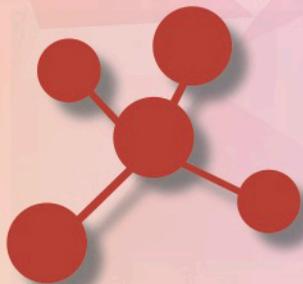


The Association of Chinese American Professionals

# Diversity Summit 2018

## Winning through Inclusion



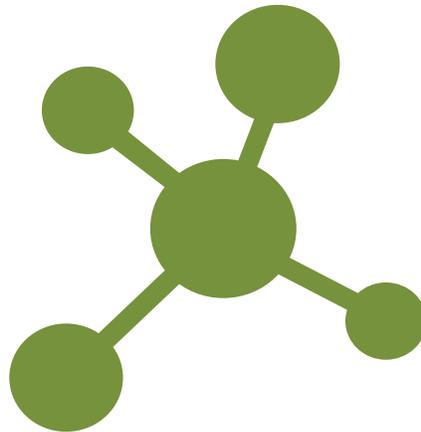
Friday, May 4, 2018  
Sugar Land Marriott  
16090 City Walk  
Sugar Land, TX 77479

[www.diversitysummit.org](http://www.diversitysummit.org)

Welcome to

*18th Annual Diversity Summit*

# **Winning through Inclusion**



*May 4, 2018*

Sugar Land Marriott Town Square  
Sugar Land, Texas

# Diversity Summit 2018

## Program

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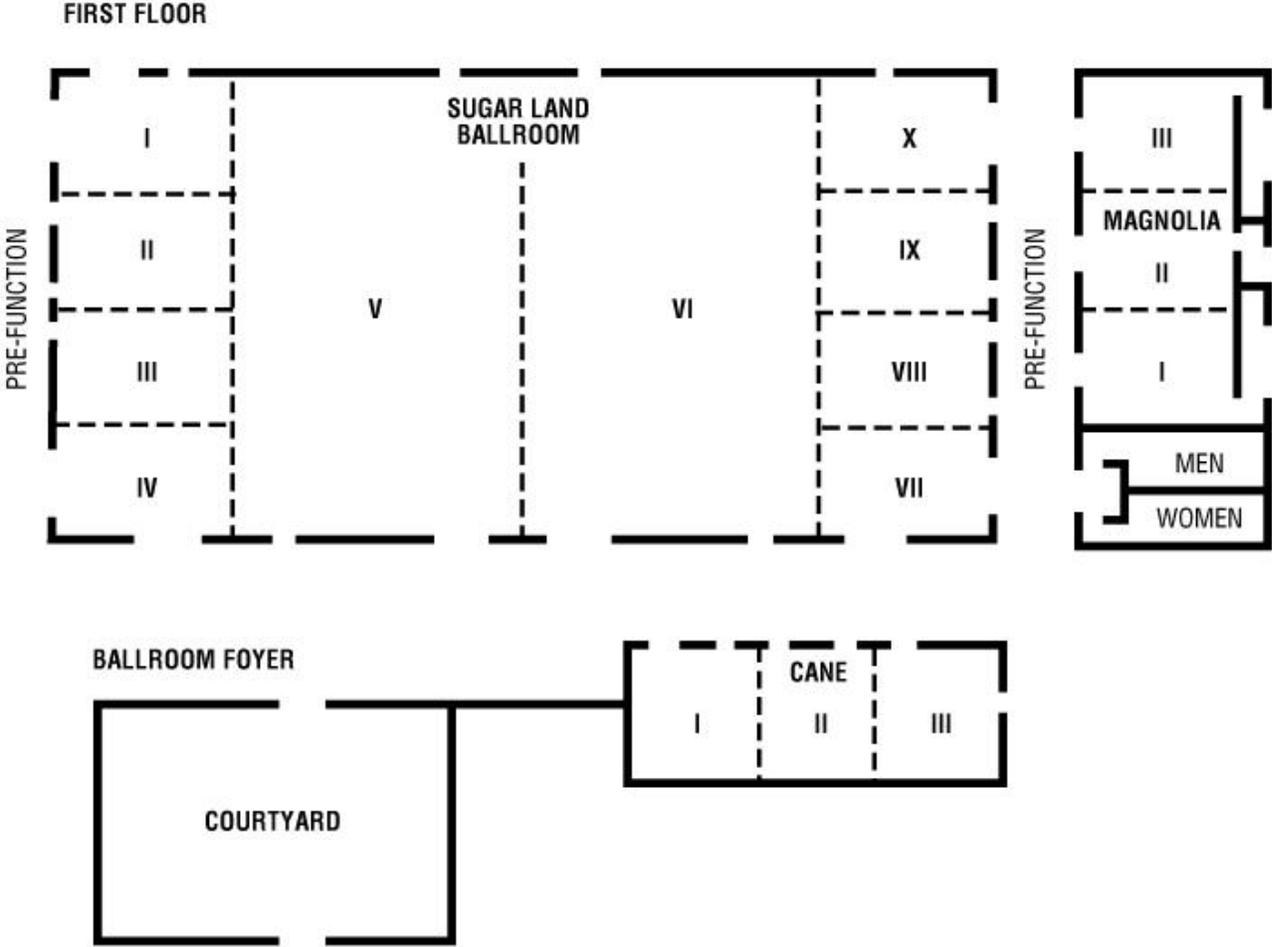
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## Program-at-a-Glance

Time	Event	Room
7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Conference Registration	Conference Center Foyer
8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.	Pre-Opening Session on best practices of D&I.	Sugar Land Ballroom VII-VIII
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Corporate Exhibits Coach’s Corner	Cane I-III
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Sponsor Exhibits	Conference Center Foyer
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Welcome</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Welcome Remarks: <i>Cecil Fong, Diversity Summit Executive Director</i>            Honorary Chair Remarks:  <i>Joanna Nolte, Manager Equal Opportunity and D&amp;I, Shell U.S.</i>  <i>Dr. Antonio D. Tillis, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social            Sciences and M. D. Anderson Professor in Hispanic Studies,            University of Houston</i></p>	Sugar Land Ballroom VI
Concurrent Sessions 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.		
A	Inclusive Leadership	Sugar Land Ballroom VI
B	Creating a Safe and Harassment Free Working Environment	Sugar Land Ballroom VII-VIII
C	Supplier Diversity	Sugar Land Ballroom IX-X
10:30 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.	Networking Break	Conference Center Foyer
10:50 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Plenary Session: Executive Panel on Inclusion Practices</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Brett Perlman, CEO, Center for Houston’s Future</i>  <i>Dr. Cesar Maldonado, Chancellor, Houston Community College</i>  <i>Dr. Veronica Martin, Chief Nurse Officer, HCA Women’s Hospital</i></p>	Sugar Land Ballroom VI
12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luncheon</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emcee: <i>Catherine Matusow, Houstonia Magazine</i>            Diversity Champion Award Ceremony</p>	Sugar Land Ballroom V
1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Networking Break	Conference Center Foyer
Concurrent Sessions 2:00 p.m. – 3:10 p.m.		
A	Diverse Abilities: Leveraging All Abilities to Build High-Performing Organizations	Sugar Land Ballroom VII-VIII
B	Are Employee Resource Groups Still Relevant?	Sugar Land Ballroom VI
C	Gender 101 – Shedding Light on Gender Identity	Sugar Land Ballroom IX-X
3:10 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Networking Reception and Door Prizes Drawing	Conference Center Foyer

**Diversity Summit**  
Sugar Land Marriott Town Square

**Conference Center Floor Plan**



All conference activities are located on the first floor.

## A Welcome Message from Diversity Summit Co-Chair

*Joanna Nolte*  
*Equal Opportunity and US D&I Manager, Shell Oil Company*

May 4, 2018

Dear Summit Participants and Guests:

Welcome to the 18th annual Diversity Summit, celebrating diversity and inclusion in the Greater Houston area. Shell is honored to continue our long-standing sponsorship of the Summit, and partner with its dedicated team of organizers at the Association of Chinese American Professionals. Special thanks to Cecil Fong, Shell retiree, for his leadership with this event.

