership that doesn't wait for change—it creates it. Through fearless conviction and a vision rooted in inclusion, they inspire communities, influence decision-makers, and light the way for others to rise.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” — Margaret Mead

This award is for the game-changers—the ones who lead with courage, humanity, and the unshakable belief that together, we can change the world.

His Royal Highness, **King Nana Yaw Osam I**

Manwirehen of the
Enyan Denkyira
Traditional Area



With the dignity of tradition and the vision of a global statesman, His Royal Majesty King Nana Yaw Osam I stands as a pillar of leadership, service, and compassion. As the esteemed Manwirehen of the Enyan Denkyira Traditional Area, His Majesty has dedicated his reign to advancing humanitarian causes and fostering unity among nations.

For many years, King Nana Yaw Osam I has served as a Distinguished Ambassador for the United Nations, advocating tirelessly for initiatives that uplift the marginalized, empower communities, and promote sustainable peace. His influence resonates across continents, where he has been a steadfast voice for dialogue, reconciliation, and mutual respect among diverse cultures.

Guided by an unwavering commitment to service, His Majesty works to bridge divides, strengthen communities, and inspire positive transformation. Whether engaging with world leaders or championing grassroots initiatives, King Nana Yaw Osam I exemplifies the noble ideals of duty, humility, and global stewardship.

Mayor **Patrick** Brown

Mayor of Brampton

Patrick Brown was re-elected Mayor of Brampton in 2022 on a platform focused on public safety, infrastructure, recreation, and attracting new jobs. Born in Toronto in 1978 to Irish and Italian parents, Patrick studied political science at the University of Toronto, earned a law degree from the University of Windsor, and is fluent in French. Patrick's public service began in 2000 as a Barrie City Councillor. He later served three terms as Member of Parliament for Barrie, winning by record margins. In Ottawa, he chaired the GTA Government Caucus, advanced Canada–India trade, and was named CHRV's 2013 Human Rights Champion for his work on Tamil genocide awareness. Elected Ontario PC Party Leader in 2015, Patrick served as MPP for Simcoe North and Leader of the Official Opposition, championing autism services, mental health supports, and education-toemployment



programs. Since becoming Brampton's Mayor in 2018, he has delivered four straight tax freezes, built record reserves, and secured funding for the new Peel Memorial Hospital and the TMU Medical School, opening in 2025. Patrick and his wife Genevieve live in downtown Brampton with their two children, Theodore and Savannah

Phylomene Zangio

Founder, New Brunswick Provincial
Council of People of African Descent

Phylomène Zangio is a visionary leader, bridge-builder, and tireless advocate for human rights who has transformed New Brunswick's social, political, and cultural landscape for more than three decades. Originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, she has lived in New Brunswick since the late 1980s, blending resilience, academic excellence, and activism to advance justice and inclusion.



A graduate of Université de Moncton with degrees in Business Administration and Information Technology, Phylomène has founded and shaped cornerstone organizations. She established the New Brunswick Provincial Council of People of African Descent (CPPAANB), co-chaired the New Brunswick Women's Council, and helped found both the Francophone Ethnocultural Women's Collective and CAFI, supporting immigrant and minority women. Her motion recognizing the contributions of Black Acadians, introduced at the 2014 Convention of Acadie, culminated in official recognition at the 2019 World Acadian Congress.

As Chair of the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission, she spearheaded initiatives to combat systemic racism, promote municipal inclusion, and strengthen intersectional protections. In 2023, her leadership secured the unanimous adoption of a provincial motion recognizing the International Decade for People of African Descent.

Internationally, Phylomène has worked with the United Nations, contributing to CERD, CEDAW, and the Permanent Forum on People of African Descent. She has spoken at global forums in Geneva and New York, advocating for racial minorities and immigrant rights, while championing data-driven equity measures.

Her intergenerational leadership extends to education, where she helped revise Francophone Social Studies curricula to include Black and Indigenous histories. Recognized with multiple awards—including the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal, Canada's Top 100 Black Women, and the Top 25 Immigrants in the Maritimes—Phylomène remains a trailblazer. She is the first Black woman to chair the province's Human Rights Commission and continues to forge enduring pathways for justice, equity, and intercultural dialogue.

Patricia Bebia

President, Diamond Plus Media
and the co-owner of Afroglobal Television

Patricia Bebia is an award-winning filmmaker, media executive, and storyteller whose work spans television, film, publishing, and public speaking. She is the president of Diamond Plus Media and the co-owner of Afroglobal Television, Canada's 24-hour Black-owned media channel.

Patricia is the writer and director of the multiple award-winning feature film *The Life Coach*, which has won 12 international awards, including in London, Paris, Milan, India, and New York, and recently completed a successful theatrical run across Canada.

With a career rooted in purpose, Patricia has created and produced over 15 television programs, including *The Visionaries*, *Standing Ovation*, and *Omobella Palace*. She is also the associate publisher of *Excellence*, *Destiny*, and *Envision* magazines. Her storytelling boldly explores identity, resilience, and transformation—often drawing from her own journey and commitment to uplifting underrepresented voices.

Named in *Who's Who in Black Canada*, Patricia is a recipient of numerous accolades, including the



Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal and the Harry Jerome Award for Media. She has served as chair of the Reelworld Screen Institute and Foundation. Patricia currently sits on the advisory board of Trebas College. Her acclaimed leadership and mentorship programs continue to inspire the next generation of creatives and changemakers.

From being inspired by Oprah Winfrey to become a talk show host to being involved with launching a 24-hour TV channel, Patricia is a testament to the power of vision, faith, and perseverance.

Artistes

Baba



ABOUT

THE EFIK CLASS

The Efik class as it is fondly called is a cultural ensemble which majorly features dance. It originates from the Efik people of Cross River State in Nigeria & the goal of the curriculum is to promote the unique Efik culture in all its beauty, authenticity & further emphasize the fluidity of the womanhood.

Often called "Calabar people", The Efiks occupy the coastal area of South Eastern Nigeria, Covering the Basins of the lower Cross River, the Calabar River, the Qua River & the Bakassi Peninsula (now part of Cameroon). Calabar, their main city and state capital, was the first ever Capital Territory of Nigeria.

The more popular dances that are performed from this part of the world are called Ekambi and Abang Dance and are mostly performed during weddings, important ceremonies and festive occasions.

The dances are characterized by rhythmic wavy movements, vibrant colored costumes and the use of intricate footwork. It shows the cultural significance, the history, values and beliefs of the Efik people in and around Calabar.

It often tells stories of the community's ancestors and historical events.



FOR THE CULTURE

Hayley Verral



Oriental Performing Group



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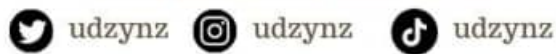
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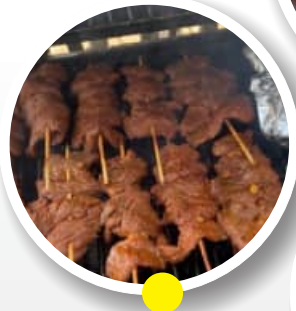
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