

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

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# Onward & Upward

*THE ERA OF THE EMPOWERED WOMAN*



MARCH 26, 2021  
9:00 AM - 11:30 AM

VIRTUAL EVENT

SPONSORED BY



Division of Diversity, Equity  
& Educational Achievement  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

# Wisconsin Women in Leadership

*Challenging the norms, charting the future, changing the script... forever.*

Belle Case La Follette the wife of “Fighting Bob LaFollette,” • Zona Gale (1895, MA 1899), author • Eudora Welty (’29), Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist • Jodie (Joan) Zeldes Bernstein (’48), former director, Federal Trade Commission’s Bureau of Consumer Protection • Vel Phillips, (LLB ’51) Law School • Lorraine Hansberry (x’52), playwright, author (“Raisin in the Sun”) • Ada Deer (’57), former head of the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs • Barbara B. Crabb (’60, LLB’62), chief U.S. district judge, Western District of Wisconsin • Joan Edelman Spero (’66), president, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation • Kay Smith Koplovitz (’67), founder, USA Network • Judith Sweet (’69), First Woman President of National Collegiate Athletic Association • Lynne Vincent Cheney (PhD’70), former head, National Endowment for the Humanities • Elizabeth Burmaster (’76, MS’84), former Wisconsin state superintendent of schools • Tammy Baldwin (JD’89), U.S. Senator for Wisconsin • Carol Skornicka (’62, MS’64, JD’77), senior vice president, Midwest Express Airlines • Former Madison Mayor Sue Bauman (’65, JD’81, MS’81) • Carol Bartz (’71), chair, president and CEO of Yahoo! Inc. • Greta Van Susteren (’76) attorney, Fox News • Deborah Blum (MA’82), author & Pulitzer Prize winner • Laurel Clark (’83, MD’87), astronaut, space shuttle Columbia

**Shirley Abrahamson (S.J.D. ’62)** – Became the first woman on the Wisconsin Supreme Court in 1976 and its first female chief justice in 1996. Justice Abrahamson spent 43 years on the bench, 19 as the chief justice, and was an indefatigable jurist known for her activist voice and tart dissents. The second longest-serving chief justice in Wisconsin history, she authored more than 450 majority opinions and participated in more than 3,500 written decisions of the court.



**WISCONSIN**  
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Cheryl B. Gittens, Interim Deputy Vice Chancellor for Diversity & Inclusion

Division of Diversity, Equity and Educational Achievement

# NDC WELCOME

Greetings participant,

We are excited to welcome you to our 2021 Wisconsin Women in Leadership Symposium hosted by the National Diversity Council. This great event offers an opportunity for you to observe, learn, network and hear different perspectives from a diverse mix of executives who have made the climb up the “corporate ladder.” You will gather a wealth of knowledge, experience and expertise from some of the best women executives speaking on topics that will address the personal and professional challenges faced, while successfully rising to the top in their respective organizations.

The theme for today’s symposium is, “Onward & Upward: The Era of the Empowered Woman”. With the turn of events in the year 2020, women of all backgrounds have experienced what it means to be resilient, adaptable and forward-thinking. This year’s symposium will explore the ways women can empower themselves and one another to conquer new norms throughout the journey of life.

We encourage you to take the initiative to virtually meet new colleagues, share questions and comments about today’s topics and exchange ideas. It is our hope that your experience is rewarding and allows you to reflect on your own goals in an effort to help catapult you to the top in your own career development. We sincerely appreciate your attendance today in support of the Wisconsin Women in Leadership Symposium and the National Diversity Council. We would like to thank all of our event sponsors, corporate partners, planning committee members and program participants. Without each of you, this event would not be a success.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Kennedy".

Dennis Kennedy  
Founder & Board Chairman  
National Diversity Council



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angeles Valenciano".

Angeles Valenciano  
Chief Executive Officer  
National Diversity Council

#TheEmpoweredEra



# SPONSOR WELCOME

Dear Symposium Participants,

A warm welcome to you from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. We are pleased to have you with us again for one of the most popular annual events hosted by the Division of Diversity, Equity and Educational Achievement. In honor of Women's History Month today we partner with the National Diversity Council to host this symposium for women rising in their careers, a comprehensive workshop that will provide a wealth of information and encouragement.