Shell is an international energy company with expertise in the exploration, production, refining and marketing of oil and natural gas, and the manufacturing and marketing of chemicals. Our strategy is to strengthen our position as a leading energy company by providing oil and gas and low-carbon energy as the world's energy system changes. Safety and social responsibility are fundamental to our business approach.



This year's theme of 'Winning through Inclusion' resonates strongly with us. At Shell, we believe that when our differences are valued and respected, people are more comfortable speaking up and contributing. It is through this rich dialogue that we can add more business value for our organization, and enjoy a more engaging work environment.

Along with Co-Chair, Dr. Antonio Tillis, we are also proud to recognize the 2018 Diversity Summit Champion Award recipients:

- Nancy Levicki, President and Co-Founder, Dress for Success Houston - Community Diversity Champion
- Stanley Kazibwe, Marketing and Business Development Associate, Bechtel – Corporate Diversity Champion

Through their leadership, Nancy and Stanley continue building diverse communities in Greater Houston and make a meaningful impact in people's lives. We are grateful for their vision and dedication.

We look forward to your active participation today, and hope that you take away new perspectives and appreciation for the value of diversity and inclusion; both the impact it can make in organizations, and the difference it can make to us as individuals.

Best wishes,

*Joanna Nolte*  
Equal Opportunity and US D&I Manager, Shell Oil Company



## **A Welcome Message from Diversity Summit Co-Chair**

*Dr. Antonio D. Tillis, Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences,  
University of Houston*

May 4, 2018

Dear Summit Participants and Guests:

Welcome to the 18th Annual Diversity Summit! On behalf of the University of Houston's College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS), I want to extend my sincerest thanks to Mr. Cecil Fong, the Association of Chinese American Professionals and Niya Blair, director of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion at UH, for their leadership and commitment to organizing such a meaningful event, which brings together people from across all sectors of Greater Houston to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace.



UH and CLASS are committed to continuing our longstanding partnership with the Summit and the association's amazing team of professionals who seek to remind all of us of the importance of collaboration and the celebration of diversity.

As dean of CLASS, I oversee 14 academic departments and programs, which is the largest and most diverse of the 15 academic colleges on the campus. CLASS has a graduating population of more than 11,000 students annually and over 600 faculty members.

In CLASS, we are fortunate to have academic units that are a reflection of our rich diversity and inclusion across the UH campus, such as the Department of Modern and Classical Languages (MCL), which is home to the Chinese Studies Program. MCL provides students with a wonderful opportunity to experience the rich heritage and cultures of Asia, Europe, and Latin America. Additionally, the African American Studies Program and the Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Program have a focus that celebrates diversity and inclusion within the faculty, curriculum, programming and community engagement.

This year's theme "Winning through Inclusion" resonates throughout CLASS as we seek to demonstrate our continual efforts to bridge communities throughout our academic community and across the city of Houston.

In closing, I consider it an honor to represent UH as an Honorary Co-Chair along with Joanna Nolte of the Shell Oil Company for this year's Diversity Summit. Congratulations to the 2018 Diversity Summit Champion Award recipients, Stanley Kazibwe and Nancy Levicki, for their stellar contributions to our community.

Cordially,

*Antonio D. Tillis*, Dean

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, and M. D. Anderson Professor in Hispanic Studies

## **Corporate Sponsors**

### ***Gold***

*Enbridge*

*Shell Oil*

### ***Silver***

*BP*

*CenterPoint Energy*

*Chevron*

*ConocoPhillips*

*Rice University*

*University of Houston*

### ***Bronze***

*Bechtel*

*Deloitte*

*H-E-B*

*Houston Community College*

*Hsiu-My Liu*

*Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital*

### ***In-Kind***

*Cole Chemical*

*DoubleTree by Hilton*

*Madras Pavilion*

*METRO*

*Outreach Strategists*

*Pink Petro*

*Voice of Asia*

## **Collaborating Organizations**

*Indo American Chamber of Commerce*

*International Coach Federation – Houston*

# **Diversity Summit Planning Committee**

## **Honorary Co-Chairs**

Joanna Nolte      Shell Oil  
Dr. Antonio D. Tillis      University of Houston

## **Executive Director**

Cecil Fong

## **Conference Co-Leads**

Dolly Brenneman      Soaring to Greatness  
Chuping Huang      President, Association of Chinese American  
   Professionals

## **Committee Members**

Helen Ye De La Rosa	BP
Marylynn Kallina Matthew, Jewel Smith	CenterPoint Energy
Gaurav Seth	Chevron
Ingrid Hill	Cole Chemical
Elizabeth Campbell, Elaine Decanio	Consultant
Carla Kuaiwa	Cross Consultant
Rohby Mitchell	Enbridge
David Cross	Houston Community College
Jagdip Ahluwalia	Indo-American Chamber of Commerce
Roland Manzano	METRO
M. Helen Cavazos	MH Cavazos Associates
David Medina	Rice University
Tim Fischer	Russell Fischer, LLC
Ariana Robinson Danquah, Deborah Wilkins	Shell Oil
John Sequeira	TL One Partner
Niya Blair	University of Houston
Jaymie Woods	L.L.Gold Consulting, LLC
Daniel Chen, Stephen Huang	Association of Chinese American Professionals
Grace Lin, Betty Tung	

## **Conference Logistics**

Betty Tung      Hotel Logistics  
Grace Lin      Treasurer & Registration  
Frank Lin      Website  
Lee Zhen Wang      Photographer

## **Program Book Editor**

Stephen Huang

## 2018 Diversity Summit Session Schedule

Time	Event	Location
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7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Registration	Conference Center Foyer
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*Six SHRM continuing education credits are available for attending the conference.*

8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.	Pre-Opening Session	Sugar Land Ballroom VII-VIII
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Facilitator: **Elizabeth Campbell, Esq.**

*This is a small group discussion of best practices to advance Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace.*

9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Sponsor Exhibits	Conference Center Foyer
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9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Coach's Corner	Cane I-III
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*Professional coaches from International Coach Federation - Houston will be offering complimentary career coaching sessions. Sign-up at the Registration Desk to take advantage of this exciting opportunity!*

9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Welcome Remarks	Sugar Land Ballroom VI
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Executive Director: **Cecil Fong, Executive Director, Diversity Summit**

Honorary Co-Chairs: **Joanna Nolte, Manager Equal Opportunity and D&I, Shell U.S.**  
**Dr. Antonio D. Tillis, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, and**  
**M. D. Anderson Professor in Hispanic Studies, University of Houston**

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Concurrent Session	
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Session A: **“Inclusive Leadership”** Sugar Land Ballroom VI

Chair: **Dolly Brenneman, President and Founder, Soaring to Greatness**

Speaker: **Eliza Horn, Lead Communications Consultant, D&I, Deloitte**

*Every year, organizations allocate time, resources, and budget towards efforts to foster an inclusive culture—and interest is still increasing. Yet, through survey results, Deloitte discovered that there often remains a disconnect between the expectations of today's workforce and inclusion in organizations. Deloitte surveyed more than 1,300 full-time employees from a range of different sized organizations and industries across the United States to discover what today's workforce values in an inclusive culture. We explored whether inclusion impacts attraction and career choices, what today's workforce prioritizes in an inclusive culture, and what organizations can do to advance inclusion now and in the future.*

Session B: **“Creating a Safe and Harassment Free Working Environment”** Sugar Land Ballroom VII-VIII

Chairs: **M. Helen Cavazos, President, MH Cavazos Associates**  
**Ariana Robinson Danquah, HR Account Manager, Shell U.S.**

