



# POWER OF

Strength In Our Diversity

# INCLUSION

**Pouvoir d'Inclusion: La Force de Notre Diversité**





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

October 19, 2022

I offer my warmest of greetings to everyone taking part in “The Power of Inclusion: Strength in Our Diversity” conference and awards night hosted by the Council of Nigerian Professionals Inc. (CNP).

Through CNP’s ardent efforts to support the personal and professional growth of Nigerians and people of African heritage living in Canada, it has played an integral role in the advancement and prosperity of these communities in Ontario. By creating forums for dialogue with industry leaders, you foster increased inclusion and diversity in Ontario workplaces. For that, Ontarians owe CNP a debt of gratitude.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen just how much Ontarians rely upon community organizations like yours. I commend CNP’s team and supporters for their continued efforts during the challenging days of the pandemic and look forward to what you will continue to achieve.

As His Majesty The King’s representative in Ontario, please accept my best wishes for a productive conference and an enjoyable evening.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Elizabeth Dowdeswell'.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell



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

Le 19 octobre 2022

J'offre mes salutations les plus chaleureuses à tous ceux qui participent au congrès et à la remise de prix « Pouvoir d'inclusion : la force de notre diversité » présentés par le Council of Nigerian Professionals (CNP).

Grâce à ses efforts continus pour soutenir la croissance personnelle et professionnelle des Nigériens et des personnes d'origine africaine vivant au Canada, le CNP a joué un rôle essentiel dans l'avancement et la prospérité de ces communautés en Ontario. En créant des tribunes de dialogue avec des chefs de file du secteur, vous favorisez une inclusion et une diversité accrues dans les milieux de travail de l'Ontario. Pour cela, les Ontariens ont une dette de gratitude envers le CNP.

Tout au long de la pandémie de COVID-19, nous avons vu à quel point les Ontariens comptent sur des organismes communautaires comme le vôtre. Je félicite l'équipe du CNP et ses partisans pour leurs efforts soutenus pendant les jours éprouvants de la pandémie et je me réjouis de ce que vous continuerez d'accomplir.

En tant que représentante de Sa Majesté le Roi en Ontario, veuillez accepter mes meilleurs vœux; je vous souhaite un congrès productif et une agréable soirée.



Elizabeth Dowdeswell



Premier of Ontario - Premier ministre de l'Ontario

November 12, 2022

**A MESSAGE FROM PREMIER DOUG FORD**

I want to extend warm greetings to everyone taking part in Power of Inclusion: Strength in Our Diversity.

Our great country is proud to be home to many professionals who have roots in Nigeria and other parts of Africa. Through their skills and talents, they have made their mark in business, trades and professions, in the arts, in public service, and virtually every field.

A big thanks to the Council of Nigerian Professionals for organizing this gathering. This is an opportunity to promote inclusion and foster dialogue between the African Canadian community and industry leaders. Know that your work will help African Canadian professionals form beneficial networks, find opportunities and succeed in Canada.

I recognize that professionals like you play an important role in building the future of Ontario. That's why our government is helping workers earn bigger paycheques, stay safe and have better opportunities. We want to put workers in the driver's seat of Ontario's economic growth while attracting the best workers to our great province.

Best wishes for a successful event.



**Doug Ford**  
Premier





Premier of Ontario - Premier ministre de l'Ontario

Le 12 novembre 2022

**MESSAGE DU PREMIER MINISTRE DOUG FORD**

Je tiens à saluer chaleureusement tous ceux et celles qui participent au *Pouvoir de l'inclusion : La force de notre diversité*

Notre formidable pays compte de nombreux professionnels originaires du Nigeria et d'autres régions d'Afrique. Par leur savoirfaire et leurs talents, ils ont su se distinguer dans le monde des affaires, des métiers spécialisés et des diverses professions, dans le domaine des arts, dans la fonction publique et dans pratiquement tous les secteurs.

Je remercie le Conseil des professionnels nigériens pour la tenue de cette rencontre, qui permet de promouvoir l'inclusion et de favoriser le dialogue entre la communauté afro-canadienne et les leaders de l'industrie. Sachez que vos efforts aideront à tisser des liens bénéfiques, à saisir des opportunités et à réussir au Canada.

Je reconnais le rôle important que jouent les professionnels comme vous pour bâtir l'avenir de l'Ontario. Voilà pourquoi notre gouvernement aide les travailleurs et les travailleuses à bénéficier de meilleures conditions d'emploi. Nous voulons mettre ces gens aux commandes de la croissance économique et attirer la main-d'œuvre la mieux qualifiée dans notre merveilleuse province.

Je vous souhaite que cet événement soit couronné de succès.

**Le premier ministre,**



**Doug Ford**



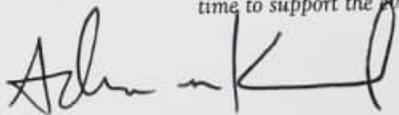


**Adam van Koeverden, M.P.**  
Federal Member of Parliament for  
the riding of Milton,  
is pleased to congratulate

**Council of Nigerian Professionals**  
on your second annual  
**Power of Inclusion  
Event and Awards Ceremony**

Your incredible dedication to empower, and create a brighter future for Nigerian and African professionals contribute to a prosperous, more inclusive, and equitable Canada for all. Thank you to the extraordinary leadership of Adejisola Ariba, and all the wonderful volunteers, and board members for your continued advocacy and commitment to building this space for community members.  
I wish you all a very successful event!

Congratulations as well to all award recipients, and thank you to the inspiring speakers who are dedicating their time to support the event.



**Adam van Koeverden,**  
Member of Parliament - Milton  
October 2022



# MP PAUL CHIANG

## MARKHAM-UNIONVILLE

November 12th, 2022

### Power of Inclusion

As the Member of Parliament for Markham-Unionville, I would like to extend my best wishes to the Council of Nigerian Professionals and their second annual Power of Inclusion event.

This event provides an excellent opportunity for the community to gather and celebrate the strength of Canada's diversity. This three-day event will focus on a variety of important themes such as rising above boundaries and inclusive leadership. As the Parliamentary Secretary of Diversity and Inclusion it warms my heart to see events like these which support and recognize outstanding Canadians who create welcoming environments in their communities.

The Council of Nigerian Professionals has been active in helping newcomers adapt and thrive in Canadian society, supporting the professional development of their members and supporting the wellbeing of individuals, marriages, and families. This work is crucial to the success of our communities and a part of what makes Canada inclusive to all.

I would like to thank all the volunteers that have made this Power of Inclusion event possible. This could not have been done without you. I wish you all the best and many more successful years to come.

Sincerely,



**MP Paul Chiang**  
Markham-Unionville





*Shaun Chen*

Member of Parliament / Député  
Scarborough North / Scarborough–Nord



November 12, 2022

### **A Personal Message from MP Shaun Chen**

As the Member of Parliament for Scarborough North, I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to the attendees of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Power of Inclusion Event and Awards Ceremony, organized by the Council of Nigerian Professionals (CNP).

This event celebrates and commemorates the CNP's dedication in providing support resources and training to Canadians of African heritage and commitment to the empowerment of Nigerian and African professionals in Canada. It is also an excellent opportunity to promote the Power of Inclusion program in efforts to raise awareness against Anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, homophobia and other global issues.

I commend for the CNP hosting this important event. Gatherings like these remind us of the multicultural fabric that binds our great nation together and demonstrates Canada's shared values of diversity, inclusion, and equality.

Please accept my best wishes for a most successful event.

Sincerely,

Shaun Chen  
Member of Parliament  
Scarborough North



Ontario

*On behalf of the*

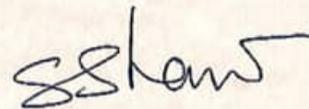
*Legislative Assembly of Ontario*

*I am pleased to extend a heartfelt congratulations to*

*The Council of Nigerian  
Professionals*

*for exemplifying the Power of Inclusion and Strength  
in Our Diversity*

*Your dedication in bringing together community leaders to  
discuss the need for a more inclusive society is crucial to  
ensure change from the status quo*



*Sandy Shaw MPP  
Hamilton West - Ancaster - Dundas*

*Hamilton, Ontario  
November 12, 2022*



Ontario

*As the Member of Provincial Parliament for Don Valley North,  
I extend my sincerest wishes to*

**X Council of Nigerian Professionals Z**

*I am pleased to express my warmest greetings and wholehearted congratulations to the **Council of Nigerian Professionals** (CNP) at its **Power of Inclusion Event and Awards Ceremony** held in Brampton.*

*It is my genuine pleasure to recognize the event participants, and especially the recipients of the **Power of Inclusion Awards**, which acknowledges noteworthy service and valued contributions to the community in the battle against racism. As a wonderful example of the Ontario spirit, with courage and devotion, the **CNP** and award recipients provide inspiration to remind us that anti-racism is fundamentally important to the success, prosperity, and future of our province. With united voices and collective efforts, the **CNP** and its members continue to build a safer and stronger community where everyone is included, cared for, and respected.*

*This special event presents a marvellous opportunity for participants to reunite with old acquaintances and foster new connections in the community, while honouring the significance of a shared heritage and rich history. With resilience and optimism for the future, the diversity of Nigerian and African Ontarians helps to shape the future of our beautiful province socially, culturally, and economically.*

*I want to thank the **CNP** and all its staff and volunteers for their hard work in organising and presenting this memorable event. I wish each of you good health, happiness, and prosperity.*

*Sincerely,*



*Vincent Ke, MPP  
Don Valley North  
November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022*



November 10-12, 2022

### ***Personal Message from Mayor Bonnie Crombie***



As Mayor of the City of Mississauga, I am pleased to extend greetings to Ms. Adejisola Atiba, Founder and President of the Council of Nigerian Professionals (CNP) Inc., all the Board members and volunteers. I hope that your Power of Inclusion: Strength In Our Diversity and Awards Night is a resounding success.

I appreciate your organization's commitment to supporting Nigerian professionals and people of African heritage towards sustainable growth, development and prosperity in Canada. It is important that we encourage inclusivity and embrace the diversity of our city, province and country. When we are inclusive of each other, we learn about other cultures, and gain new perspectives.

I would like to thank your organization for including me during your Black History Month Celebration and Essay Writing Competition this past February 2022. We also recently celebrated the Nigerian 62<sup>nd</sup> Independence Day with our very first flag raising event at City Hall. We are looking forward to the exciting next steps that CNP Inc. will be taking here at the City of Mississauga. Thank you for making a difference, and for recognizing community leaders and change makers in Mississauga and beyond.

I'd like to give a special shout out to all the sponsors and supporters of this 3-day event. Thank you for your contributions to our community and best wishes for continued success.

Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Bonnie Crombie".

Bonnie Crombie, MBA, ICD.  
Mayor, City of Mississauga



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**MAYOR PATRICK BROWN**

November 12, 2022

Greetings from Mayor Patrick Brown

On behalf of the Members of Brampton City Council, I want to extend greetings to the participants attending the Power of Inclusion: Strength in our Diversity Conference being hosted by the Council of Nigerian Professional Inc., a not-for-profit organization that relies on goodwill financial support from well meaning organizations and individuals to run its impactful programs that is changing lives and transforming our communities.

Our country derives strength from the diversity of its population and from its commitment to equal opportunity for all. That is why we have made diversity and inclusion a top priority at the City of Brampton. We are one of the youngest and most diverse cities in Canada – a mosaic made up of 234 cultures and 115 different languages. The City of Brampton is committed to apply an equity lens throughout the broader organization to create an environment of equity, inclusion, diversity and anti-racism within the corporation and in the community. The City of Brampton is committed to eradicating systemic Anti-Black racism in Brampton in collaboration with internal and local community stakeholders and to uplift the social, cultural and economic position of Brampton's Black community.