Today's theme, "Onward and Upward, the Era of the Empowered Woman," will guide our discussion and examine the evolving needs for women in the contemporary workplace. We have five panelists who are going to share their journeys to leadership, instruct participants on the nuances specific to women in leadership, mentor on the realities of building a career, and share best practices for success.

Moderated by Binu Palta Hill, one of our UW-Madison Women in Leadership and Assistant Dean for Diversity & Inclusion at the Wisconsin School of Business, we are excited to present panelists:

- Kourtney Gibson, President of Loop Capital Markets, LLC;
- Melissa Scholz, Principal Attorney/Owner of Scholz Nonprofit Law, LLC;
- Kareeda Chones-Aguam, Vice President of Partner Strategy & Management Milwaukee Bucks;
- Syneathia LaGrant, Vice President, Global Learning & Development, ManpowerGroup;
- Ana Hooker, Senior Vice President, Operations at Exact Sciences.

We intend for this symposium to reinvigorate the spirit, celebrate the ability to instinctively seek solutions through common experiences, and renew inner joy with the empathy of a few heartfelt laughs. Above all, together we will explore how to climb with confidence and support one another on this amazing journey.

Please enjoy the 2021 Women in Leadership Symposium.

In Community,



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Cheryl B. Gittens".

Cheryl B. Gittens, Ed.D.  
Interim Deputy Vice Chancellor for Diversity &  
Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer  
Division of Diversity, Equity & Education Achievement  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

# AGENDA

9:00AM - 9:05AM

**ZOOM RULES**

9:05AM - 9:10AM

**OPENING REMARKS**

NATIONAL DIVERSITY COUNCIL, CEO, ANGELES VALENCIANO

9:10AM - 9:12AM

**WELCOME**

UW-MADISON'S INTERIM DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR

9:12AM - 9:15AM

**MODERATOR INTRODUCTION OF PANELISTS**

**9:15AM - 11:20AM**

9:15AM - 9:30AM

**PANELIST 1**

9:30AM - 9:45AM

**PANELIST 2**

9:45AM - 10:00AM

**PANELIST 3**

10:00AM - 10:15AM

**AUDIENCE QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION I**

10:15AM - 10:20AM

**BREAK**

10:20AM - 10:35AM

**PANELIST 4**

10:35AM - 10:50AM

**PANELIST 5**

10:50AM - 11:05AM

**PANELIST - ALL**

11:05am - 11:20am

**AUDIENCE QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION II**

11:20am - 11:25am

**CLOSING REMARKS**

NATIONAL DIVERSITY COUNCIL

## Panelists & Topics:

**I Am Not Your Superwoman. Debunking Women Having to Take Care of Everything**

Kourtney Gibson, President of Loop Capital Markets, LLC

**Be the Change You Want to See in The World: How to Advocate and Support Causes That Matter to You.**

Melissa Scholz, Principal Attorney/Owner of Scholz Nonprofit Law, LLC

**Diversity of Womanhood: Showcasing the Wide Array of Experiences Among Women.**

Kareeda Chones-Aguam, Vice President of Partner Strategy & Management Milwaukee Bucks

**What's Wrong with Being Confident?**

Dr. Syneathia LaGrant, Vice President, Global Learning & Development, ManpowerGroup

**The High-Achieving Woman: A Look at The Five Key Themes of Agency, Authenticity, Connection, Self-Clarity and Wholeness**

Ana Hooker, Senior Vice President of Operations, Exact Sciences

## All Panelists

**I Got Your Back: The Importance of Sponsorship and Having More Women in Executive Leadership**

# MODERATOR



## ***Binnu Palta Hill***

*University Wisconsin-Madison Women in Leadership and Assistant Dean for Diversity & Inclusion at the Wisconsin School of Business*

Binnu Palta Hill has spent the last 24 years in the UW System teaching, consulting and designing programming that enhances inclusion by leveraging strategic leadership and organizational cultural dexterity. Since 2008, she has led The Office of Diversity and Inclusion at the Wisconsin School of Business where she works closely with the Dean to develop a diversity, equity and inclusion strategy with the goals of enhancing diversity among students, faculty and staff, and fostering an inclusive culture. A distinguishing factor in her approach is the combination of academic research and lived experience to dissect core issues related to identity differences. This approach is apparent in the Diversity Lunch and Learn Series she founded in 2010. These discussion forums on topics such as race, gender, and politics. Ms. Hill also teaches inclusive leadership in the Wisconsin MBA Programs.