Moderator: **M. Helen Cavazos, President, MH Cavazos Associates**

Speakers: **Dr. Ksenia Krylova, Clinical Assistant Professor, University of Houston**  
**Joe Bontke, Outreach and Education Coordinator, Houston District, EEOC**  
**Katrina Grider, Of Counsel Houston, Ogletree Deakins**

*Join this session for a dynamic panel of speakers from a cross-section of perspectives to discuss a very hot topic this year, sexual harassment. We will look at this incendiary topic from various angles including the*

*#MeToo movement, creating safe spaces in the workplace, the legal and political climate for change in this space as well as an open Q&A.*

Session C: **“Supplier Diversity”** Sugar Land Ballroom IX-X  
 Chairs: **Jagdip Ahluwalia**, Executive Director, IACCGH  
**Ingrid Hill**, Executive Assistant/Office Manager Cole Chemical  
**Jewel Smith**, Manager Supplier Diversity, CenterPoint Energy  
 Moderator: **April Day**, President, WBEA Texas  
 Panelists: **Brian Hall**, Manager Supplier Diversity, Shell  
**Shurronda Murray**, External Relations Manager, METRO  
**Connie Rankin**, President & CEO, CRES & Associates  
**Yesenia Taylor**, General Manager, Business Solutions, HISD

*Hear from supplier diversity leaders as they share insights on how they are leading with PIC through rapidly changing and challenging environments in order to promote sustainable supplier diversity Relevance/ ROI and to advance supplier development outcomes.*

<b>10:30 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.</b>	<b>Networking Break</b>	<b>Conference Center Foyer</b>
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*Visit exhibits and sign up for a complimentary session at Coach’s Corner.*

<b>10:50 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.</b>	<b>Plenary Session</b>	<b>Sugar Land Ballroom VI</b>
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**“Executive Panel on Inclusion Practices”**

Chair: **Dolly Brenneman**, President and Founder, Soaring To Greatness, LLC  
 Moderator: **Dr. Dusya Vera**, Associate Professor, Bauer College of Business, University of Houston  
 Panelists: **Brett Perlman**, CEO, Center for Houston’s Future  
**Dr. Cesar Maldonado**, Chancellor, Houston Community College  
**Dr. Veronica Martin**, Chief Nurse Officer, HCA Women’s Hospital

*Most organizations express the benefits of human capital differences, predicated on the assumption that diversity and inclusion (D&I) sparks innovation, insights, and makes us stronger. What then are some of the winning strategies or lessons learned? How are these D&I initiatives and the return on their investment measured? Do organizations have a moral responsibility to invest in D & I to ensure social justice? How does the generational gap among the workforce, the #MeToo movement, and gender income inequality play into the D&I program? The esteemed panelists will explore some of these issues and share what the commitment to D&I mean to them.*

<b>12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.</b>	<b>Luncheon</b>	<b>Sugar Land Ballroom V</b>
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Emcee: **Catherine Matusow**, Houstonia Magazine  
 Diversity Awards:  
 Corporate Diversity Champion: **Stanley Kazibwe**, Bechtel  
 Community Diversity Champion: **Nancy Levicki**, Dress for Success

<b>1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Networking Break</b>	<b>Conference Center Foyer</b>
------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

*Visit exhibits, and sign up for a complimentary session at Coach’s Corner*

<b>2:00 p.m. – 3:10 p.m.</b>	<b>Concurrent Sessions</b>	<b>Room</b>
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Session A: **“Diverse Abilities: Leveraging All Abilities to Build High-Performing Organizations”**

Sugar Land Ballroom VII-VIII

Chairs: **Timothy Fischer**, Principal, Russell Fischer, LLC  
**David Cross**, Director Institutional Equity, Houston Community College

Speakers: **Dustin Ruffatto**, Inclusiveness and Flexibility Leader, EY  
**DeLinda Parker**, Assurance Senior, EY  
**Lynn Winstead**, Assistant Director, EY Assist, EY

*EY (formerly Ernst & Young) works to create a culture allowing each person to contribute fully to our success. This means that we value the contributions of people from all backgrounds and perspectives. In this session, you will learn about EY's strategy to promote an abilities inclusive culture driving innovation and exceptional service for its clients. Viewed from three unique perspectives, this session will show how the Americas & Regional strategic resources, EY's Employee Assistance Program, and grass-roots participation by the local Professional Network leaders, blend to paint a picture of inclusion in the abilities space within EY.*

Session B: **"Are Employee Resource Groups Still Relevant?"** Sugar Land Ballroom VI

Chair: **John Sequeira**, CEO, TL One Partner

Speakers: **Eliza Horn**, Lead Communications Consultant, D&I, Deloitte  
**Kevin Edwards**, Global Lead, Culture, Inclusion, and Diversity, Bechtel  
**Laura Granger**, HR Director, Texas and South West Area, McDonald's USA  
**Vani Rao**, Director Diversity & Inclusion, BP  
**Deborah Wilkins**, Senior Equal Opportunity Consultant, Shell US

*Employee Resource Groups (or Networks) have been a component of successful Diversity and Inclusion initiatives for decades. However, some organizations are rethinking or restructuring the groups to stay relevant and finding new ways to add value. Join us for this provocative session and hear how multiple corporations across a variety of industries are adapting their Resource Group structures to meet the ever-changing demands of their respective organizations.*

Session C: **"Gender 101 – Shedding Light on Gender Identity"** Sugar Land Ballroom IX-X

Chairs: **Elaine Decanio**, Consultant  
**Niya Blair**, Director, Center for Diversity and Inclusion, University of Houston

Speaker: **Shelley Roth**, President, Springboard Ventures

*Based on first-hand, real-world experience, combined with decades of practical business expertise, Shelley Roth tells their story and brings clarity to an often-confusing topic. By the end of this session attendees will:*

- *Increase understanding of what gender means*
- *Have an awareness and sensitivity on how and why to address all customers and patrons in an inclusive manner, including those across and beyond the gender spectrum*
- *Discover why businesses and organizations cannot afford to misgender customers, prospects, and clientele*
- *Gain understanding of the difference in gender, biological sex, and sexual orientation*

*This workshop is for anyone wanting a broader understanding of gender, as well as longtime transgender advocates seeking to grow in understanding of gender variations and gender non-binaries.*

**3:10 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Network Reception**

**Conference Center Foyer**

### **Door Prizes Drawing**

- *Return all name badges to the registration desk for recycling at the end of the conference.*
- *All attendees who return completed conference surveys will be eligible for door prize drawing which will start at 3:30 p.m. and you must be present to win.*

## Diversity Summit Co-Chairs

### **Joanna Nolte**

Manager, Equal Opportunity and US Diversity & Inclusion, Shell Oil

An experienced Human Resources Manager with 20 years at Shell, and 10 years with other large corporations. **Joanna's** roles have been varied and include both specialty roles in compensation, benefits, policy, talent, as well as generalist roles. Currently, she works to ensure conformity across Shell in the US with Equal Opportunity requirements, as well as D&I activities to leverage Shell's Employee Resource Groups, partnering with external organizations to foster D&I, incorporate best practices, and raise awareness and skills to leverage D&I.



Joanna also serves as an advisory board member for the Institute for Workplace Equality. Throughout her career, she has strived to partner with the business, assist individuals in achieving rewarding careers, and enjoyed being part of a large organization where the collective efforts of many can produce amazing results – particularly when the culture is positive and inclusive, allowing people to reach their potential.



## **Diversity Summit Co-Chairs**

### **Dr. Antonio D. Tillis**

Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, and  
M. D. Anderson Professor in Hispanic Studies  
University of Houston

**Dr. Antonio D. Tillis** is the dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences and M. D. Anderson Professor in Hispanic Studies at the University of Houston. He received his Ph.D. in Latin American literature with an Afro-Hispanic emphasis from the University of Missouri, his M.A. in Spanish literature from Howard University, and a B.S. in Spanish from Vanderbilt University.

As dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, he oversees 14 schools and departments. The college is the largest and most diverse of the 15 academic colleges on the UH campus, with a graduating population of more than 11,000 students annually, and 600 faculty members.

A native of Memphis, Tennessee, he served as dean of the School of Languages, Cultures and World Affairs at the College of Charleston. Prior to his appointment, he was a distinguished international visiting scholar at the University of the West Indies in Mona, Jamaica, and has developed relationships with numerous universities in Brazil, Columbia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, France, Peru, Trinidad, Jamaica, Sweden, France, England, Costa Rica, Peru, Ghana, China and Spain.

Dr. Tillis is a nationally and internationally acclaimed scholar and author with specializations in Latin American, Afro-Latin American, and African Diaspora literature.

From 2009 to 2014, he served as chair, African and African-American Studies, at Dartmouth College. From 2008 to 2009, he served as the inaugural chair of Latin American and Latino Studies at Purdue University.

Dr. Tillis is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Office of Black Student Advising; the Professor of the Year Faculty Recognition Award from the Office of Pluralism and Leadership at Dartmouth College; the Internationalization Innovator Award from the Purdue University Office of International Programs and Study Abroad; and the Professor of the Year Award from the Black Caucus of Purdue University Faculty and Staff.



UNIVERSITY of  
**HOUSTON**

Congratulations to the  
2018 Diversity Award Recipients

Corporate Diversity Champion

**Stanley Kazibwe**

Marketing and Business Development Associate, Bechtel

Community Diversity Champion

**Nancy Levicki**

President and Co-Founder, Dress for Success Houston

from

*Chuping Huang*  
President of ACAP

May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018

# **Corporate Diversity Champion**

## **Stanley Kazibwe**

Marketing and Business Development Associate – LNG  
Bechtel

Stanley is a globally astute and geographically mobile Business Development / Strategy & Supply Chain Professional within the global energy industry. He has built and managed business /supplier relationships within various functions in a globally integrated supply chain.

Before joining Bechtel, he worked as a Sales and Marketing Development Coordinator with Black & Decker / DeWalt (now Stanley-Black & Decker), in Tampa, Florida. Stanley holds Bachelor of Arts degrees in Business Management from Texas Southern University and an MBA from Rice University Jones School of Business.

As Chair of Diversity Advisory Council (DAC) at Bechtel, Stanley was instrumental in Bechtel being named as 2017 Corporate Partner of the Year by both Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers – Houston and by National Society of Black Engineers – Houston. Both groups seek to inspire and empower underrepresented communities to pursue excellence through STEM professions. In addition, Stanley has been an incredible change agent for the advancement of D&I in Bechtel:



- Supported recruiting efforts at the 2016 and 2017 SHPE/ NSBE National Conferences
- Promoted and facilitated energy industry and Bechtel discussions on Diversity and Inclusion.
- Received 2017 Distinguished Alumni of Year Award from Black Business Students Association at Rice University Jones School of Business.
- Hosted SHPE Houston's award-winning professional, career, and leadership development events including "Interviewing Skills Workshop for engineers", "Empowering and Inspiring", and "Inclusive Leadership — Eliminating Micro Indignities".
- Named as one of the 2016 - 40 under 40 Professionals by Alumni Association of Texas Southern University
- Served as K-12 Advocate through NSBE SEEK/ Big Brother Big Sisters/ and ACE Mentoring
- Engaged with Bechtel OG&C and faith-based organizations, to assist with Harvey Relief.

Stanley's passion for Diversity and Inclusion is evident. He is always willing to help others and share his insights and has inspired other colleagues to become more involved in this critical mission.



## Community Diversity Champion

### **Nancy Levicki**

President and Co-Founder  
Dress for Success Houston

In the summer of 1998, Nancy Levicki put her fashion skills back to work, but this time, it was not for a major retail specialty store. Nancy's background as the couture buyer for Sakowitz was the perfect backdrop for her drive to help low-income, Houston area women enter the job market looking and feeling their best. Nancy, Susie Cunningham and a small group of founding Board members opened the first Dress for Success in the state of Texas. Twenty years later, Dress for Success Houston has provided more than 75,000 units of service to 40,000 underprivileged women in Houston.

In 2012, under Nancy's leadership, Dress for Success Houston completed a successful \$6.7 million capital campaign and moved into a stunning 16,600 sq. ft. building conveniently located in the Upper Kirby District at 3310 Eastside Street. Houston is proud to be the first and only affiliate, worldwide, to purchase land and build a permanent facility. 2018 marks the 20th anniversary of Dress for Success Houston, and Nancy is proud to have co-founded an agency committed to addressing the needs of women of all ethnicities in our community.



Some of Nancy's accolades include:

- Recognized as a "Woman Who Means Business" by Houston Business Journal,
- Humanitarian Award by the American Red Cross,
- Named a "Woman on the Move" by Texas Executive Women,
- Named one of the fifty most influential women in Houston by Woman Magazine,
- "Woman of Courage Award" from the Houston Chapter of Hadassah,
- Named one of "Houston's Treasures" at The Social Book's annual recognition for Houstonians in philanthropy, and
- Featured in KHOU's "Stand for Houston" series.



***Going Places. Going Strong.***

## Previous Diversity Champions

The following recipients have been recognized as Diversity Champions by the Diversity Summit. Each recipient exemplifies the attributes of a true diversity champion and has made extraordinary contributions at a corporate or community level.

2008

**Cecil Fong**, Shell Oil Company  
**Jagdip Ahluwalia**, Indo American Chamber of Commerce of Houston  
**Jenny Yang, Ph.D.**, Association of Chinese American Professionals

2009

**Robert Pease**, President and CEO, Motiva Enterprises LLC  
**La Monica Yarbrough**, Community of Respect, Project Coordinator, ADL - Southwest Region

2010

**Donna Cole**, President/CEO, Cole Chemical  
**Martin Cominsky**, Director, Anti-Defamation League – Southwest Region  
**David Medina**, Director Multicultural Community Relations, Rice University

2011

**John Sequeira**, Diversity and Inclusion Consultant, Shell Oil Company  
**Richard Huebner**, President, Houston Minority Supplier Development Council  
**Jill Carroll, Ph.D.**, Scholar, Writer & Speaker

2012

**Earl Shipp**, Vice President, the Dow Chemical Company  
**Dolly Nguyen Haim Brenneman**, President and Founder, Soaring to Greatness

2013

**Felipe Bayon Pardo**, Senior Vice President, BP America Head of Global Deepwater Response  
**Cherry Steinwender**, Executive Director and co-founder, Center for the Healing of Racism

2014

**Greg Vesev**, Vice President of Gas Supply and Trading, Chevron  
**Adrian Garcia**, Harris County Sheriff

2015

**Floyd J. LeBlanc**, Vice-President, Public Affairs and Communications, CenterPoint Energy  
**Craig Clayton**, CEO iNSPIRAR Inc and Founder of Respect Matters-Houston

2016

**Kelly Showalter**, General Manager, Shell Technology Center  
**Maria Palacios**, "Goddess on Wheels"

2017

**Lynn Chou**, General Manager, Chevron  
**April Day**, President, Women's Business Enterprise Alliance

## Speakers and Session Chairs

**Jagdip Ahluwalia**  
Executive Director,  
IACCGH



With over 35 years of teaching, manufacturing, business management, and consulting experience, **Jagdip Ahluwalia** was one of the Founders of the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Houston. Jagdip is an engineering graduate from the Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra, India.

He is a past chair of the Mayor's International Trade and Development Council for South Asia (MITDC). He was honored with the Outstanding Leadership Award by the Greater Dallas Indo American Chamber for his role in forming the Alliance of Indo American Chambers in the US.

The Greater Houston Procurement Breakfast and the India Culture Center have also felicitated him for his tireless advocacy for business in, for and with Houston. He serves on the Board of Trustees of the American Leadership Forum, Gulf Coast Chapter and is an active Rotarian.