I want to thank the volunteers and sponsors for making this 3-day conference a success. Enjoy tonight's awards dinner. It is so important to recognize the champions of inclusivity in our community.

Sincerely,



Patrick Brown  
Mayor



# Have You Ever!



**Adejisola Atiba (Lady ABHA)**  
 President and Founder, CNP Inc.

On behalf of CNP Inc leadership, volunteer board, advisory board and all our volunteers we welcome you to our second edition of Power of Inclusion. #POI2022.

I would like to start us off with a plethora of quotes that I find both intriguing and interesting on Inclusion.

"Inclusivity means not 'just we're allowed to be there,' but we are valued. I've always said: smart teams will do amazing things, but truly diverse teams will do impossible things." - Claudia Brind-Woody,

"Why be a star when you can make a constellation?"

–Mariam Kaba

"You deserve a circle of inclusion and influence, but it's up to you to create it."

–Richie Norton

"To me, beauty is inclusion— every size, every color— that's the world I live in." –Prabal Gurung

"We are greater than, and greater for, the sum of us."

–Heather McGhee

"The human heart is too grand to be wasted in the gutter of cultural exclusivity." –Abhijit Naskar

Thank you so much for joining CNP for another weekend of dialogue around Diversity and Inclusion. We are indeed honored to have all you amazing leaders, join us to add your voice to this important conversation.

Congratulations also to all the award

recipients, thank you for all you do to make our community a better place for all.

Special thanks to RBC Royal bank and Canadian Race relations foundation for their support of POI2022. I also want to acknowledge all our small businesses; we wish you continuous success now and always. The event would not be a success if you did not believe in us. You are all highly appreciated.

Does the overarching theme and different sub-themes have impact on just African, Caribbean, and Black people? Maybe more than others, but I dare say that we all feel excluded somewhat, somehow during our journey in life.

So, my question to you today is "Have You Ever?"

That is the title of my address today, Have You Ever?

Have you ever felt lonely?

Have you ever felt you are not enough?

Have you ever felt discriminated against?

Have you ever felt conscious of yourself?

Have you ever felt the need to impress someone else?

Have you ever been bullied?

Have you ever been talked down at?

Have you ever felt ridiculed? Disrespected, Abused, Inadequate, or self-conscious?

I have felt most of the above, in some degrees, but I have not allowed any of it to make me feel less than who I am. Not only

that, but I also focus on channeling the bad experiences to be positive and to impact people around me. This is and will continue to be my focus.

Something I have realized over time is that those who take the time to make others question their worth tend to have personal and often significant issues that they are dealing with.

The focus of Power of Inclusion is to ensure that our communities are included in all areas of Canadian life. We are proactively therefore reaching out to welcome everyone and anyone from different background, culture, language and more into our space. By so doing, we get to know each other, and learn from each other too. We need to be inclusive of others to make our world a better place for all.

2021 "Power of Inclusion: What is the Fuss About" was an experience. It was an experience so much so that, some attendees were asking about what we have in store for 2022. The maiden edition was to ensure the conversation on inclusion remains current, relevant, and ongoing.

We also realised that the people who have the most to gain, our communities, need to continue the conversation. We all can attest to the fact that inclusivity sure brings a different level of dynamics and unique thoughts to every discussion, dialogue and decisions made.

The government of Canada, under its Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada policy has been facilitating the

immigration of diverse people to join in the Canadian dream since 2002. These new communities especially, understand the importance of inclusion and as a result focused on sharing

ideas and “

recommendations on ensuring the conversation continues unhindered.

Our second edition "Power of Inclusion: Strength in our Diversity" focuses on continuing the conversation and change the status quo. The event would feature community and corporate leaders leading the dialogue on Inclusion. The sub-themes are thought provoking and will elicit different sentiments from different people.

We keep hearing about shattering glass ceilings, but how can we shatter glass ceilings, when there is an unseen cap on our achievements, irrespective of the value added, expertise and

or experience we have to offer? What are some ways to overcome these boundaries that hold us down?

What are some of the best practices we can

share with our leaders to make them think deeper about inclusion? What can we do to make them conscious, and always chose inclusion? These are some of the questions we would hear our speakers address during this event.

We all have a lot to do. More than we acknowledge. Let us ask ourselves and understand what we need to do in our own space to support inclusion. We can want change, but we need to take part in the change process.

CNP Inc. fosters inclusion through continued dialogue with industry leaders and the community. Canada is a country that welcomes diversity, but we all agree there is work to be done when it comes to inclusion.

**Have you ever felt lonely? You have a community around you, reach out.**

**Have you ever felt you are not enough? You are enough, you just need to continue to build on what you already have.**

**Have you ever felt discriminated against? Turn the experience around and be that better person.**

**Have you ever felt conscious of yourself? Know your brand, know who you are.**

**Have you ever felt the need to impress someone else? Be yourself.**

**Have you ever been bullied? Speak up against it.**

**Have you ever been talked down at? Speak up for yourself and others around you.**

**Have you ever felt ridiculed? Disrespected, Abused, Inadequate, or self-conscious? Learn from others how best to address this, you do not have to go through it alone.**

”

inclusion through continued dialogue with industry leaders and the community. Canada is a country that welcomes diversity, but we all agree there is work to be done when it comes to inclusion.

This event is to continue the candid conversation about what we all stand to lose when inclusion is lacking at the table.

I would like to end responding to the have you ever questions, to all who have felt any of it:

Have you ever felt lonely? You have a community around you, reach out.

Have you ever felt you are not enough? You are enough, you just need to continue to build on what you already have.

Have you ever felt discriminated against? Turn the experience around and be that better person.

Have you ever felt conscious of yourself? Know your brand, know who you are.

Have you ever felt the need to impress someone else? Be yourself.

Have you ever been bullied? Speak up against it.

Have you ever been talked down at? Speak up for yourself and others around you.

Have you ever felt ridiculed? Disrespected, Abused, Inadequate, or self-conscious? Learn from others how best to address this, you do not have to go through it alone.

Let us all work together and use those disappointments to our advantage, and make it easier for others.

We hope that this event and more like it, would push the dial in the right direction. Thank you again for joining us on the journey.

Visit our website to learn more about our

various programs @ [www.cnpngo.ca](http://www.cnpngo.ca)

To volunteer your time, email us at [info@cnpngo.ca](mailto:info@cnpngo.ca)

Join us and let us make the impossible possible.

Together, we are UNBEATABLE!

Adejisola Atiba (Lady ABHA) is an author, and a people manager with RBC Royal Bank of Canada. She has been with RBC for 16 years and in the Banking Industry for 30 years.

She is a 2022 Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Pin recipient, a 2020 RBC Global Citizen Award winner, and many other awards for her continued work in the community.

Her focus is on Digital transformation, Change and Workforce planning, financial planning, Inspiring people, and building leaders.

She founded Council of Nigerian Professionals Inc (CNP), and African Caribbean Council of Halton (ACCH). She sits on the Board of both organizations, United Way Halton and Hamilton and Rotary Club of Milton. She usually says that Banking is her profession, but community is her passion.

Email: [president@cnpngo.ca](mailto:president@cnpngo.ca)

Website: [www.ladyabha.ca](http://www.ladyabha.ca)



## Power of Inclusion: Strength in Our Diversity

Since its inception in 2018, the Council of Nigerian Professionals (CNP) has been on its journey of commitment to community impact in serving Canadian professionals of Nigerian and African heritage on various fronts. Its core mission of touching and transforming lives through sustainable empowerment in the areas of socio-economic, political, and professional advancement has remained unwavering over these few years. We have boldly tackled seemingly unassailable issues that intrinsically plague and stagnate our communities head-on and have begun achieving practical results in critical areas where transformative change is necessary. As a corporate entity, we have solidified our efforts by engaging with our stakeholders and communities through active participation at the grassroots level to bring about true sustainable, dynamic, and systemic change. This is what I would dub, "The CNP Way."

These last few years have witnessed our mission objectives and corporate social responsibilities being systematically measured by our strategic imperatives in

terms of improving conditions for our stakeholders, communities, and environment – one person at a time. However, our moral responsibility transcends further, reflecting the need to address fundamental ethical issues such as diversity, inclusion, dignity, equity, and equality.

Granted, diversity is a fact of life we all have come to embrace. However, inclusion is the truest form of demonstrable acknowledgment through an actioned response to this fact. While diversity seems a worthy ideal, inclusion brings with it the machinery and dynamic force of the essence of true diversity. Without inclusion, diversity remains but an idea that experiences a stillbirth, a stasis, and inertia of nothingness and meaninglessness. Without inclusion, diversity leads only to a revolving door of people and communities devoid of achievement focus, creativity, and purpose. The reality is that diversity only succeeds as a societal priority when collective efforts make it a priority to foster inclusion. Without true inclusion, our communities will remain void of vision,

aspirations, cohesion, and directional movement toward impactful goals. This is because, without a doubt, inclusion absolutely is the device that unlocks diversity.

While diversity is a lofty dream or vision, inclusion is the mission that delivers the outcome of true diversity. In response to diversity in all its recognized ramifications, CNP has taken on the challenge of embodying true inclusion through its focus on direct positive impact in various dimensions - with and for our communities. The service streams of CNP rest on the functional pillars of networking, mentoring, professional capacity building, volunteering, leadership modeling, and information sourcing and disseminating. We have and continue to stay committed to exceptional service through these vital functional pillars for its members and stakeholders. As a result, CNP has enjoyed tremendous growth, development, and impact generation these last few years in moving the needle forward toward the organic advancement of Canadian professionals of Nigerian and African heritage. While these laudable efforts have not been without challenges, CNP has continued to forge forward in its commitments by ensuring that it builds its sustainable capacity to achieve with precision through the inclusion that draws from the collective strengths it

harnesses in the diversity of thoughts, ideas, peoples, and cultures.

This year’s event tagged with the theme, “Power of Inclusion: Strength in Our Diversity” comes as a timely and relevant call to action for all of us to rise to the challenge in confronting the intrinsic weaknesses of our community struggles with the power and strength of engaged diversity through inclusion. Our communities and the world at large are fraught with the constant challenge and crisis of change and chaos. To achieve a successful impact that can create sustainable change, we must recognize and embed the necessary and the needful – The Power of Inclusion through our diverse strengths.

**“ Together as CNP, let us lead the way in advancing inclusion through diversity! ”**

Finally, in the words of Mother Theresa, “None of us, including me, ever do great things. But we can all do small things, with great love, and together we can do something wonderful. I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things.” Together as CNP, let us lead the way in advancing inclusion through diversity!

Thank you.  
Ebere Morgan, Ph.D





Power of Inclusion:

# A perspective from a minority.

By Efuange Khumbah

As an individual who is defined as visible minority, Black of African heritage, racialized individual, indigenous it is my believe that the statements or corporate policies on diversity and inclusion are targeted toward people like me and others who are not usually seen in board rooms.

We can find these statements on almost all job postings. Interestingly some institution assume that we already know their diversity and inclusion policies, while other direct us to go and read it on their websites. A lot of people like me do not read those policy statements about corporate commitments to diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and anti-racism. We can simply smell, hear, feel and sometimes our ancestors tell us about the power of inclusion and diversity within any institution.

In an effort to promote diversity and inclusion, some corporations have implemented the blind audition technique, a system where software is used to screen resumes of bias-indicator such as race, age, gender, ethnicity, or socio-economic status. Some employers have gone a step further to ask applicants to go through a work-related

assessment or complete a challenge which is used as evidence of their skills. Unfortunately, blind audition is something we typically do not see when reading job description published by corporations with diversity and inclusion policies. So do not blame us when we do not read your diversity and inclusion policy, we simple do not see where that policy is implemented.