In May 2015, Ms. Hill represented WSB at the White House as Wisconsin became one of the first business schools to commit to best practices for increasing opportunities in business for women and preparing a culturally competent 21st century workforce. She has also served on a number of advisory boards such as the WI Governor's Youth Summit, Information Technology Academy and the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism. In recognition for her contributions to UW-Madison and the Madison community, she has received several awards including the UW-Madison Outstanding Woman of Color award, Wisconsin Innovation Award, the Wisconsin Alumni Association Leadership Award.

Ms. Hill has been a guest speaker at over 100 conferences throughout the United States and Europe. She has served as a consultant for culture and inclusion for over two dozen corporations. Her work on "Building Inclusive Business Cultures" has been featured in The Capital Times, Biz Education and NBC 15 news.

# PANELISTS



## **Kareeda Chones-Aguam**

*Vice President of Partner Strategy & Management  
Milwaukee Bucks*

In her 21st season with the Milwaukee Bucks, Kareeda Chones Aguam is the Vice President of Partner Strategy and Management. Leads a team responsible for managing and retaining 70+ marketing partnerships for the Milwaukee Bucks including working closely with the management team in the construction and development of the new 500M Deer District in downtown Milwaukee. The partnership revenue line has quadrupled during her leadership. In addition to her position with the Milwaukee Bucks, Chones Aguam has also been a free-lance voice talent artist for over 20 years as the voice of numerous radio and television commercials, television programs, and professional employee videos for various clients throughout the city and across the country including Milwaukee Bucks' Basketball, and her most recent project as the Voice of Fiserv Forum! Chones Aguam was formerly the TV host of the Marquette Women's Basketball Coach's Show, Marquette Women's Basketball TV Color Analyst, and on-air voice talent on Milwaukee's Smooth Jazz 106.9. Chones Aguam is excited to launch Aguama Productions LLC. this year ... site coming soon!

A graduate of Marquette University and four (4) year letter winner of the Marquette Women's Basketball Team, Kareeda majored in PR along with a minor in Spanish. Kareeda also is engaged in the community as a Board of Directors for the Penfield Children's Center of Wisconsin and Board Director for Employ Milwaukee, and past member of the African American Chamber of Commerce Women in Business Committee and the Women's Fund Board of Greater Milwaukee.



## **Kourtney Gibson**

*President  
Loop Capital Markets, LLC*

Kourtney Gibson is the President of Loop Capital Markets. She oversees all brand-building efforts at the firm including the cultivation and enhancement of strategic client relationships across the firm's various business lines. In addition, Ms. Gibson identifies and pursues firm-wide opportunities for growth and operational improvement. Ms. Gibson serves on Loop Capital's Management and Fairness and Valuation Committees.

Ms. Gibson started with Loop Capital as an intern in 1997, the firm's founding year. Over more than 20 years, Ms. Gibson has worked across multiple functions at Loop Capital including strategy, investment banking, sales and trading. In 2015, after a decade of running the firm's equity division, she became responsible for heading the firm's taxable fixed income division. Ms. Gibson was then named President in 2016. Ms. Gibson currently serves on the boards of Lululemon Athletica Inc. (NASDAQ:LULU) and MarketAxess Holdings Inc. (NASDAQ:MKTX). She is a member of The Economic Club of Chicago and the Treasury Market Practices Group sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. In addition, Ms. Gibson sits on the board of trustees at the University of Miami, where she serves on the Executive Committee and Investment Committee, and Viterbo University, where she serves on the Finance Committee. Her community outreach includes her role as a board member of the Dibia Dream Foundation and Chairman of the board of the Chicago Scholars Foundation. She holds Series 7, 57, 24 and 63 FINRA registrations and is a CNBC Contributor providing insight, analysis and outlook on the markets. Ms. Gibson received an M.B.A. from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and a B.B.A. from the University of Miami.