### **Niya Blair**

Director, Center for Diversity and Inclusion, University of Houston



**Niya Blair** serves as the Director of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Houston. In this role, she provides leadership, strategic vision, organization and administrative oversight of campus-wide initiatives, workshops, and training in the areas of diversity and inclusion.

Niya has over a decade of experience working in the areas of social justice, inclusion and leadership at three institutions of higher education. Niya has presented at national and regional conferences and for campus and community organizations in the areas of multiculturalism, diversity awareness, cultural competency, and leadership. She is certified as an Intercultural Consultant with the Intercultural Development Inventory, LLC.

### **Dolly Nguyen Haim Brenneman, EMBA**

President and Founder, Soaring to Greatness, LLC



**Dolly Brenneman** is a leader, entrepreneur, organizer, organization development consultant, and an executive coach working to awaken and transform individuals and organizations to soar to new heights. Her vast previous work experiences in healthcare, finance, insurance, energy, education, and interfaith organizations help enrich those she interacts with fresh, creative and unique perspectives. She enjoys matching talents and resources to help diverse stakeholders to succeed in their mission. She coaches her clients to gain new insights, to minimize stress, find new directions, achieve new goals, and what it takes to live the best life that they have been

given.

She continuously obtains insights into how world-class organizations work and new understanding in the areas of human potential and development. Dolly holds an Executive MBA from the University of Houston; completed certification work with the International Coach Federation (ICF), the Executive Coaching Master Business Accelerator, Spiritual Intelligence (SQ 21), Personalanalysis, and the Institute for Diversity & Cross-Cultural Management. She is a facilitator of the Advanced Mind-Body Medicine professional training program, the Non-Violent Communication (NVC) techniques; Big Mind process; Emotional Intelligence, Integral Transformative Practice, Wealth Dynamics, and various approaches that embody the "wholeness" of human beings. She is a faithful mindfulness and meditation practitioner.

She believes in giving back, be a servant leader, and extend compassion and service to those in needs. She is offering therapeutic psychosocial recovery skills to heal traumatized survivors impacted by Hurricane Harvey using *The Center for Mind-Body Medicine* holistic approaches – a project funded by Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund. She is a board member of the venerable Rothko Chapel, a 47 years institution with a mission to nurture reverence for the highest aspirations of humanity and inspire people to action through art and contemplation.

### **Joe Bontke**

Outreach & Education Coordinator

Houston District office of U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission



**Joe Bontke** has been in the field of Human Resources & Civil Rights for the past 27 years & has experience in employment law and adult education. With a Bachelor's in Philosophy and a Masters in Education, he has been a Human Resources Director, a Training Coordinator for the American Disabilities Act (ADA) Technical Assistance Center for Federal Region VI.

Joe was appointed as Assistant Professor at Baylor College of Medicine & is the former Chair of the Governors' Committee for People with Disabilities and recently commissioned an honorary Admiral in the Texas Navy. Using his entertaining style, Joe has educated groups throughout the country & most recently, his work at the EEOC has enabled him to empower employers and employees with the understanding they need to work effectively at their jobs.

Joe's philosophy of education is - that 90% is knowing where to find the information ... when you need it.

### **Elizabeth Campbell, Esq.**

Consultant



**Elizabeth Campbell** is an employment attorney by profession and has worked in executive-level HR and D&I roles. She is a frequent author, speaker, and training facilitator on D&I and employment law-related topics. Most recently, she was the Partner and Chief Diversity Officer for the Houston-based law firm, Andrews Kurth Kenyon.

Elizabeth received her B.A. in Political Science and Psychology from American University in Washington, D.C., and her J.D. from the University of Michigan. She is admitted to practice law in D.C., NY, PA, and NJ as well as before several federal courts including before the United State Supreme Court. Elizabeth is proud of her two adult sons, one who works in

Denver and the other who lives in Washington, D.C.

### **M. Helen Cavazos**

President & CEO, MH Cavazos & Associates



**M. Helen Cavazos** is human resources and diversity executive with extensive background in a variety of industries to include leadership positions in both the private and public sector. Most recently she has worked with nonprofit organizations that provide training and development opportunities for diverse groups and women. Her professional career included working for McDonald's Corporation in various locations starting in the Houston market with a career progression that led her to head the McDonald's of Hawaii Human Resources Department and then to the corporate headquarters of McDonald's Corporation in the Chicago area.

Her last corporate position was Vice President, HR & Diversity & Inclusion for METRO Houston. She has served in a consultant role for career and leadership development programs for McDonald's and HACE – Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement headquartered in the Chicago area and SER Jobs for Progress Houston.

Helen has served in leadership roles with national and local boards of organizations that foster leadership and economic development for diverse groups and women. She is currently active on the Education Committee of the City of Houston Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Board, serves on the Executive Committee of the Ronald McDonald's House Charities Board of Houston/Galveston, Advisory Committee.

### **David Cross**

Director, Office of Institutional Equity,  
Diversity and Dispute Resolution Center  
Houston Community College



**David Cross** has worked in the higher education for over twenty-five years and has successfully held a variety of roles in instruction, student services, and administration before taking his current post in September 2008. Mr. Cross directs the Houston Community College (HCC) Office of Institutional Equity and the HCC Diversity and Dispute Resolution Center. Under his leadership, the HCC Council for Diversity and Inclusion was formed in 2010. The first HCC District Diversity and Inclusion plan was launched in 2012.

### **Ariana Danquah**

HR Account Manager  
Shell Oil



**Ariana Danquah** is currently a Human Resource Account Manager in Global Functions, supporting various HR activities across the Finance and Real Estate skill pools.

She joined Shell full-time in July 2010, after an internship at the Convent Refinery in Louisiana. She completed her master's degree in business, emphasizing in Human Resource Management at Purdue University, and has a BA in Psychology from Cal Poly Pomona.

She has had myriad positions within Shell including HR roles supporting Recruitment, Commercial Supply and Distribution, Global Functions, and an overseas assignment in Malaysia supporting resourcing for Upstream activities. Through a variety of experiences, both personal and professional, she appreciates how we all differ and can contribute in unique ways to bring a competitive advantage to collective endeavors. Adventurously, Ariana has traveled to most major continents, remains a keen student of other cultures (and cuisine!) and enjoys movies and music.

### **April Day**

President, Women's Business Enterprise Alliance (WBEA)



For more than 16 years, **April Day** has brought her unique passion and "sheer willingness" to her mission to develop communities and improve lives through education and economic sustainability. Her body of work demonstrates that she has always been on the front end of active service, challenging the status quo in order to create, deliver and preserve programs that achieve her personal goal to change the world.

Today April serves as president of the Women's Business Enterprise Alliance (WBEA). The WBEA is a leading third-party certifying organization that serves women-owned business enterprises representing 15 billion dollars in revenue and more than 40,000 jobs. April's primary role is to increase opportunities for women-owned businesses through procurement, education and executive networking.

### **Elaine Decanio**

Consultant



**Elaine Decanio** has worked in the oil and gas industry for over thirty years. Much of her career has been with Shell Oil in its Project and Technology Organization. She grew up near London, UK, and came to the US to go to graduate school. She received her MS from Texas A&M University and Ph.D. from Wesleyan University, CT. Since then she has held a series of roles in technology development, commercialization, and management.

Elaine is committed to helping to create diverse and inclusive work environments. Elaine has served on D&I Councils helping to better understand the issues and opportunities for the business. She serves on the steering team of Shell's GLBT employee resource group and is actively helping to create a safe and inclusive environment for Shell's GLBT employees globally in. Elaine also serves on the business advisory council for the workplace project of the Human Rights Campaign. In this role, Elaine has helped to develop and administer the HRC corporate equality award (CEI)

**Kevin Edwards, PE, MBB**

Global Manager of Culture, Inclusion & Diversity  
Bechtel



**Kevin Edwards** is leading the Culture, Inclusion and Diversity program. This involves recruiting efforts at several key partner schools and minority professional conferences to bring diverse, engineering, procurement and construction talent to the organization. Additionally, the talent management, promotion process, ERGs and/or other people processes are in the process of being updated to support our inclusion and diversity commitments. Prior to his current role, Kevin led the Quality and Six Sigma function and collaborated with functional leaders from Engineering, Procurement, Construction and other functions as part of an integrated leadership team.