The challenge about diversity, is that almost everyone has some sort of unconscious bias about others who do not look like them. Our brains are still wired to see others, them, outsiders as a thread to our survival. Social media algorithms are mostly designed to show us contents which are related to our worldview. This may be a good point to take a break, scroll through our social media platforms, and see how much contents shows people who do not look like you. Even when we go looking for individuals to feel the diversity quota or percentages, our social media library will return results which are non diverse nor inclusive.

Hence, it not surprising when some corporations are unable to find qualified candidates who do not look like them to fill in

for advertised positions or be hired.

A diverse and inclusive workplace is supposed to be one that makes everyone feel equally involved in and supported in all areas in the workplace. Researchers tell us, a diversified workplace does boost productivity, creativity and improves customer satisfaction. But does anyone really need a researcher to state this fact. By just having people who look different it has to be obvious that will increase creativity and customer satisfaction. As easy as it may sound this is not easily applicable. There are situations where women who have cracked the so-called glass ceiling, but they are treated as if they are because of the corporate policy. Some businesses have the so called “old boys clubs” and it is just not possible to join those club. People of my heritage are sensitive and feel this exclusion when we work into such environments. Maybe we get some telepathic message from our ancestors signalling how diversity and inclusion works in such settings. And if you are wondering how these feelings come about.... it sometimes is as simple as in dressing codes, how people seat in the cafeteria, drinks in the vending machine, wall paintings and the obvious one is how diverse are picture on the gallery portion of your website relative to board members.

The council of Nigerian professional (CNP) has taken a different approach when it comes to inclusion and diversity. They have brought in the concept of the Nigerian (African)

culture where celebration is not just a one-day thing. The Yoruba Egungun festival for example is a yearly festival that takes up to seven days and highlights history, legends, conquest, and diversity. The CNP power of inclusion has borrowed and modernise such a concept of African festivals. The Power of inclusion is now a yearly event that would last for three days. It is believed that those who take part in most of the activities during the three days will make long lasting relationship. And just like in most African festivals, the highlight of the event is on the last day with gala-type setting where those who have been building relations can finally meet, share a meal, and improve their network. This approach is a novelty and to pull this together a lot of planning is required.

CNP believe that corporate policies and implementation of diversity and inclusion should be embraced and encouraged. However, the goal should always be to achieve equity.

# Diversity & Inclusion; Who must?

Diversity, for the longest of time is becoming a show stealer in most conversations around the world and it is gradually taking a center stage in all areas of human society including and not limited to the corporate world, the church, sports, education, communities, families and in fact anywhere humans subsist.

This is an exciting drive to cure the worldwide cancer of racial, polarized politics, class inequalities and many uncountable disunifying diseases that has limited the human race from reaching her full potential. Mahatma Gandhi is quoted to have said "No culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive." - Hence all systems that have lived centuries without embracing inclusiveness have or are experiencing some form of death which sometimes cannot be realized if one does not pause to ponder. And culture is a comprehensive way of human life – cutting across how we build and run industries, communities, laws and policies, healthcare, educational system design, how we innovate to serve humanity, etc.



Day in and day out, the society we live in continues to become diverse as new people are birthed of many differences - uniquely different in several beautiful skin colors, dissimilar backgrounds, serving the world with an opportunity of diverse perspectives of opinions to give options for solutions to how the world can be made better for humanity. Imagine the world with one way of thoughts on how to dress up – what a tragedy it will be for human kind in different temperature zones. With this I am confident to say diversity peeks out her head in many forms: sexuality, values, religion, gender, race and profusion of other many forms not listed. However, in as much as diversity is knocking at the doors of every community space to be allowed in, the society is used to hearing, seeing and embracing the things they are already comfortable hearing, seeing and understanding giving diversity a cold welcome, thence keeping other people out of

the inclusion equation by virtue of their unique race, sexuality, religion, values and many others uniqueness they carry.

Many polarized situations will seek to know why other different perspectives should be taken into account if we are certain the perception we hold is right? The simple answer is that other perspectives must be welcomed because no single individual has existed without an error, that reflects the fact that nobody is always right and until we open our doors to other ways of viewing and doing things, we may not appreciate how disastrous our error is.

Giving a chance to diversity and including other voices and perspectives is the sure way to discover brilliant ideas lying in wait out there in the world. That is how we can know more about the world around us.

Take a chance to explore other ideas, beliefs, culture and lifestyles with an open mind, and you will be surprised at the level of exposure we will grant ourselves to exercise genuine creativity and diverse problem solving by just looking at things from other lenses – the sure way to break barriers.

This revolution can only be catalyzed by the world realizing the need to speedily eschew closed-minded ideologies that has led the

world to hate, bias and catastrophe throughout history.

The big statement that is in itself a question here is “who must ignite the flames of this revolution”? We must not search wild because it will definitely not be the General Secretary of the United Nations, African Union head or the Head of the G8.

I randomly define “who” in this context as:

W- Whoever you are

H- However you are

O – On planet earth.

This revolution will collectively catch fire when we all assume our individual roles in leading the change chain in our communities- regardless of the size of the platform. It can only be possible when you allow the change for Inclusion to begin with you.

By: Derrick K. Amo Anim (Chartered Banker | Credit Risk Manager | CNP Volunteer)

# CNP Mentoring Program

## 2022 Cohort



The premise behind the registration of CNP Inc. is to ensure we share timely, relevant and impactful information within the community. It is a space to connect, network and co-create.

Both Mentee and Mentor work collaboratively to set goals, explore, build relationships, expand networks and ultimately increase their net worth.

People have shared stories of little information, lack of information and misinformation which held many people back. With the support of the founding directors, we laid a foundation for immediate and future success through mentoring.

CNP Mentoring Program was created with intentionality, to share knowledge, support and educate new, young, and seasoned professionals alike. It has been running now

for three (3) years.

We would like to use this opportunity to appreciate all our mentors, who consistently respond to our calls for support. They are too many to mention, but you know yourselves, we are indeed very grateful to you all. Thank you for your time, sacrifice and support.

Our sincere thanks to our mentee, open and willing to learn from our mentors, we hope that you would also pay it forward soon.

We are in the process of changing the dynamics of our mentoring program to make it more accessible with the use of technology. It will allow for a rolling mentoring program, and not restricted to the twice a year we currently run.

We'll share more information as soon as

possible.

We are happy to share some comments from our 2022 mentee:

- o My Mentor is an exceptional mentor, I'm glad you were able to match me with someone in my field and from Nigeria. Her method of mentoring is amazing.
- o Thank you for the opportunity. – Mentee
- o The program has been impactful, and I am grateful for the opportunity.
- o I have had two sessions with my mentor, and I must confess it has been very productive. I now have a better understanding of the industry and the things I need to know about the compliance framework in Canada. I really appreciate CNP for this mentoring opportunity.
- o Our mentor/mentee relationship has flourished beyond this, we are now family friends. It has really been a blessing to me.
- o Hello CNP, thank you for this amazing lifetime opportunity
- o I was not sure of what to expect, but the relationship blew me away, I am in the IT space and my mentor went above and beyond in supporting me, I am happy to say that I got a job as a result of the mentorship. Thank you CNP Inc.
- o I have been volunteering with CNP Inc since its inception and follow all the videos on its YouTube channel. I wanted to learn more about the digital and creative space, and I was matched with an amazing leader. He celebrated my strength, but most importantly, he supported me in identifying my areas of opportunities which are liberating to me. I am thankful for the opportunity, and it also expanded my network.
- o I am an undergraduate looking to pursue Law and I was matched with a practicing lawyer. We met virtually and I am glad that I also got to meet her in-person. She is very busy, but she ensured she created time for me to support me. I am really inspired, and confident to pursue my degree because of this amazing woman. Thank you CNP for the opportunity.
- o As a business owner, it is overwhelming the amount of misinformation available. I was introduced to CNP, and I was introduced to another business owner in my field. She was able to put my mind at rest, answer all my questions and continue to stay in touch till date. Thank you CNP for all you do in the community. The work you do is needed, necessary and impactful.

# DAY ONE

## POWER OF INCLUSION

Strength In Our Diversity

**Sub-Theme: Rising Above Boundaries**

Keynote Speaker

## Mark Beckles

Vice President, Social Impact & Innovation  
RBC Corporate Citizenship



Mark has over 25 years' experience in financial services, Mark has executive leadership experiences in banking, insurance, risk management and non-profit leadership.

Mark leads the strategic execution of RBC's Social Impact portfolios including RBC Future Launch, RBC Tech for Nature and RBC Emerging Artists. Mark also leads stakeholder relations to cultivate and maintain key relationships across Canada including policy makers, partners and stakeholders to advance RBC's

community investment priorities. Mark holds an MBA in International Business from the University of Bradford and has completed executive programs with Richard Ivey School of Business and holds the Institute of Corporate Directors designation (ICD.D).

Speaker

## Natasha Tacchi

Senior Commercial Account Manager

Natasha started her career with RBC as a summer student in the Homeline Equity Closing Centre. She has since served as an Associate in Private Banking, Business Account Manager and Branch Manager leading the Marina Del Rey branch in Etobicoke.

In her current role, as a Senior Commercial Account Manager, Natasha delivers an exceptional client experience to clients and prospects in the Commercial Real Estate and C o n s t r u c t i o n i n d u s t r y .

Driven by our purpose, Natasha has also made valuable connections within the community. She was awarded the Global Citizen Award in 2020 as recognition for her efforts in support of a number of youth



focused organizations. She is currently sits on the National NextGen Capabilities Cabinet team, GTR's Employee Giving Campaign Cabinet team and volunteers with Big Brothers Big Sisters Halton as a 'Big Sister'.

She holds an undergraduate degree from Wilfrid Laurier University, a Postgraduate Diploma in Management from Les Roches in Switzerland, an Honors Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resources from McMaster University and is a WSET Level 3 Sommelier.

Speaker

## Curtis Ennis

Director of Education for the  
Halton District School Board

Curtis Ennis began his career in banking before switching to education. Curtis' career portfolio during the past 25 years in education has included a variety of senior leadership positions with the Toronto District School Board, Canada's largest school board, as well as the Ontario Ministry of Education. Curtis began his career as a primary teacher and advanced through various leadership roles as a Superintendent of Education with increasing responsibilities. He is currently the Director of Education for the Halton District School Board. Curtis holds a Bachelor of Business Management (Accounting/Finance) and a Bachelor of Education and Master of Education (Language, Culture & Teaching) from York University.

Curtis has worked with many communities' initiative to improve diversity, equity and inclusion, during his time in the Toronto



District school board, and continues to be a role model and leader in the Halton community. He is a leader of leaders, as he has supported and mentored many people to go into leadership roles over the years in the school system.

Curtis lives with his partner Beverly and their four daughters.

Speaker

## Yvonne Ruke Akpoveta

Change Management Strategist & Advisor, and  
Founder of The Change Leadership

Yvonne is a Change Management Strategist & Advisor, Founder of The Change Leadership, and a Change Leadership Advocate with over 20 years of experience helping professionals and organizations to navigate through change, most especially in today's disruptive environment. She also sits on the Board of Directors for the Ontario Education Quality and Accountability Office.

She is passionate about helping professionals and organizations lead and respond to change better & faster, for the greater benefit of the society. She believes that change done right, provides invaluable benefits to stakeholders and the community at large.

She has worked with a broad range of organizations globally including RBC, TD, Deloitte, Loblaw's, Ontario Public Service and JP Morgan Chase to lead and manage their Strategic, Technology and Regulatory Change Initiatives. She is the founder of The Change Leadership, a community focused on preparing leaders, change agents and organizations to lead and respond to change in today's fast-paced and disruptive business



environment.

She holds a BSc honours in Business Information Technology & Marketing from London Guildhall University, an MBA from Warwick Business School, England, and a Change Leadership Certificate from Cornell University.