# PANELISTS



**Ana Hooker**

*Senior Vice President, Operations  
Exact Sciences*

Ana Hooker is the SVP of Operations at Exact Sciences where she is responsible for laboratory operations, manufacturing, and quality. Ana joined Exact Sciences in 2013 to start the Clinical Laboratory while waiting for the test's FDA approval bringing over 20 years of clinical laboratory experience to the operation. Prior to her position at Exact Sciences, she was at ARUP Laboratories for 15 years, the latter two as the SVP Division Manager for anatomic pathology, oncology and genetics. She received her BS from Kansas State University, her MT from Hays Pathology Laboratories, and her MBA from Westminster College in Salt Lake City, Utah.



**Syneathia LaGrant**

*Vice President, Global Learning & Development  
ManpowerGroup*

Dr. Syneathia LaGrant is an expert in adult learning and leadership development. She brings more than 18 years of experience working in human resources focusing on training, leadership development and talent management. Her experience includes managing global talent management teams and developing learning interventions for multi-national organizations including MolsonCoors Beverage Company, Fiserv Inc, and Johnson Controls, Inc. In her current role with ManpowerGroup, she leads the strategy for designing, developing, and deploying enterprise wide learning and leadership development initiatives.

Syneathia holds a bachelor's in English and Secondary Education Certification from Bradley University. She earned a Master's in Adult Education with an emphasis on Instructional design from Alverno College. Syneathia earned her doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania's Chief Learning Officers Program. Her dissertation is entitled *Beyond Belonging: Identifying Critical and Conflicting Factors in Women's Career Progressions*. Her research explored the impact of belonging on a woman's success trajectory in large organizations. When she is not working, Syneathia enjoys being active in the Milwaukee community supporting educational initiatives and volunteering with nonprofits that support education, children, and serve the homeless. She provides leadership development and board development workshops for churches and community groups, is an active board member for Community Memorial Hospital in Menomonee Falls, and serves as a trustee and youth ministry leader for her church. She also loves spending time with her husband, Robert, going Bucks games and enjoying the many restaurants in Milwaukee. She is the proud mother of Brendan, a freshman at Howard University in Washington DC, and Marcus, a sophomore at Rufus King IB High School in Milwaukee, WI.



# PANELISTS



## **Melissa Scholz**

*Principal Attorney/Owner  
Scholz Nonprofit Law, LLC*

Melissa Auchard Scholz is the principal attorney for Scholz Nonprofit Law, a Madison-based firm focused on serving the tax and corporate legal needs of nonprofits and social entrepreneurs. <https://scholznonprofitlaw.com/> Melissa started her career in the corporate and tax practice of a large law firm and then formed her firm in 2007 to create more accessible legal services for community based organizations - - and have more flexibility as a working mom. Through the law firm, Melissa employs four colleagues, three of them are working moms and all have flexible work schedules.

Melissa is active in the community, including currently serving as a founding board member of March for Our Lives Action Fund (youth-led gun violence prevention, Parkland, FL), and on the Boards of the Foundation for Madison's Public Schools and its advocacy affiliate, Schools Make Madison Advocates, as well as Play Fair Wisconsin (redistricting issues). Prior to law school, Melissa helped to found a youth service organization, Campus Compact, worked as a professional fundraiser and served on the Dane County Board of Supervisors. Throughout her career, she's found ways to stir up "good trouble."

Melissa holds a B.A. from Stanford University and a J.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She and her husband have enjoyed living in Madison for thirty years and raising their three daughters. When Melissa isn't practicing law or working on a community issue, she enjoys being outdoors, cooking or eating good food, and spending time with family and friends.

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Jul 12 - 16



**Denver Virtual**  
Aug 09 - 13



**Grand Rapids Virtual**  
Aug 23 - 27



**Washington Virtual**  
Sep 13 - 17



**Phoenix Virtual**  
Sep 27 - Oct 01



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Oct 11 - 15



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September 8



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October 13



The Power of a Diverse Workforce  
November 10



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December 1

**For more information, visit NDC Virtual Suite!**



# THANK YOU



We are committed to diversity and the transformation of our workplace and community into environments where people are valued for the uniqueness and are secure in their knowledge that their efforts make a difference. We respectfully ask you to consider joining us to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace and community. If you are interested in learning more about our organization and partnership opportunities that are available, please contact us below.

**For additional information about the National Diversity Council, please contact:**  
**Linda D. Jackson** - [Linda.jackson@nationaldiversitycouncil.org](mailto:Linda.jackson@nationaldiversitycouncil.org)



**NATIONAL DIVERSITY COUNCIL**