Previous positions also included Lead Field Engineer, Civil, and Lead Resident Engineer. Six Sigma played a part in Kevin's Bechtel background as he held a Project Master Black Belt position for the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, and was the Six Sigma Deployment Coordinator/MBB/BB for Bechtel's Communications Business Line. Kevin earned his Masters of Engineering in Environmental Engineering from Stevens Institute of Technology, and his Bachelors of Science in Industrial Engineering from Rutgers University.

**Timothy G. Fischer**

Principal, Russell Fischer, LLC



**Tim Fischer** is a Principal at Russell Fischer, LLC, an inclusion consultancy focused on helping organizations build more inclusive and engaging workplaces. He is an accomplished Diversity & Inclusion leader, offering years of experience in how to reinvigorate, build and sustain Inclusion initiatives to achieve desired results.

Tim is a graduate of Cornell University's Advanced Diversity Practitioner's Program. He also holds a B.A. in Accounting from Cedarville College and is both a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and Certified Internal Auditor (CIA). Tim's deep commitment to Diversity & Inclusion also aligns with his personal values. Today, he is actively involved in Catalyst, Hispanic Scholarship Fund, Human Rights Campaign, Pink Petro, and the Texas Diversity Council. He also serves on the planning committee for the Association of Chinese American Professionals annual Diversity Summit.

**Cecil Fong**

Executive Director, Diversity Summit



**Cecil Fong** is the Executive Director for Diversity Summit which is a non-profit organization aimed to promote diversity and inclusion in order to create an inclusive work environment to allow everyone equal opportunity to succeed.

Cecil Fong is the President of Education Rainbow Challenge, which is a non-profit organization geared toward raising interest in math and science via semi-annual math challenges and hands-on science experiments. Since its inception in 1999, over 10,000 students in grades 3-8 in Houston area have participated in this program.

Cecil is the President of OCA Greater Houston. OCA is a national organization which advocates for equal rights for Asian Americans. Major focus areas include civic engagement, leadership development, youth mentoring, arts, and culture.

Cecil retired from Shell Oil in 2011. With a career spanning 34 years, he has held a number of technical and management positions in various business segments including Exploration & Production, Chemicals, Lubricants, Pipeline, Supply & Distribution, and Technology. He holds Bachelor and Master degrees in Chemical Engineering from Rice University.

**Laura Granger**

HR Director, Texas & Greater South West Area  
McDonald's USA, LLC



**Laura Granger** partners with the regional leadership teams to help shape the Regional Business strategy and ensure the People strategy drives the needs of the business. As the head of HR for 5 States, she leads the selection, development, and retention of all Regional & Restaurant Company staff to best meet the current and future needs of the company.

Laura started with McDonald's in South Africa in 1996. There she held several HR leadership positions. Since being in the USA, Laura has held several HR leadership roles across the country from, Tampa, Chicago, Seattle, and now she lives in Houston, TX. She has led large HR teams and worked with over 1100 restaurants and 250 Independent Owner Operators.

Laura has also been a leader in the Global Women's Leadership Network for the past 10 years. The vision is "We're one GLOBAL NETWORK advancing a culture where women have the greatest opportunity to succeed and grow." We celebrate our diversity business networks, however, we believe the future is about inclusion.

**Katrina Grider**

Of Counsel  
Houston office of Ogletree Deakins.



**Ms. Grider** has over thirty years of extensive federal and state court labor and employment law litigation, administrative, counseling, and practice experience from both perspectives: management and enforcement. Ms. Grider represents employers in state and federal courts, as well as in proceedings before the Texas Workforce Commission, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Department of Labor. Ms. Grider counsels clients on administrative and judicial interpretations of various labor and employment laws and assists clients in developing best policies and practices for personnel matters.

Prior to joining the firm, Ms. Grider maintained a management-side labor and employment boutique solo practice for 20 years. Ms. Grider is Board Certified in Labor and Employment Law – Texas Board of Legal Specialization.

**Brian K. Hall**

Manager, Supplier Diversity & Outreach, Small Business Liaison Officer  
Shell Oil Company



**Brian Hall** received his B.A. in Marketing and Computer Science at Sam Houston State University as well as post-graduate work at Texas A&M and Rice University. Brian started his career in energy with Diamond Shamrock (now Valero) in 1989 and recently completed his 25th year with Shell Oil Company in Houston. Throughout his career, he has delivered commercial impact across many of Shell's business units including Retail Marketing, Shell Chemicals, and Shell Pipeline. However, Brian describes his current Diversity & Inclusion work as the "role of a lifetime" as he helps to lead Shell's supply-chain transformation by focusing on developing the pipeline of small and/or diverse-owned business enterprises. His

passion is helping suppliers to FIND THEIR FIT in the energy supply chain.

Brian's personal commitment to community through philanthropy and volunteerism includes board and committee roles with Theta Chi Fraternity, The Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo, Board Member of the Sam Houston State Alumni Association, as well as Founder and President of FridayHarbour.org, a Houston based non-profit organization providing thousands of free hotel nights per year for cancer patients/families seeking treatment in the Texas Medical Center.

**Ingrid Hill**

Executive Assistant/Office Manager  
Cole Chemical



**Ingrid Hill** joined Cole Chemical as the Executive Assistant/Office Manager in 2014. She brought decades of valuable experience in Administration having worked for chemical, oil and gas companies as well as non-profit minority civic organizations.

**Eliza Horn**

Lead Communications Consultant, Talent Communications, Deloitte



**Eliza Horn** focuses on building engagement around the firm's inclusion initiatives. As part of her current role, she conducts research, develops internal communication strategies, creates new marketing initiatives and builds learning and development content. Eliza co-authored the white report, "Unleashing the Power of Inclusion: Attracting and Engaging the Evolving Workforce" – the topic of this proposed presentation. Before this role, Eliza drove Deloitte's marketing efforts, including spearheading a program for executive-level women. In the community, she serves as the Vice President for the University of Houston Friends of Women's Studies and is a member of the River Oaks Women's Breakfast Club.

**Ksenia Krylova**

Clinical Assistant Professor, C.T. Bauer College of Business  
University of Houston



**Ksenia O Krylova** is a Clinical Assistant Professor at C.T. Bauer College of Business, the University of Houston. She received her Ph.D. in Business Administration and LL.M. in International Law (Fulbright Program) from the University of Houston. She holds a Bachelor in Law from Mari State University, Russia.

Dr. Krylova's research is in organizational trust, apologies, dispositional attributions, impression management, forgiveness, and implicit personality theory. This research has been published in the Journal of Business Ethics, Journal of Knowledge Management, and Leadership Quarterly, and has been presented at multiple international conferences. Dr. Krylova is a 2015-2016 recipient of the University of Houston Teaching Excellence Award (Graduate student category).

**Dr. Cesar Maldonado, Ph.D., P.E.**

Chancellor, Houston Community College



A nationally recognized leader in the engineering and manufacturing industry, **Dr. Cesar Maldonado** transitioned to a leadership role in higher education in 2008. Today he serves as the 8th Chancellor of the 47-year old Houston Community College District that stretches over nearly 700 square miles in the nation's fourth largest city. As Chancellor, Dr. Maldonado has overseen the establishment of 15 Centers of Excellence, managed the building of new campuses, and created partnerships with numerous four-year universities and private industries.

Dr. Maldonado is an accomplished engineer, civic and business leader who became President of Texas State Technical College (TSTC) in Harlingen in 2008. Three years later, he was named Vice Chancellor for Institutional Effectiveness and Commercialization for the statewide TSTC System. He has served as the Interim Chairman of the Border Governors Conference on Science and Technology, where he worked to foster bi-national research and technology exchange with scientists across the U.S. and Mexico border.