She works closely with executives and professionals to help them more effectively lead and drive change in their organizations. She is a published author, speaker and change catalyst.

More information about Yvonne, visit: [www.OliveBlue.com](http://www.OliveBlue.com) | [www.TheChangeLeadership.com](http://www.TheChangeLeadership.com)

Speaker

## Carlos

I.T. professional and entrepreneur



Originally from Peru, Carlos is an I.T. professional and entrepreneur, and has worked for and with companies large and small, in South America, Africa and North America.

Carlos also volunteers as the President of Hispanotech.ca, an association dedicated to the integration and success of Latin American

# DAY TWO

## POWER OF INCLUSION

Strength In Our Diversity

**Sub-Theme: Inclusive Leadership**

Keynote Speaker

## Lekan Olawoye

Founder and CEO

Black Professionals in Tech Network (BPTNO)

Lekan Olawoye is the Founder and CEO of Black Professional in Tech Network (BPTN), the largest Black tech and business community in North America. Lekan was one of Canada's Top 40 Under 2021 for his indelible mark as a thought leader in Black tech. With a mandate to disrupt the network gap facing Black professionals, Lekan created - BFUTR - largest, Black professional summit in North America. In February 2022, Lekan and his team also launched Obsidi by BPTN, an all-in-one networking platform for Black professionals to access more opportunities and level up their career.

Before BPTN, Lekan was the program director then lead executive of Talent Development at MaRs Discovery District, Toronto. There he guided professionals in adapting to new environments in fast growing companies. Previously, he was Executive Director of For Youth Initiative, Toronto, working on policy



and strategic development. In 2013, Lekan also served as chair of the Ontario government.

Lekan has a MSW in Social Work with a specialization in non-profit management from the University of Toronto and a BSW in social work from Ryerson University. He volunteered with the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigration (OCASI), Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

Lekan received media coverage in The Globe and Mail, the Toronto Star, and TechCrunch.

Speaker

## Laura Mae Lindo

Member of Provincial Parliament for Kitchener Centre

Laura Mae Lindo, Member of Provincial Parliament for Kitchener Centre, is a respected activist and educator who holds both a Masters and PhD in Education. Her commitment to building inclusive communities both within and outside of educational environments is grounded in her experience with putting anti-oppression theories into practice. Laura Mae is a knowledgeable advocate for the rights of women and girls, a respected ally to marginalized community members, and, most importantly, a courageous public speaker on issues often left unaddressed in the mainstream. In 2019, the Leader of the Official Opposition appointed her as Chair of Official Opposition's first Black Caucus whose role included collaborating with Black communities to address systemic anti-Black racism in Ontario. Laura Mae is currently the



Official Opposition Critic for Anti-Racism and Equity as well as Colleges and Universities, and she is the Vice Chair of the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy.

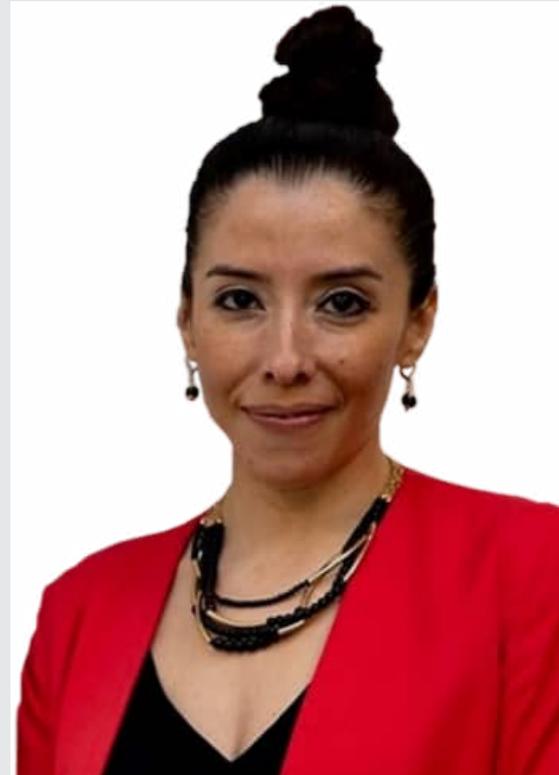
Speaker

## Citlalli Rios

Director for Member Services  
at Hispanotech

Originally from Mexico, Citlalli is a trilingual professional in social innovation, business strategy and product management, with over 10 years of experience in Logistics, Sales, Marketing and Customer Management.

She is passionate about diversity, equity, women empowerment, and sustainability. She loves networking, mentoring, and supporting the Latino community in Canada through Hispanotech, as their Director for Member Services.



Speaker

## Tyson Jones

Regional Vice President,  
Commercial Financial Services for RBC

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As Regional Vice President, Commercial Financial Services for RBC, Tyson leads diversified Commercial Banking teams across the Greater Toronto Area who are focused on delivering trusted advice and financial solutions to businesses, business owners, and their employees.

He has over 15 years of financial industry experience held in progressively senior leadership roles in Sales Management, Strategy, and Credit Underwriting.

An active member of the community, Tyson is Chair of RBC's Black Professionals Network, a strategic advisor to the RBC Black Entrepreneur Program and volunteer to many initiatives. He is also a former Co-Chair of RBC's Mosaic Employee Resource Group for Newcomers and Visible Minorities and



former Board of Directors for Seven Oaks General Hospital and United Way GenNext.

Tyson is a graduate of University of Alberta with a Bachelors majoring in Economics.

Speaker

# Edosa Adams-Idode

Executive member of the Canadian Bar Association  
- CBA (Women's Law Forum)

Edosa Adams-Idode is a mother of teenage boys who love basketball. She is a wife, volunteer, mentor and a lawyer by profession.

She was called to the Nigerian Bar in 1999 and Ontario Bar in 2007 and holds a Master's degree in Dispute Resolution from York University, Toronto.

She personifies herself as a voice for the voiceless with a purpose to achieve equity, fairness and leadership by example. While in Nigeria, she advocated for reproductive health rights to eradicate female genital mutilation. In her professional career in Ontario, Canada, she provides legal services to families who are currently separating or divorcing and/or having decision-making responsibility, and visitation disputes. She also works with families experiencing Immigration issues, provides child protection representation and acts as Duty Counsel Advice to low income families for legal aid through Barbara Schiffer Commemorative Clinic, Toronto, Catholic Cross Cultural, Mississauga, INDUS (formerly Indian Rainbow Legal Clinic) and Salvation Army – Legal Support, Brampton.

Ms. Adams-Idode firmly believes it is important that lawyers contribute to the community, if for no other reason than to counter the negative image of lawyers that is often too prevalent. Therefore, in her effort to impact change in her community, she strives to create an inclusive space by influencing the power of working together through volunteering for not-for-profit



organizations such as the African Caribbean Council of Halton (ACCH), Association of Nigerian Community in Milton (ANCiM). She speaks on several platforms about the silent culture of domestic violence and its impact on our economic/social lifestyle.

She is also a Presenter at the Mandatory Information Program (MIP) at the Brampton Courthouse since its inception in 2010 and an Executive member of the Canadian Bar Association - CBA (Women's Law Forum).

Recently, she was recognized and awarded the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Pin for her exceptional service and dedication to support the Community in Milton.

In her not too often spare time, she loves to travel and spend time with her family.

Speaker

## Nation Cheong

Vice-President Community Opportunities  
and Mobilization

For over 20 years, Nation has dedicated his professional and personal time to community development strategies. He started on the frontlines supporting individuals impacted by chronic mental health, substance dependency and inadequate housing. Later, his work focused on positive youth development for young people across the GTA, including the influential Youth Challenge Fund and United Way's Youth Success Strategy.

Known for his integrity and ability to bridge diverse perspectives, he is a respected organizational leader, strategic partner, community animator, artist and teacher.

As United Way's VP of Community Opportunities and Mobilization, he works closely with public and private sector partners; and community service agencies to collectively plan and build more inclusive



communities including the implementation of local economic strategies. Nation oversees United Way's Research, Public Policy and Public Affairs strategies, Strategic Initiatives and UWGT's Reconciliation and Equity Action Plan.



# DAY THREE

## POWER OF INCLUSION

Strength In Our Diversity

**Sub-Theme: It Begins With Me**

Keynote Speaker

# Isaac Olowolafe Jr.

Founder and General Partner  
of Dream Maker Ventures (DMV)

Isaac Olowolafe Jr. is the Founder and General Partner of Dream Maker Ventures (DMV) a Toronto based, early-stage venture firm. DMV Fund II, “The Diversity Fund” is the firm's second fund that primarily invests in early-stage tech companies with founding teams inclusive of persons of colour, women, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ+, immigrant, refugee and indigenous entrepreneurs.

Isaac is also an award-winning real estate entrepreneur, angel investor and philanthropist. Isaac's corporation, Dream Maker Inc., successfully operates multiple divisions including a brokerage, real estate development, wealth management, property management, education, private equity and insurance. The Development division celebrated the completion of the first major mixed-use development (condos, townhomes, retail) called Dream Residences at Yorkdale, located directly across from Yorkdale Mall, and has more developments underway across the GTA. Through his love of sports, Dream Maker Developments became the jersey sponsor of the Men and Women National Basketball Team and will be participating in the 2019 World Cup in China.

Isaac received a Bachelor in Economics from the University of Toronto. He has received numerous awards and recognition, including



a Harry Jerome Business Award, an Enterprise Business Award by Planet Africa, an Arbor Award from the University of Toronto, a Business Leadership Award by Leadership and Governance Canada Inc. and a Public Service Award from the Transformation Institute for Leadership & Innovation and Toronto Board of Trade Award.

In addition to his membership in the Ryerson Innovation Circle, Isaac made a generous donation which named the Isaac Olowolafe Jr. Digital Media Experience Lab in Ryerson's iconic Student Learning Centre.

Speaker

## Maria Bosnjak

RVP Financial Planning  
Greater Toronto Area

Maria Bosnjak has 25 years of Sales and Sale Leadership experience, and is presently the RVP Financial Planning in GTR. She has held several leadership positions in GTR, most recently the Vice President for Retail Banking, Regional Vice President, Mortgage Specialists and Regional Vice President for Retail Banking in the Markham Region. Maria has also held roles in the National Office, including RBC Direct Investing, Sales Strategy, Sales Effectiveness in Contact Centres along with various roles in retail banking.

Maria has been a coach and sponsor for many people in the bank and continues to do so. She is a leader's leader and focuses on empowering others.

Maria has been involved in the community as a past member of the Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation Board and held the



position of Vice-Chair. Maria was the co-chair of the JDRF Ride of York Region from 2007 to 2009 and was also a member of the Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital Breast Health Centre Fund Raising Committee. Presently Maria is volunteering with the Mackenzie Health Hospital on the Major Gifts Committee

Speaker

## Chuks Ezeokafor

Vice President of Information Technology  
at Levitt-Safety

Chuks Ezeokafor is the Vice President of Information Technology at Levitt-Safety, Canada's leading distributor of safety products and services, with 19 branches and 400+ employees.

Chuks leads new product development, innovation, cybersecurity, B2B eCommerce and enterprise project teams at Levitt-Safety. In addition, he is co-Chair of Levitt's Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

He's held leadership roles at companies in Canada, Nigeria and the US in industries spanning Oil and Gas, Technology Consulting, Industrial Engineering and Wholesale Distribution. In addition, Chuks co-owned and led Sales at RMV Publications, owner of the 'WHERE Canada' trademark in the Canadian Rockies.



He's a member of the board of Governors at Sheridan College. Chuks is also on the Board of Trustees at the Ontario Science Centre. He also served on the Tax & Economic Affairs Committee at the Calgary Chamber of Commerce. Chuks has an MBA from York University's Schulich School of Business, and BSc and MSc degrees in Computer Science from The University of Lagos.

Speaker

# Chinyere Eni-McLean

**Vice President Commercial Financial Services Personal & Commercial Banking**

Within Royal Bank of Canada, Chinyere has led individual contributor, leader, and specialist teams to deliver premium business results. Through her stewardship of client relationships within personal, commercial banking, financial planning, and national office strategic capacities, she has enabled proactive, helpful, and relevant advice to clients leading to positive outcomes and strong business results. Chinyere successfully launched the first RBC branch and Insurance co-location in Canada in Toronto's Waterfront community. She went on to deliver premium new client acquisition results as a Senior Commercial banker. Within RBC's downtown Toronto branch community, she delivered the highest client loyalty results in the history RBC's flagship Plaza Main location. As a National Office strategist, she differentiated RBC's position in the marketplace with a first-to-market launch of a now \$100MM commercial lending program. Currently, Chinyere leads a team of commercial banking Supply Chain industry specialists in the Toronto East region who are focused on bringing the best of RBC to businesses, business owners, and their employees. Her team stewards these client relationships by demonstrating in words and in actions the positive impact the RBC team can have on client experience. She is accountable for building and executing a market strategy and action plan to capture market share and take ownership of Centre results in client experience, business performance, portfolio quality, employee engagement, and digital enablement. As an active community leader, Chinyere is a board member, advisory council participant and a passionate volunteer for several community organizations including the War Amputations of Canada Child Amputee Program, The Amputee



Coalition of Canada, and the Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation. She is an active speaker on topics related to her community engagement including the largest fundraising event in Canada, the Ride to Conquer Cancer as well as the Continuing Studies program at the University of Toronto. She has been recognized by the Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation for her impact across thousands of riders in the Ride to Conquer cancer by demonstrating what's possible as a physically challenged rider. She currently chairs the Community Investment Committee of the largest granting foundation in the country, the Ontario Trillium Foundation. In June 2021, Chinyere will join the Wilfrid Laurier University Board of Governors. Chinyere holds a Masters of Business Administration (M.B.A.) from Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto, a Bachelor of Arts from the University of British Columbia, and a Personal Financial Planning (P.F.P.) designation. A lifelong active volunteer, in 2013, Chinyere received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Award for service to Canada. In 2020, she was recognized as an RBC Global Citizen Award winner which acknowledges top-performing employees who have displayed an incredible commitment to giving time and expertise to communities by volunteering and leading charitable initiatives.

Speaker

## Segun Olude

Avid photographer & graphics designer

Segun Olude runs a collaborative graphic design studio, teaches graphic design. His professional portfolio includes a 10-year dossier of teaching graphic design at the University of Manitoba, while also producing various editorial and magazine design, corporate identities, web design, commemorative postage stamps for Canada Post, local and international event branding, including the event branding and publicity materials for TEDxWinnipeg.

'Segun is connected to various professional and community organisations in Canada. He



participates annually in community development missions with his wife, and also teaches professional development seminars in Canada and Nigeria. An engaging presenter, he is often called upon to make presentations or to speak about design, human rights, immigration, multiculturalism, and a range of other topics.

'Segun is an avid photographer.

Speaker

# Johnnie Vu

Senior Commercial Account Manager in the Real Estate and Construction Services Group

Johnnie Vu has been with RBC for over a decade. He is currently a Senior Commercial Account Manager in the Real Estate and Construction Services Group. He provides comprehensive advice on cash management, equipment leasing and real estate financing strategies to business owner. Previously he was a Community Manager leading one of RBC's largest flagship businesses where he was responsible for the implementation of sales strategies, talent management, operational effectiveness and sustaining an empowering culture. Prior to RBC Personal & Commercial Banking, Johnnie worked at RBC Dominion Securities where he assisted various portfolio managers in equity research, trading and operations. He also has previous experience working at a Fortune 100 company in corporate development, M&A and treasury services.

In his daily life he is a Lieutenant in the Canadian Navy CIC Branch. He is actively involved with the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce, Urban Land Institute, Canada LGBT+ Chamber of Commerce and on the board for the NextGen Yee Hong Community Wellness Foundation. Johnnie was the Associate Vice President Marketing and Communications with Ascend Canada and Co-Chairs the Ascend Canada @ RBC group. He also sits on the National Committee for RBC Mosaic, an employee resource group



that helps develop diverse talent. Johnnie was awarded multiple RBC Quarterly and Annual Royal Performance Awards, the Royal Canadian Legion Medal of Excellence and the RBC Global Citizen Award for his outstanding contributions to the community. Johnnie holds an MBA and Certificate in Corporate Social Responsibility from The Smith School of Business, Queen's University and a Bachelor of Commerce from the John Molson School of Business, Concordia University and recently completed Ascend Canada's Executive Insight Series and RBC's Social Impact Leadership Program.

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Our organization understands the need in the community, especially with thriving in a new culture. Feeling a sense of belonging is not only about the inability to achieve your goals due to your culture, language and more. It could also be because of lack of the basic things in life.

Some geo-political issues like, rising interest rates and inflation continues to have negative effects on many families and has reduced their purchasing power. It was really uplifting when our summer students decided to do a food drive as their project to support the community.

Global hunger numbers rose to about 828 million in 2021 according to an article dated 06/07/22 on the food and agricultural organization of the United Nations, [FAO.org](https://www.fao.org).

Together we raised about 550kg of can foods and other non-perishable items. We were also able to raise cash which will support about 1400 meals. We are super excited that we were able to do something to help our neighbors in need.



The food banks were pleasantly surprised when we opened their doors to drop off the donations and checks.

We supported, Feed Scarborough, Salvation Army, Milton; Second Harvest, Etobicoke; Knight's Table, Brampton, and Ottawa Food bank.

We would also like to appreciate all community members that supported with cash and kind donations, you are all highly appreciated.

Are you looking to support the CNP community outreach, please visit our website at [cnpngo.ca/donate](http://cnpngo.ca/donate) and collectively we can make lasting impacts in our communities.




 2022  
 COUNCIL OF NIGERIAN PROFESSIONALS INC.

## Summer Students Reflections



CNP Inc. had the honor of hiring thirteen (13) summer students this year. It is our second time participating in the government sponsored summer student programs. In 2021, we hired 6 students.

It is always wonderful to have them join the team; our aim is to empower them to be better leaders. In the last week of the 8 weeklong summer employment, we asked for their feedback about their experience at CNP. Please see below some of the responses, unfortunately, we are unable to post them all. Happy reading.

### Wallace Bepaye Ngochi

Being a business development officer for the Council of Nigerian Professionals has been the most engaging and motivating experience I have had during my time as a summer intern for the organization. I connected very well with my fellow members and other members of the organization all of whom have aided my growth.

With such a charismatic, inspirational, and supportive supervisor like Lady Abha, this experience has helped me achieve my goal in people's skills, collaboration, and communication. Due to the lessons I have learned not only from my supervisor but from my fellow members, I am confident I will continue to prosper and develop professionally and in my

own personal aspect. Within my time as a member of this organization two things that stood out to me as the most influential aspect of my development this summer, were community involvement and time management.

Throughout my internship I was able to develop and bring a positive outlook both to my community and to my workplace all through the support and mentorship of my supervisor/s. Due to my time management skills, I also developed organization and discipline skills which improved greatly.

I found my strengths to be in collaboration where I assisted my partners in setting tasks for themselves to achieve our common goals. An area of improvement I think I could have done better is my social skills. I found it a little bit challenging at the start to navigate through tricky social situations, but I have progressively been getting better at it.

I am confident in the progress and growth of my colleagues and me. If it weren't for these internships, I would not have the knowledge or skills I currently possess. I am really looking forward to where this job experience takes me to in the future.

### Ebenezer Banjo

My experience at CNP was fun and enjoyable. I really enjoyed all the events we had to attend and tasks we were assigned. When my dad was telling me about working at CNP, I was very uninterested. I thought working at CNP would be a waste of my time and summer, but due to my experience here at CNP, my expectations couldn't have been more far off. At the multicultural event, me and Wallace were talking about how before the job started, we thought we would be going into an office (maybe

we would've if we weren't online) every day and start doing paperwork as the role of a business management officer. I felt like I grew from this experience, from all the events and our meetings. I felt like I was able to learn more about life and how things really work either in real estate, credit or learning life skills and I was able to be informed about CNP's mission. I learnt more about Nigerians and Africans immigrants struggling in Canada and how CNP helped Nigerians thrive. I really learned a lot from the power of inclusion videos. Jean Augustine spoke out a lot against injustice in Canada, especially surrounding the issue of race. One thing that generally stood out for me was when she said that if you don't like something, change it. If you can't change something, change your attitude. We can support anti-black racism by speaking up. A lot of other speakers from the power of inclusion video had powerful things to say like Arthur C. Amandi, Rebecca pang, and Dan Donnelly. In our meeting we usually talked about the importance of learning about the mission, goals, and vision of CNP and we would usually review the website. I feel like working on this job really enlightened me more about the struggles of immigrants. One of the stories Lady Abha kept telling us that struck me was about the story of the guy who was overqualified for the job he wanted to fill in CNP. There are so many people who are immigrants, who are overqualified for jobs they decide to fill in because of the wrong advice they got from people in the land they migrated to. I really like how CNP creates hope for these people, and I believe CNP's vision will change the world. I Also really enjoyed going into the office where we met in person for the first time. We had a very informal conversation about credit, the five Cs of credit, budgeting, and finances. After that I really enjoyed meeting Oshobuge, Jezreel, Jasmine,

Osadeba, and Esther for the first time. My working experience here at CNP was great, I felt like I was making myself useful when I was raising those canned food donations and money donations (even the telephone etiquette, my gratitude to lady Abha because it helped with polishing my social skills). My experience working at CNP really blew me away from my initial expectations. Everyone was respectful, Lady Abha was really kind and patient even when I didn't follow instructions and I when I was late with work deadlines sometimes. I wish the best for CNP and all the workers well. Thank you Lady Abha for Hiring me.

#### **Jezreel Sol-Edeigba**

I was surrounded by the amazing community of CNP, and I worked with amazing people. I will miss everyone at CNP.

Some of the areas we worked on includes:

- Analyzed the objectives of CNP
- Networked with individuals apart of CNP
- Added critical job skills such as phone etiquette
- Listened to amazing webinars such as the leadership conferences.
- Yearned to attend the fun CNP activities and events.
- Financial literacy

It was such an exciting experience joining CNP. It was Interesting, engaging and fun working at CNP. The activities are also inspiring, educating, and motivating. My summer went by so quick.



POWER OF INCLUSION  
**AWARD**  
— CATEGORIES —

- LEADERSHIP
- YOUTH LEADERSHIP
- VOLUNTEER
- ENTERPRENERAL

## ■ POWER OF INCLUSION

### AWARDS TYPES AND RECIPIENTS

#### LEADERSHIP AWARD

- Isaac Olowolafe Jr.
- Ojo Adeniran Tewogbade
- Maria Bosnjak
- Curtis Ennis
- Dr. Olutoyin Oyelade
- Andrew Tyrrel
- Dr. Ayodele Akenroye
- Wale Osamiluyi
- Popoola Akande
- Lekan Olawoye
- Pascal Atem
- Alphonso Carter
- Rita Orji PhD
- Segun Olude
- Wunmi Adekanmbi

#### YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD

- Calah Iyase
- Immanuel Oluwatofunmi Okoroafor

#### VOLUNTEER AWARD

- Ivory Li
- Johnnie Vu
- Edosa Adams-Idode
- Claire Nsong
- Birgit Uwaila Umaigba

#### ENTERPRENEURIAL AWARD

- Michael Okolie
- Margaret Adekunle
- Yvonne Ruke Akpoveta
- Thierry Lindor

# AWARD RECIPIENT

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POWER OF INCLUSION  
LEADERSHIP AWARD

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“There's no shortage of remarkable ideas, what's missing is the will to execute them.”