Dr. Maldonado has led legislative efforts to create high school/college dual enrollment opportunities in Texas and has served as a board member and twice as president of the Harlingen Consolidated Independent School District. Dr. Maldonado was also appointed by the governor to serve as a Regent of the Texas State Technical College System.

Dr. Maldonado holds Bachelor and Masters of Science degrees in Chemical Engineering from Texas A&M University, a Doctorate in Systems and Engineering Management from Texas Tech University, and is an alumnus of the UC Berkeley Haas School of Business.

**Dr. Veronica Martin, D.N.P., R.N.**

Chief Nursing Officer (CNO)  
Women's Hospital of HCA



**Dr. Veronica Martin, DNP, RN, NEA-BC**, is the Chief Nursing Officer for The Woman's Hospital of Texas. The care of women and children has been Martin's passion throughout her career. She has over 25 years of nursing and operations experience and comes to The Woman's Hospital of Texas from Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, a freestanding children's hospital in St. Petersburg, Florida where she served as the vice president and chief nursing officer. Martin led many initiatives during her tenure at this organization inclusive of improving nurse engagement, stabilizing the nursing workforce, hardwiring shared governance, and creating a strategy to achieve Magnet designation. In addition, she has a sharp focus on patient experience, quality initiatives and collaborating with teams.

Prior to her employment at Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital she served as the corporate chief nursing officer for the Shriner's Health System. She has also led nursing services at WellStar Cobb Hospital in Austell, Georgia, Tampa General Hospital, and the University of South Alabama Children's & Women's Hospital in Mobile, Alabama. She previously served as the Assistant Vice President for Women's and Children's Services at Medical City Lewisville in Lewisville, Texas.

Dr. Martin earned a Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.)/Health Systems Leadership from Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida in 2014. She holds an MS in Nursing/Executive Level Administration and a BSN from the University of South Alabama. She is Nurse Executive Advanced/Board Certified and a member of the American Organization of Nurse Executives and the American College of Health Care Executives. Dr. Martin also holds a clinical faculty appointment with the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing and teaches in their Doctor of Nursing Practice program.

**Catherine Matusow**

Editor-in-Chief, Houstonia magazine



**Catherine Matusow** is the editor in chief of Houstonia magazine. She started with the magazine as executive editor, playing an integral role in launching the publication, which debuted in April 2013 and soon became the city's largest local and only paid-circulation magazine. Her roles at Houstonia include traffic controller, kolache bearer, writer of profiles, travel stories, and news features, and editor of just about every page of the book. Over her career, Catherine has served as editor on many award-winning stories. A native Houstonian, Rice University/Columbia University School of Journalism alum, and former managing editor of the Houston Press, she's a fan of her husband, her dogs, a glass of wine and a good novel.

**Shurronda R. Murray**

Small Business External Relations Officer  
METRO



In her capacity with METRO, **Shurronda Murray** assists small and disadvantaged businesses with contract opportunities, business development/technical assistance program information and certifications. She is responsible for providing external relations and outreach for the Department of Procurement and the Office of Small Business. She's responsible for informing past, current and potential vendors about anticipated procurements and small business opportunities. She conducts small business training and she promotes METRO's certification to small and disadvantaged businesses. In September of 2009, Shurronda Murray received her certification, as a "Certified Compliance Administrator" from the American Contract Compliance Association and Morgan State University Center for Continuing and Professional Studies.

She has worked for METRO for over 25 years, in areas such as Customer Service and Marketing and Human Resources, in the Training Department. Mrs. Murray has received numerous awards for her outstanding service to

the community while at METRO. She received the 2017 Merit's Award from Greater Houston Business Procurement Forum. She was a 2017 Advocate of The Year Award Nominee for Women's Business Enterprise Alliance. She received the Texas Women Empowerment Foundation's 2015 International Leadership Award. Shurronda received the "2009 Helping Hand Award Finalist" for Houston Minority Business Council. She received the "Women Empowerment Training Institute (WETI) 2008 Women of Distinction Award", in March 2008. Mrs. Murray also received the Exemplary Service Award in 2000, for her outstanding service to the small business community, in Houston and surrounding areas. Shurronda is married and has three beautiful children.

### **DeLinda Parker**

Assurance Senior, EY



**DeLinda Parker** is an experienced senior in the Assurance practice at EY, serving clients across a spectrum of industries in the Houston, TX market.

Outside of her day-to-day activities, she is highly involved in the AccessAbilities Professional Network at EY at both the Regional and Americas levels. She has a love for all things dogs, books, and travel, especially books about traveling dogs.

### **Brett A. Perlman**

CEO, Center for Houston's Future



**Brett Perlman's** 25-year career has spanned senior positions in business, government as well as corporate board work and service to his community.

He is currently CEO of the Center for Houston's Future, a non-profit that focuses on developing consensus-based solutions to important social issues for the entire Houston region. Before his appointment, he was a Fellow at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and at the Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative (ALI), an innovative program composed of experienced global leaders focused on developing new approaches to the world's most pressing social issues.

Brett has also been recognized for his roles as a business person, corporate director and public official in the energy and telecommunications industries. Most notably, he served for four years as a Commissioner on the Public Utility Commission of Texas and led the successful restructuring of Texas' \$37 billion electric utility industry and \$4 billion telecommunications industry as these markets opened to competition. As a result, Texas has been widely recognized as an international model for successful electric market restructuring. He also has been a co-founder and Board member of two technology incubator and accelerators.

He holds advanced degrees in public policy from Harvard University and in law from the University of Texas. He was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Northwestern University.

### **Connie Rankin**

President & CEO

CRES & Associates



**Connie Rankin** has 35 years executive experience working in the commercial real estate industry with Fortune 500 companies, small businesses, educational institutions, and non-profits. The first 20 years of her career were spent working her way up to the Executive ladder of one of Houston's most prestigious commercial real estate firms (PM Realty Group).

She is the president of an award-winning commercial real estate firm and a former Vice President and board chair of the Women's Business Enterprise Alliance and Texas Executive Women. Connie was honored as a Women of Influence by the National Real Estate Forum, as one of Houston's 50 Most Influential Women of 2016, and in 2017 became a bestselling author of *God Gave Us Wings*.

Connie's passion is empowering women, entrepreneurs, leaders, and people from all walks of life on how to achieve success. A sought-after conference and keynote speaker, she has appeared on CBS, Fox 26 News, on the cover of *Business Today* magazine, and a contributing writer for *The Huffington Post*. Connie has transcended her childhood

of life-threatening injury, sudden poverty, and even being homeless to now one of success. Her broad life experiences uniquely qualify her as an expert on various diverse entrepreneur issues and the challenges facing them in the workplace and beyond.

### **Vani Rao**

Director, Diversity & Inclusion  
BP America



**Vani Rao** works for the BP America D&I team and is accountable for Business Resource Group (BRG) engagement and operations. With 12 national groups and 65 chapters across the Americas, the BRGs represent multiple diversity dimensions – age, ethnicity, gender identify, generations, nationality, physical abilities, sexual orientation, veterans, and working parents.

Vani joined BP in the Gulf of Mexico in 2006, with roles in projects & engineering, continuous improvement, planning, and capability. She has also been a national co-lead for BP’s Asian Network (BPAN).

Vani received her Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Austin College and MBA from Columbia University. She is also certified in project management (Project Management Professional) and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. Before joining BP, she worked as a project management consultant. She is also a 2012 APAWLI (Asian Pacific American Women’s Leadership Institute) Fellow, a signature leadership program for APA women. Her current passion is supporting charitable organizations in the US and India focused on providing educational opportunities for children.

### **Shelley Roth**

President, Springboard Ventures, Inc.