– Seth Godin

POWER OF INCLUSION  
LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Isaac Olowolafe Jr.

Founder and General Partner of  
Dream Maker Ventures



Isaac Olowolafe Jr. is the Founder and General Partner of Dream Maker Ventures (DMV) a Toronto based, early-stage venture firm. DMV Fund II, “The Diversity Fund” is the firm's second fund that primarily invests in early-stage tech companies with founding teams inclusive of persons of colour, women, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ+, immigrant, refugee and indigenous entrepreneurs. Isaac is also an award-winning real estate entrepreneur, angel investor and philanthropist. Isaac's corporation, Dream Maker Inc., successfully operates multiple divisions including a brokerage, real estate development, wealth management, property management, education, private equity and insurance. The Development division celebrated the completion of the first major mixed-use development (condos, townhomes, retail) called Dream Residences at Yorkdale, located directly across from Yorkdale Mall, and has more developments underway across the GTA. Through his love of sports, Dream Maker Developments became the jersey sponsor of the Men and Women National Basketball Team and will be participating in

the 2019 World Cup in China.

Isaac received a Bachelor in Economics from the University of Toronto. He has received numerous awards and recognition, including a Harry Jerome Business Award, an Enterprise Business Award by Planet Africa, an Arbor Award from the University of Toronto, a Business Leadership Award by Leadership and Governance Canada Inc. and a Public Service Award from the Transformation Institute for Leadership & Innovation and Toronto Board of Trade Award.

In addition to his membership in the Ryerson Innovation Circle, Isaac made a generous donation which named the Isaac Olowolafe Jr. Digital Media Experience Lab in Ryerson's iconic Student Learning Centre.

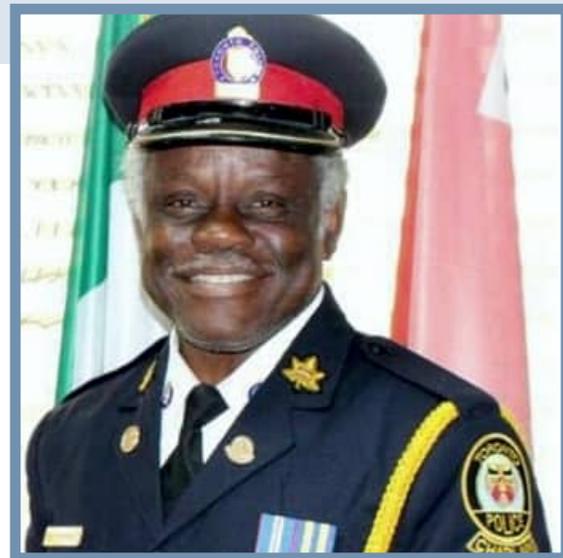
## POWER OF INCLUSION LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Ojo Adeniran Tewogbade

Police Chaplain - Toronto Police Service

I was born in Nigeria, West Africa, and migrated to Canada in 1972. I have been a Toronto resident for 49 years and I take great pride in my ability to serve the people of this great city in my capacity as a police officer. I retired as a police officer on the 1st of September, 2014 after 35 years of meritorious service. Prior to my career in policing, I had a brief career as an appliance technician with Goodwill Society. Prior to that, I worked as a powdered drink mixer for Maple Leaf Mills of Canada. Prior to that, I worked for All Tube Products as a chrome chairs grinder. And finally, prior to that, I was a member of the Canadian Armed Forces (Reserve) at 660 Fleet Street Armoury 2nd Field engineering.

I gained more experience working with



youths when I became a Sunday school teacher at North Runnymede United Church in 1973, working as a bus driver with Travel Ways Bus Transit in 1974, and working at McDonalds Restaurants.

I met my wife Frances Tewogbade in 1968 and married her three days before coming to Canada on September 14, 1972. We have three children: Elizabeth who is 47 years of age, John who is 43 years of age, and Florence who is 39 years of age. A grandfather of Mia Kemi Grace.

POWER OF INCLUSION  
LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Maria Bosnjak

RVP Financial Planning in GTR

Maria Bosnjak has 25 years of Sales and Sale Leadership experience, and is presently the RVP Financial Planning in GTR. She has held several leadership positions in GTR, most recently the Vice President for Retail Banking, Regional Vice President, Mortgage Specialists and Regional Vice President for Retail Banking in the Markham Region. Maria has also held roles in National Office, including RBC Direct Investing, Sales Strategy, Sales Effectiveness in Contact Centres along with various roles in retail banking.

Maria has been a coach and sponsor for many people in the bank and continues to do so. She is a leader's leader and focuses on empowering others.

Maria has been involved in the community as a past member of the Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation Board and held the



position of Vice-Chair. Maria was the co-chair of the JDRF Ride of York Region from 2007 to 2009 and was also a member of the Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital Breast Health Centre Fund Raising Committee. Presently Maria is volunteering with the Mackenzie Health Hospital on the Major Gifts Committee

## POWER OF INCLUSION LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Curtis Ennis

Director of Education for the  
Halton District School Board

Curtis Ennis began his career in banking before switching to education. Curtis' career portfolio during the past 25 years in education has included a variety of senior leadership positions with the Toronto District School Board, Canada's largest school board, as well as the Ontario Ministry of Education. Curtis began his career as a primary teacher and advanced through various leadership roles as a Superintendent of Education with increasing responsibilities. He is currently the Director of Education for the Halton District School Board. Curtis holds a Bachelor of Business Management (Accounting/Finance) and a Bachelor of Education and Master of Education (Language, Culture & Teaching) from York University.

Curtis has worked with many communities' initiative to improve diversity, equity and inclusion, during his time in the Toronto



District school board, and continues to be a role model and leader in the Halton community. He is a leader of leaders, as he has supported and mentored many people to go into leadership roles over the years in the school system.

Curtis lives with his partner Beverly and their four daughters.

POWER OF INCLUSION  
LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Dr. Olutoyin Oyelade

Partner at Invcap

Olutoyin holds A Doctorate in Leadership and Management from University of Maryland ( Global Campus). Olutoyin is a Partner at Invcap, a Fund Manager. She manages and oversees all aspects of business development and operations for the group. Before then, she was with Casa Developments and the Intercontinental Group. At various times in her career, she had responsibility for Funds Management and Client Management Operations in the financial services sector covering Europe, Africa and North America. She has held various decision-making roles in the vertical sectors of Financial Services, Management Consulting, Project Management and Funds Management that include: Group Executive, Funds management, Group Treasurer, Vice President, Investment Banking, Member of Asset and Liability Committee and Management, Credit Risk Committee. In other non-profit roles, she served as a Member of the National Executive Council of the Money Market Association between 2005-2009 and was instrumental to its smooth transition into the Financial Markets Dealers Association (FMDA) in line with structural changes in the global financial markets. She is actively involved in community development activities and currently serves on the Boards and



Governing Councils of the Vita Manor (A United Way Partner), Culbeat Foundation, and is a member of the Maytree Foundation, a Canadian registered Nonprofit which promotes Diversity in Corporate Governance. Olutoyin holds a degree in Philosophy, an MBA from the University of Ife. She is a graduate of the Advanced Management and Business Management programs of Wharton Business School, International Institute of Management Development, (IMD), Switzerland and Lagos Business School (in association with IESE, Spain). As President at Casafoundation, Olutoyin supervises the general management of the organization and has responsibility for external and donee relationships committee of the board.

## POWER OF INCLUSION LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Andrew Tyrrel

President of the Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton

Andrew Tyrrel is the President of the Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton. This Caribbean Association serves the entire region of Halton and is dedicated to promoting diversity and inclusion, supporting cultural development, encouraging civic engagement through volunteering, and offering arts and educational programs. During his 4 years leading the organization its impactful social programs have grown and it now touches the lives of over 200,000 Halton residents annually.

In May of 2022 Andrew's 6 year term as Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of Radius Child and Youth Services ended and he continues to volunteer on the fundraising committee in order to support providing clinical assessment and treatment services to children, adolescents and families affected by neglect and interpersonal abuse. Appointed to the Halton Regional Police Services Board by the Lieutenant Governor from 2006 to 2015, Andrew is proud to have been involved in a wide variety of policing and community-based programs and initiatives.

Since 2006 Andrew continues to serve as an Executive Committee member and President of the Oakville Renegades Track & Field Club. At present he also serves on the Board of Directors for the Oakville Community Foundation where he is Vice-Chairman of the Community Legacy Building Committee. And he sits on the Oakville Hospital Foundation Board of Directors and is the Vice-Chairman of the Community Engagement Committee.

In 2022 Andrew was presented with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Award for exemplary community service.



Professionally, Andrew Tyrrel is a Senior Investigator with expertise in complex financial frauds, professional conduct of regulated professionals and criminal prosecutions. He has held positions in private practice, the Law Society of Ontario and Intact Financial Corporation. He holds certifications from the University of Windsor Law School in Alternative Dispute Resolutions and with the National Association of Certified Fire and Explosive Investigators. He is also certified by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners and the International Association of Special Investigation Units as a specialist in insurance fraud investigations.

As a very proud Canadian citizen, Andrew has resided in Oakville for over 30 years. He is also a citizen of the United Kingdom as well as the Caribbean Island of St. Kitts and Nevis.

Andrew has completed 20 marathons, and is an avid cyclist who has competed in Ironman triathlon events throughout North America. As a licensed private pilot he enjoys seeking out remote Canadian destinations.

POWER OF INCLUSION  
LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Dr. Ayodele Akenroye

Federal Crown Prosecutor with the Public Prosecution Service of Canada

Dr. Ayodele Akenroye is a Federal Crown Prosecutor with the Public Prosecution Service of Canada/Government of Canada and an Independent Arbitrator.

He is the Chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the ICC Canada Arbitration Committee and a member of the ICC Taskforce Committee on the Taskforce on Disability Inclusion in International Arbitration. He sits on the Advisory Committee of International Centre for Dispute Resolution - Canada and he is a Director of the Canada Branch of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrator, London, U.K. He has acted as a sole arbitrator in different complex commercial disputes.

Before his current positions, he was a Tribunal Member with the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada/Government of Canada, he was in private law practice with varied experience in different areas of law such as corporate and commercial law, banking, insurance, joint ventures, ethics, and anti-corruption. He has worked with international organizations such as the International Criminal Court, The Hague Netherlands, and The International Anti-Corruption Academy, Vienna, Austria amongst others. He has taught classes as a Sessional Instructor at the University of Toronto, McGill University, and the University of Winnipeg.

Also, he is active in his local community; currently sit on the board of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Simcoe



County, ON and Elizabeth Fry Society, Simcoe Muskoka, ON. In the past, he has sat on the Boards of Directors of the Halton County Law Association, Milton, ON, the Manitoba Association of Rights and Liberties, Winnipeg, Manitoba and was elected Member of the Training Committee of the International Criminal Court Bar Association, The Hague, Netherlands.

He obtained his LL.B. degree from the Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria, earned my LL.M. Degree from the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, and his doctorate in international criminal law from McGill University Faculty of Law. Further, he is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, London, UK.

Outside of his professional and educational accomplishments, he is an amateur photographer and an avid cyclist with a particular interest in winter biking with his fat bike.

## POWER OF INCLUSION LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Wale Osamiluyi

Engineer and the president of Davtos Inc.

Wale is an Engineer and the president of Davtos Inc., a comprehensive multidisciplinary firm with extensive expertise and experience in Project Management, Civil Engineering, Electro-Mechanical Engineering and Water Resources Development and Management. He also founded Sato Engineering Nigeria Limited, a foremost Building, Civil, Electro-Mechanical and Water Resources Engineering Company in Nigeria in 1997.

Under his leadership, he guided the companies through several significant milestones and initiatives, leading with empathy, inspiring positivity and aggressively growing them through excellent service delivery. He ensured everyone feels they belong and free to be themselves by welcoming, valuing, creating, maintaining and enhancing an equitable, diverse and inclusive environment.

He holds an MBA Global Business degree from the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto and a Global Executive MBA degree from the University of St Gallen, Switzerland. In addition, he has an MSc degree in Project Management from the University of Cape Town, South Africa and earned his Bachelor of Engineering degree from the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

He is a Registered Member of the Council for The Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria (COREN), Member of The Nigerian Society of Engineers (MNSE), Member of The Nigerian Institute of Management (MNIM), Member of The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (MRICS) among other professional bodies and a Fellow of The Institute for Government Research and Leadership Technology.

Wale is a Rotarian and the immediate past president as well as past chair strategic planning of the Rotary Club of Milton, District 7080, Ontario, Canada. He is also a past president of the Rotary Club of Oke-Ona Egba, District 9110, Nigeria.

Along with keen strategic vision, a hallmark of Wale's inclusive leadership style is his ability to build relationships and create a collegial, "people-centric" environment within organizations. He is committed to cultivating relationships, cooperation, and a sense of shared purpose in serving the greater good. He believes that true leadership entails being aware of his own biases and actively seeking out and considering different perspectives to inform his decision-making and for effective collaboration with others.

Wale as Chair Strategic Planning for the Rotary Club of Milton spearheaded the structured and systematic process, where the board and members established the vision of the club's future and then developed and implemented the actions necessary to achieve that future. This afforded the club to discover what makes it unique and build upon those core values in all its efforts. Making the club more vibrant and active with the members not only having fun but



also serving communities with projects that have real and lasting impact with a continuity of vision from year to year, which has kept the club moving toward fulfilling its shared purpose.

Under his leadership as president of the Rotary Club of Milton, the club embarked on numerous projects and initiatives towards making life a better place for all, earning the club a Rotary Citation, which is the most significant award a Rotary club can achieve, for the Rotary year. As president of the Rotary Club of Oke-Ona Egba, the club built and equipped a hospital for the ItaElega community, in Ogun State, Nigeria in partnership with Dundee Township Rotary Club Illinois, USA, among other great feats.

Personally, he has embarked on several projects to enhance community development like construction and donation of toilets to schools, water supply systems to communities as well as donation of books and uniforms to schools and underprivileged children in Nigeria.

Wale is a multiple Paul Harris Fellow of Rotary International and has received other numerous awards and honors. They include an award and a Certificate of Excellence by the Rotary Club of Milton with deep appreciation for his outstanding and astute leadership and guidance to the club as president, Outstanding Young Person's Award from Junior Chamber International and an Award in Recognition of Excellent Performance, Dedication to Duty and Tireless Service to Humanity from Rotary Club of Oke-Ona Egba among others. Wale and his wife Jumoke are blessed with two children (daughter Toni and son, Tobii). In his free time, he enjoys golf, piano and spending time with families and friends as well as travelling.

POWER OF INCLUSION  
LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Popoola Akande

A serial entrepreneur, a seasoned consultant

Popoola Akande is a serial entrepreneur, a seasoned consultant with a high level of professionalism. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria He holds a BA Degree in Banking, Insurance & Risk Management from Sheffield Hallam University, and a master's degree in accounting from Glasgow Caledonian University, both in the United Kingdom.

He is a Financial Analyst, and a Business Professional with proven abilities in Project Management, Strategic Planning, Infrastructure, Enterprise Application, Process Integration/Management and Change Management.

Before setting up his own group of companies, Popoola had worked with a few



banks around the world such as Citibank, Barclays Bank, Canadian Western Bank and ATB Financial as well as the largest housing company in Europe, Glasgow Housing Corporation.

Popoola is an astute advocate for community development and his passion for growth propelled him to set up Canadian Imperial College, an institution providing an enduring legacy to humanity through education.

## POWER OF INCLUSION LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Lekan Olawoye

Founder and CEO  
Black Professionals in Tech Network (BPTNO)

Lekan Olawoye is the Founder and CEO of Black Professional in Tech Network (BPTN), the largest Black tech and business community in North America. Lekan was one of Canada's Top 40 Under 2021 for his indelible mark as a thought leader in Black tech. With a mandate to disrupt the network gap facing Black professionals, Lekan created - BFUTR - largest, Black professional summit in North America. In February 2022, Lekan and his team also launched Obsidi by BPTN, an all-in-one networking platform for Black professionals to access more opportunities and level up their career.

Before BPTN, Lekan was the program director then lead executive of Talent Development at MaRs Discovery District, Toronto. There he guided professionals in adapting to new environments in fast growing companies. Previously, he was Executive Director of For Youth Initiative, Toronto, working on policy



and strategic development. In 2013, Lekan also served as chair of the Ontario government.

Lekan has a MSW in Social Work with a specialization in non-profit management from the University of Toronto and a BSW in social work from Ryerson University. He volunteered with the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigration (OCASI), Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

Lekan received media coverage in The Globe and Mail, the Toronto Star, and TechCrunch.

POWER OF INCLUSION  
LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Pascal Atem

Scrum Master with Nissan Canada

My name is Pascal Atem currently residing in Markham, ON. I am a certified Scrum Master by profession working for Nissan Canada.

I have been living in Toronto, Canada for the last 15 years. I migrated from the USA to Canada after spending several years in the US. I was born in Cameroon and completed most of my education there up to graduate level. I hold a Bachelor's degree in Bilingual Letters from The University of Yaounde, Cameroon and a Teaching Diploma from the Higher Teachers Training Institution "Ecole NormaleSuperieure". I know this brief bio gives away my age. I am married with two beautiful daughters relatively grown now as the 1st will be graduating the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus soon and the 2nd is in High School at the Bill Crothers Secondary School. We are a fairly athletic family even though sometimes my stature doesn't reveal that.

Enough about me and my family...the reason I would have been shortlisted for this Award is by virtue of my community involvement. I am currently the Chair of the Music Africa Board of Directors. I am going on my fifth year at the helm and have been involved with Music Africa for over ten years. For those of you who may not know what Music Africa does, we organize and showcase the largest African Festival in North America. The AFROFEST. Please check out our website at [afrofest.ca](http://afrofest.ca). Just like the CNP we honor Africans in the



Greater Toronto Area who contribute to the overall well-being and sustainability of our community on a daily basis with our Community Shield Award. We are watching the work you are doing individually and collectively. Afrofest is spreading it's wings and we are attracting partnerships in the continent. At the same time I will be honored here in Canada with the "Power of Inclusion" leadership Award, Music Africa will be celebrating its 2ndAfrofest Africa in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. We had our 1st edition in Ghana.

I live and breed community building. I have been involved all my life with multiple ventures showcasing our cultural heritage. Africa is big and has a lot to bring to our world in terms of culture and music. I have made that my focus and crusade and I am happy that a lot of you are joining me in this mission.

POWER OF INCLUSION  
LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Alphonso Carter

Black Community Liaison Officer  
for the Toronto Police Service

PC Alphonso Carter 16 years with Toronto  
Police Service.

Worked majority of his career at 41  
division in Scarborough where he worked  
as a School Resource Officer for 6 years  
engaging with students and developing  
programs to build relationships.



PC Carter is currently working with  
Community Partnerships and  
Engagement Unit where he holds the  
position of Black Community Liaison  
Officer for the Toronto Police Service.

POWER OF INCLUSION  
LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Rita Orji PhD

Computer Science Professor, a Canada Research Chair in Persuasive Technology, and the Director of the Persuasive Computing Lab

Rita is a Computer Science Professor, a Canada Research Chair in Persuasive Technology, and the Director of the Persuasive Computing Lab who happens to be a LinkedIn Influencer. We steer the discussion! I am among the Top 1% with respect to engagement on my posts on LinkedIn.

I am open to partnership and collaboration with companies and big organizations in areas related to Brand Promotion, Brand Ambassador, Technology Innovation, Behaviour Change Systems, Technology for Public and Social Goods, Humane Technology, Internet of Behaviour, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in STEM, Women, and Youth Empowerment, etc.

I am also a motivational speaker who is passionate about inspiring the next generation. I am open to serving as an ambassador for multinationals for a cause that I am passionate about.



You can reach me at "contact.ritaorji@gmail.com" for any inquiries related to partnership, ambassadorship, collaboration, promotion, and speech invitation.

If you are inviting me for a keynote, guest speaker, panelist, please make reasonable compensation plans.

## POWER OF INCLUSION LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Segun Olude

Avid photographer & graphics designer

Segun Olude runs a collaborative graphic design studio, teaches graphic design. His professional portfolio includes a 10-year dossier of teaching graphic design at the University of Manitoba, while also producing various editorial and magazine design, corporate identities, web design, commemorative postage stamps for Canada Post, local and international event branding, including the event branding and publicity materials for TEDxWinnipeg. 'Segun is connected to various professional and community organisations in Canada. He participates annually in community development missions with his wife, and also teaches



professional development seminars in Canada and Nigeria. An engaging presenter, he is often called upon to make presentations or to speak about design, human rights, immigration, multiculturalism, and a range of other topics.

'Segun is an avid photographer.

## POWER OF INCLUSION LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Wunmi Adekanmbi

An ecosystem builder, immigrant advocate and a certified professional coach

Wunmi Adekanmbi is an ecosystem builder, immigrant advocate and a certified professional coach with a commitment to community prosperity.

She founded, organizes and hosts Immigrant Techies Alberta - a currently 426-member meetup group of immigrant tech enthusiasts and career pivoters - helping bridge newcomers into Alberta's innovation ecosystem.

She's also the Founder of ReSkill Calgary (<https://reskillcalgary.ca/>) - an organization that helps employers solve their tech talent gap problem by leveraging the vast pool of competent immigrant professionals.

She is very active on the Alberta tech scene and enjoys bringing people together. She also co-hosts the Rainforest Alberta's Leaders Innovators and Big Ideas (LIBI) Podcast.

With a career that has spanned academia, project management, change management, enterprise digital transformation, product management and customer



experience, Wunmi gives back to the immigrant community by providing support in the following areas:

- navigating the Alberta tech ecosystem
- future of work strategy
- essential skills for tech careers
- individual career mapping
- hosting, facilitating and speaking at tech events

Wunmi lives in Calgary with her husband and two beautiful daughters.

# AWARD RECIPIENT

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## YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD

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“Serving my generation with excellence will in turn mean my generation can lead with excellence.”

- Onyi Anyado

## POWER OF INCLUSION YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Calah Iyase

Media Volunteer and former Business Development Officer for Council of Nigerian Professionals

Calah Iyase is a Media Volunteer and former Business Development Officer for Council of Nigerian Professionals. A winner of the Black History Month Essay contest, as well as one of the winners of the 2021 TD BEX Youth Hackathon. She is an activist for the black community and believes in equity. She used to manage the Oshawa Riding Instagram account of FutureMajority, and is now a member of her school's Diversity Club. Art and dance are her hobbies while maintaining her consistent honor roll placement in high



school. Currently, she is the Minister of Incoming Students at her Student Council, and anticipates the journey of becoming an outstanding Medical Doctor who takes responsibility of children, which is inspired by caring for her two younger brothers.

POWER OF INCLUSION  
YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD

# Immanuel Oluwatofunmi Okoroafor

Digital team member with African Caribbean  
Council of Halton

Immanuel was born in Lagos Nigeria and migrated to Canada at the age of Six (6).