**Shelley Roth** is an entrepreneur, social media trainer, speaker, consultant and author helping individuals, organizations, and teams improve marketing effectiveness, sales results and growth. Springboard’s methodologies and services are based on over 25 years of successful business development, sales and educational leadership working with individuals, small businesses and Fortune 500 corporations.

Shelley’s ability to inspire and empower students, partners, affiliates, and clients is recognized by all those that she works with. With Shelley’s 4th published book, “Don’t Call Me Ma’am,”

Shelley shares the story of growing up as a transgender person with organizations and business leaders who are seeking more knowledge, compassion, and understanding of gender diversity. Classes, Keynotes and Panel Speaking Topics

### **Dustin Ruffatto**

Southwest Region Inclusiveness and Flexibility Leader, EY



**Dustin Ruffatto** is the Southwest Region Inclusiveness and Flexibility Leader (IFL). Starting with EY in 2000 as an audit staff where he served a variety of EY clients in the Houston market for over a decade. In 2011 he transitioned to the Talent Team as a People Consultant before accepting the role as the Southwest Region IFL. As IFL, Dustin’s responsibility including aligning Professional Network strategies with business priorities and consulting with networks and teams to ensure that ALL EY employees feel a sense of belonging to the organization. In addition to Dustin’s IFL responsibilities, he is integrally involved in the Southwest Region’s

Highest Performing Team and People Initiative activities – as well as consult with onboarding, community engagement and recruiting. In 2017 Dustin joined the Americas AccessAbilities Professional Network Steering Committee, enabling people of diverse abilities to do their best work. Holistically, these activities support an exceptional EY experience, bring out the best in our people and enable excellent client service.

Dustin is a Texas native. He received his BA in English from the University of Houston and his MPA from the University of Texas at Austin. Dustin has served on the Boards and Audit Committees of various organizations within the Houston community. He recently fulfilled his tenure as Audit Chair and Secretary for AIDS Foundation Houston, one of the largest AIDS Service Organizations in the US.

**John Sequeira**  
CEO, TL One Partner



**John Sequeira** is the CEO of TL One Partner, LLC whose primary mission is to provide strategic Diversity and Inclusion consulting and transformational coaching to Executives and other Leadership levels. His corporate career in the energy industry spans over thirty-six years and includes a broad range of Human Resources managerial, strategic advisor and specialist roles. Most recently he served as the senior practitioner within Royal Dutch Shell's D&I consulting practice. He was a charter member of Working Mother Media's Diversity Best Practices Council, served on the Conference Board Diversity Council and the Board of Directors of the National Hispanic Corporate Council.

John has published numerous articles on the topic of Diversity and Inclusion and contributed commentary to other D&I related research published by Conference Board, Catalyst, Diversity Best Practices, and a case study produced by Harvard University. He is a member in good standing with the Houston Coaches Association and the International Coaching Federation. He also serves on the planning committee for the Diversity Summit and was recognized as ACAP's Corporate D&I champion in 2011.

**Jewel Smith**  
Manager Supplier Diversity, CenterPoint Energy



**Jewel Smith**, manager of supplier diversity for CenterPoint Energy Inc., is responsible for providing strategic guidance and success towards enhancing the company's supplier diversity initiatives and the integration of supplier diversity into the company's overall corporate strategy and culture. Jewel has a key role in design and implementation of processes and procedures to grow relationships with diverse and small business enterprises and to increase their inclusion in business opportunities at CenterPoint Energy.

**Yesenia Taylor**  
General Manager Business Solutions  
HISD



**Yesenia Taylor** is the General Manager of Business Solutions for the Houston Independent School District. She is responsible for increasing the participation of minority and woman-owned business enterprises (M/WBEs) in the areas of procurement, construction, and professional services.

The Supplier Diversity Department advocates fair and equitable opportunities for the participation of M/WBE firms and works with M/WBE Suppliers and HISD departments to create active business partnerships. In addition to the district's Supplier Diversity department,

Yesenia also oversees the Risk Management Department.

**Deborah Wilkins**  
Senior Equal Opportunity Consultant  
Shell Oil



**Deborah Wilkins** has been working with Shell Oil Company since 1997. In total, she has over 37 years of varied Human Resources experience in employee relations, diversity management, facilitation and training, and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO).

Her Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) experience includes leading the regional and global implementation of D&I plans and providing strategic guidance to staff, senior and mid-level management regarding D&I issues. She now serves as the Senior Equal Opportunity Consultant for Shell, with responsibility for EEO compliance and oversight of Shell's US Employee Resource Groups.

Deborah graduated from the Pennsylvania State University with a Bachelor's degree from the College of Human Development. She holds SPHR certification and completed the National Training Labs - Diversity Practitioner Certificate Program. She resides in Sugar Land, TX with her husband, Gordon.

**Lynn Winstead, Ph.D., L.P.C.**

Assistant Director, EY Americas Talent Team, Total Rewards  
EY Assist



**Lynn Winstead** is the Assistant Director of Ernst & Young's Employee Assistance and Work Life program known as EY Assist. Lynn joined EY in 2017 after an extensive career consulting with emergency responder organizations and over 20 years in private practice as a mental health practitioner. She was also a full-time professor at The University of Texas at Dallas where she taught Crisis Communication at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, Interpersonal Communication, The Culture of Bullying in America and Professional Communication in Business.

Lynn formerly worked at The Dallas Police Department as a consultant in crisis communication, crisis response, and critical incident response. Lynn won the Distinguished Dissertation Award upon receiving her doctorate degree for her dissertation on communication in law enforcement personnel. Lynn is a Licensed Professional Counselor who lives in Dallas, Texas and enjoys reading, spending time with her 2 children and exercising in her free time.

**Dusya Vera**

Associate Professor of Strategic Management, C.T. Bauer College of Business  
University of Houston



**Dusya Vera** joined the Bauer College in 2002 and has, since then, taught courses in leadership and strategy at the undergraduate, masters, doctoral, and executive levels. At the Bauer College, she is the recipient of multiple awards including the Melcher Awards for Excellence in Research, Teaching, and Service. She received the University of Houston Distinguished Leadership in Teaching Excellence Award in 2017 and the University of Houston Teaching Excellence Award in 2011.

Dusya Vera received her Ph.D. in Business Administration (Strategic Management) from the Richard Ivey School of Business at Western University in Canada. Dr. Vera's research is in the areas of strategic leadership, improvisation, organizational learning, and innovation. She has published in top academic and practitioner publications.



## **The Association of Chinese American Professionals**

ACAP is an association of Chinese American professionals with a wide variety of expertise including engineering, science, health care, business, humanity, and arts and culture. Founded in 1978, and currently with a total membership of approximately 300, the ACAP recruits its members from, but not limited to, the states of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas and Oklahoma.

In 2001, the ACAP, in collaboration with JPMorgan Chase, Shell Oil Company and Marathon Oil Company, organized the inaugural Diversity Summit annual conference. This annual conference has since gained wider support and attendance from other major corporations and organizations in the greater Houston area.

As a non-profit organization, the ACAP strives to foster the professional development and fellowship among its members, to facilitate the development of leadership skills of Chinese Americans professionals, and to address various issues that Chinese American professionals faced in the workplace.

In order to encourage professional advancement of the members, the ACAP regularly hosts technical seminars and workshops with various professional disciplines throughout the year. The flagship activity is the Science, Engineering and Technology Seminars (SETS) held in Houston in the spring/ summer of each year. SETS usually draw 200 to 300 participants. These seminars, workshops and conferences are multidisciplinary, and often involve guest speakers from other states and foreign countries.

For more information on ACAP, please visit the website at: <http://www.acap-usa.org/>.

To become a sponsor of the Diversity Summit, please contact  
DS Executive Director Cecil Fong at  
[cecil.fong@gmail.com](mailto:cecil.fong@gmail.com).

For sponsorship information, please visit our web site:  
**[DiversitySummit.org](http://DiversitySummit.org)**.