He is an Honours graduate with a double major in Law & Justice and Political Science. He is currently studying Law at The University of Dundee, while also managing a consulting business.

Throughout his youth he has followed his mother to volunteer in many different places and events. He has volunteered with Knight's Table, Brampton, Mississauga Food bank and



JA Central.

He has been volunteering with CNP Inc. since its inception in 2018. He is also a digital team member with African Caribbean Council of Halton (ACCH).

# AWARD RECIPIENT

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## POWER OF INCLUSION VOLUNTEER AWARD

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“Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

– Martin Luther King, Jr.

## POWER OF INCLUSION VOLUNTEER AWARD

### Ivory Li

Branch Manager with RBC

Ivory Li is a Branch Manager with RBC who has over 11 years of experience in the financial industry. As a leader at work, she mentors and guides her team members to success. In her spare time Ivory loves helping others and giving back to the community. She believes the saying “we rise by lifting others “. As a newcomer herself she realized the hardship of a changing environment. She becomes a newcomer advocate, and partners with different organizations to help newcomers settle in Canada. Helping youth is also one of her passions, she is actively involved with JA achievement and is a future launch champion with RBC, to help the younger generation to prepare them to join



the workforce. CNP holds a very special place in her heart because it's such a wonderful charitable organization dedicated to help people.

POWER OF INCLUSION  
VOLUNTEER AWARD

# Johnnie Vu

Senior Commercial Account Manager in the Real Estate and Construction Services Group

Johnnie Vu has been with RBC for over a decade. He is currently a Senior Commercial Account Manager in the Real Estate and Construction Services Group. He provides comprehensive advice on cash management, equipment leasing and real estate financing strategies to business owner. Previously he was a Community Manager leading one of RBC's largest flagship businesses where he was responsible for the implementation of sales strategies, talent management, operational effectiveness and sustaining an empowering culture. Prior to RBC Personal & Commercial Banking, Johnnie worked at RBC Dominion Securities where he assisted various portfolio managers in equity research, trading and operations. He also has previous experience working at a Fortune 100 company in corporate development, M&A and treasury services.

In his daily life he is a Lieutenant in the Canadian Navy CIC Branch. He is actively involved with the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce, Urban Land Institute, Canada LGBT+ Chamber of Commerce and on the board for the NextGen Yee Hong Community Wellness Foundation. Johnnie was the Associate Vice President Marketing and Communications with Ascend Canada and Co-



Chairs the Ascend Canada @ RBC group. He also sits on the National Committee for RBC Mosaic, an employee resource group that helps develop diverse talent. Johnnie was awarded multiple RBC Quarterly and Annual Royal Performance Awards, the Royal Canadian Legion Medal of Excellence and the RBC Global Citizen Award for his outstanding contributions to the community. Johnnie holds an MBA and Certificate in Corporate Social Responsibility from The Smith School of Business, Queen's University and a Bachelor of Commerce from the John Molson School of Business, Concordia University and recently completed Ascend Canada's Executive Insight Series and RBC's Social Impact Leadership Program.

## POWER OF INCLUSION VOLUNTEER AWARD

# Edosa Adams-Idode

Executive member of the Canadian Bar Association  
- CBA (Women's Law Forum)

Edosa Adams-Idode is a mother of teenage boys who love basketball. She is a wife, volunteer, mentor and a lawyer by profession.

She was called to the Nigerian Bar in 1999 and Ontario Bar in 2007 and holds a Master's degree in Dispute Resolution from York University, Toronto.

She personifies herself as a voice for the voiceless with a purpose to achieve equity, fairness and leadership by example. While in Nigeria, she advocated for reproductive health rights to eradicate female genital mutilation. In her professional career in Ontario, Canada, she provides legal services to families who are currently separating or divorcing and/or having decision-making responsibility, and visitation disputes. She also works with families experiencing Immigration issues, provides child protection representation and acts as Duty Counsel Advice to low income families for legal aid through Barbara Schiffer Commemorative Clinic, Toronto, Catholic Cross Cultural, Mississauga, INDUS (formerly Indian Rainbow Legal Clinic) and Salvation Army – Legal Support, Brampton.

Ms. Adams-Idode firmly believes it is important that lawyers contribute to the community, if for no other reason than to counter the negative image of lawyers that is often too prevalent. Therefore, in her effort to impact change in her community, she strives to create an inclusive



space by influencing the power of working together through volunteering for not-for-profit organizations such as the African Caribbean Council of Halton (ACCH), Association of Nigerian Community in Milton (ANCiM). She speaks on several platforms about the silent culture of domestic violence and its impact on our economic/social lifestyle.

She is also a Presenter at the Mandatory Information Program (MIP) at the Brampton Courthouse since its inception in 2010 and an Executive member of the Canadian Bar Association - CBA (Women's Law Forum).

Recently, she was recognized and awarded the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Pin for her exceptional service and dedication to support the Community in Milton.

In her not too often spare time, she loves to travel and spend time with her family.

POWER OF INCLUSION  
VOLUNTEER AWARD

## Claire Nsong

Volunteers with CNP facilitating  
French classes

Claire Nsong received her Bachelors of Education in Curriculum studies and teaching from the University of Buea, Cameroon. She is a certified Scrum Master with over 10 years of banking experience. Claire is a teacher, coach, mentor and community leader. She is passionate about leading teams in their agile journey and currently working for a Crown Corporation. She also serves as a president of Victoria Association Canada(Cameroon) and



volunteers with CNP facilitating French classes.

Claire loves spending time with family, reading, cooking and hanging out with her girlfriends.

POWER OF INCLUSION  
VOLUNTEER AWARD

## Birgit Uwaila Umaigba

Clinical Instructor at Centennial College

Birgit Uwaila Umaigba is a Clinical Instructor at Centennial College, a mentor, speaker, and critical-care/emergency room nurse in the Greater Toronto Area. She has extensive experience in Emergency Room and Critical Care nursing and teaches across a broad range of clinical/academic settings. She is currently working as a Professor in the Critical Care program at Centennial College, Scarborough Ontario. Birgit is a vocal advocate for anti-racist healthcare and education, nurse wage increases, improvements to labour conditions and the increased employment of Internationally Educated Health Care Professionals (IEHPs) across Canada. Her advocacy and scholarship have focused on promoting a healthcare system where diverse ethnic groups are represented in leadership positions. She has published opinion pieces on these and related subjects in media outlets across the country and internationally. She regularly serves as a coach, consultant and



speaker for a variety of audiences in healthcare, education and immigration related topics. Also, she has commentaries and articles on nursing advocacy in the Toronto Star, Toronto Life, Chatelaine, Al-Jazeera, Forbes Magazine and has appeared on TVO, CTV, CP24, Global news, CBC, and NewsX India. Birgit is committed to creating an inclusive and culturally-sensitive healthcare to address anti-Black racism in nursing while promoting the health and well-being of Black people. She is originally from Nigeria and currently lives in Canada with her husband, daughter, sister and nephew. She enjoys singing.

# AWARD RECIPIENT

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POWER OF INCLUSION  
ENTREPRENEURAL AWARD

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“Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

## POWER OF INCLUSION ENTERPRENEUR AWARD

# Michael Okolie

IT Professional, owner and a Director  
at Netact Services Inc.

Michael is a seasoned IT Professional, owner and a Director at Netact Services Inc. (NASCI). NASCI is a multi-software, IT solutions and services provider. We help small, medium-sized and large-scale businesses by transforming their current IT services from reactive to proactive and provides a modern experience that is innovative and future-ready. NASCI provides a brand portfolio of IT software and services; encompassing all components of the IT organization, the people, process and technology.

Michael has over 25 years record of achievement and demonstrated success in planning and delivering tech projects in Software Development, Digital Transformation, Cybersecurity, ERP, CRM, E-commerce as well as business and



manufacturing process improvement. He is highly regarded for leading global business and strategies to achieve stellar growth for industry leaders. He's an out-of-the-box, visionary thinker who champions innovative solutions to elevate organizational performance

He has completed a broad range of IT training and certifications in MCSA, CCNA, CCNP, Certified Project Manager and Scrum Master, Business Analyst Professional, and a host of customized tech certification. He holds diploma in Mathematics/Statistics and IT, a

POWER OF INCLUSION  
ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

## Margaret Adekunle

Founder of ATB Black team members Network.

I'm a Diversity and Inclusion Strategist and the Founder of ATB Black team members Network.

I founded the Black team members network to advance the Inclusion of Black team members by providing development opportunities and creating diverse talents throughout the organization. My vision is to create a pathway to leadership for all underrepresented groups.

I am committed to bringing Inclusion, Diversity, Human Right and a Sense of belonging to the forefront through education and community initiatives.

Teaching and mentoring new immigrants on how to adapt to the Canadian workplace culture is a cause that has been fulfilling for



me.

With over 18 years of experience in retail banking, developing employees, creating a safe environment, and helping employees feel a sense of belonging is a priority for me.

I completed my MBA at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops BC.

POWER OF INCLUSION  
ENTREPRENEURIAL AWARD

# Yvonne Ruke Akpoveta

Change Management Strategist & Advisor,  
and Founder of The Change Leadership

Yvonne is a Change Management Strategist & Advisor, Founder of The Change Leadership, and a Change Leadership Advocate with over 20 years of experience helping professionals and organizations to navigate through change, most especially in today's disruptive environment. She also sits on the Board of Directors for the Ontario Education Quality and Accountability Office.

She is passionate about helping professionals and organizations lead and respond to change better & faster, for the greater benefit of the society. She believes that change done right, provides invaluable benefits to stakeholders and the community at large.

She has worked with a broad range of organizations globally including RBC, TD, Deloitte, Loblaws, Ontario Public Service and JP Morgan Chase to lead and manage their Strategic, Technology and Regulatory Change Initiatives. She is the founder of The Change Leadership, a community focused on



preparing leaders, change agents and organizations to lead and respond to change in today's fast-paced and disruptive business environment.

She holds a BSc honours in Business Information Technology & Marketing from London Guildhall University, an MBA from Warwick Business School, England, and a Change Leadership Certificate from Cornell University.

She works closely with executives and professionals to help them more effectively lead and drive change in their organizations. She is a published author, speaker and change catalyst.

POWER OF INCLUSION  
ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

## Thierry Lindor

An award-winning entrepreneur,  
a Canadian G20 YEA & UN Delegate

Thierry Lindor is an award-winning entrepreneur, a Canadian G20 YEA & UN Delegate. The active citizen has closely collaborated with Nobel peace prize laureates, Malala & Vice President Al Gore. In 2019, he won the Black Tech Matters “Innovative Entrepreneur of the Year” award in Washington DC. That same year, he was recognized at the United Nations as one of the Global Top 100 under 40 most Influential people of African Descent, an honour he shared with Naomi Osaka, Drake & Meghan Markle to name a few. At the beginning of the Pandemic, he launched a platform called “Colors Of COVID” which collects race-based data and the results have since been published in one of Europe's top scientific journals. In 2021 he Co-Founded the Federation of African Canadian Economics(FACE) which raised \$330M with the Canadian Government to support Canadian



Entrepreneurs of African descent. His latest venture, Happly aims to reduce economic inequalities by providing access to funding opportunities for business owners with an intentional focus on marginalized entrepreneurs. In 2022 Thierry was named Valedictorian of the prestigious Next Ai and HEC Accelerator while his company won the 2022 TOP Venture award from BMO and the DMZ AMEX award.

# A GREAT READ

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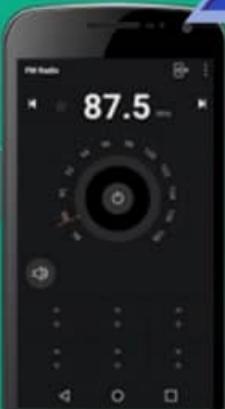
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