



2023 NOMINEE PROFILES

PURPOSE

Per MOTA’s request, compilation of biographies and headshots for new ICH Full Council members filling seats vacant or expiring in 2023.

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ADAM ROCAP (PROVIDER CATEGORY, REAPPOINTMENT)

Adam Rocap, LICSW, is the Deputy Director at Miriam's Kitchen, a nonprofit organization working to end chronic homelessness in DC through outreach, connections to services, housing, and advocacy. He is active in DC's Interagency Council on Homelessness, particularly in efforts to end veteran and chronic homelessness. He was a Future Executive Director Fellow through the Nonprofit Roundtable in 2014-2015 and received the Founder's Award from the DC Behavioral Healthcare Association for Excellence in Behavioral Healthcare Management in 2015. Prior to working at Miriam's Kitchen and attending NCSSS, he worked with homeless seniors through the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in Oakland, CA, and did community support work with adults living with severe and persistent mental illness at Green Door here in Washington, DC. He received a Master of Social Work degree from Catholic University in 2007.



CHRISTY RESPRESS (PROVIDER CATEGORY, REAPPOINTMENT)

Christy Respress has more than 28 years of experience working with individuals who are experiencing homelessness and living with complex behavioral health challenges. She has worked with Pathways to Housing for 20 years, and has been in the role of President & CEO of Pathways to Housing DC since January 2011. She has extensive knowledge of Housing First and has provided technical assistance to agencies and communities around the world to implement this innovative model. She is an active member of the Board of Directors of the DC Behavioral Health Association. Christy received her Bachelor of Arts in Social Work from The Catholic University of America and her Masters in Social Work from Howard University.



DANIEL RICO (LIVED EXPERIENCE CATEGORY, NEW MEMBER)

Daniel Rico, Chief Development Officer, Sasha Bruce Youthwork

Danny Rico's path is one of resilience and dedication, fueled by his own experience of childhood homelessness as a Latino immigrant and gay man. This unique perspective shapes his deep passion for empowering marginalized youth and preventing homelessness, a passion he translates into action not only as Chief Development Officer at Sasha Bruce Youthwork but also as a passionate fundraising and community engagement professional.

Danny believes that diverse voices are the key to unlocking innovative solutions. He thrives on bringing people together across local and national landscapes, forging strategic partnerships that unite leaders to champion common causes. This collaborative spirit is evident in his success at Sasha Bruce Youthwork, where he implemented a data-driven fund development strategy that propelled the organization from \$11 million to \$17 million in just three years. These funds directly supported critical programs for opportunity youth and their families, demonstrating Danny's ability to translate vision into tangible results that empower individuals and communities.

Danny's expertise extends beyond fundraising. He is a master at uniting diverse stakeholders, bridging divides, and bringing unlikely collaborators together for greater impact. His experience working with national and local nonprofits has honed this ability, allowing him to see the bigger picture and find common ground. This is further exemplified by his role as a mentor in the Georgetown University Scholars Program, where he guides first-generation scholars on their journeys to success, paying his passion for empowerment forward.

Joining the DC Interagency Council on Homelessness represents a natural progression for Danny. It offers an opportunity to translate his beliefs, experience, and expertise into city-wide solutions, aligning his vision with the Council's goal of making homelessness brief, rare, and non-recurring in DC.

He brings his leadership, expertise, and unwavering passion to ensure every young person in the nation's capital has the chance to thrive. His vision is for a future where homelessness is not simply managed but prevented, creating a city that fosters the well-being and success of all its young residents.

Danny is eager to collaborate with the Council and community leaders to realize this vision. Together, they can shape a DC where every youth has the opportunity to shine, unburdened by the challenges of homelessness.

Beyond the workday, Danny can be found nurturing his gardens, exploring hiking paths, and chasing after his two adopted feline companions, Mila and Tabitha. These pursuits reflect his love for growth, exploration, and connection – values he brings to both his professional and personal life.



Deborah Jones

Deborah Jones is a licensed clinical social worker, with over forty years of experience in healthcare financing, program evaluation, and program development. Ms. Jones uses this experience as the Clinical Manager with Housing Up’s Permanent Supportive Housing Program.

Ms. Jones is an HBCU graduate of Clark College, Atlanta University School of Social Work, and Howard University. Ms. Jones's commitment to advocacy is deeply rooted in her HBCU’s mantra “Find A Way or Make One.” During her service with the Government of the District of Columbia, Ms. Jones received the Andrew Wood Advocacy Award, from the Mayor’s Committee on Persons with Disabilities (1996). Deborah is passionate about her commitment to working with homeless families and individuals in the District of Columbia.

When she is not working, she loves classic movies, British comedies, listening to jazz, and easy-listening music along with the love of her two shih tzu poodles.



LYNN AMANO (PROVIDER CATEGORY, NEW MEMBER)

Lynn J. Amano

Director of Advocacy at Friendship Place, a premier provider of housing and services for those experiencing homelessness. www.friendshipplace.org

I have been working in Advocacy at Friendship Place and participating in 7+ ICH workgroups and meetings for the last 3 years. I come from a strong background of commitment to improving the lives of others through local and national budget and legislative advocacy. I have a master's degree in political management from GWU and a 30-plus year history building compassionate campaigns around candidates and issues addressing poverty and its causes. I bring a continually deepening understanding of needed solutions to improve our housing services system, and the knowledge and experience of our organizational staff who provide hands-on help to our participants, to the role of Provider at the ICH.



NIKILA SMITH (PROVIDER CATEGORY, NEW MEMBER)

My name is Nikila Smith I'm from Philadelphia PA, I reside in Washington DC. I'm seeing a new me in a new light, I'm an advocate, I work for a paper called Street Sense Media, I'm a writer, poet, illustrator, and I have worked my way up to staff. I am a homeless woman but, I'm not missing any joy. I'm going to be a awesome caseworker, and a stronger advocate.



RACHELLE ELLISON (ADVOCATE CATEGORY, NEW MEMBER)

I am Rachelle Ellison, a woman with the lived experience of being homeless with co-occurring disorders. for 17 years straight, who is now is in long term recovery. I am a speaker and advocate for the national coalition for the homeless. I have worked through a lot of early childhood trauma. Today I stand in the Gap, for those still unhoused, with COC needs. I am the Assistant Director of People for Fairness Coalition and Lead of the Rhonda Whitaker Streets to life Dc. I am one of the women onboarded to the Consumer engagement working group on the Interagency council on homelessness, where I advocate, for the most vulnerable population in many ways. I'm also a member of a three-person team who has been approved to do HMIS and has been given a seat at the CAHP table. I am also co facilitator t for CNHED Community Voices Working Group. It is my duty and passion to help others that in the homeless population learn to become their own best advocates and help them with the resources they need with the goal of ending their homelessness. I believe we can do this together.



I consider myself as a tool for God's purpose and what He is doing in His kingdom (born and raised Christian). I pray daily to be made a 'clean container' so that He may use me to do His body work for His people. This train of thought has led me to manage the volunteer staff with donation from the public for operating funding for the Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV) as the Executive Director since 2008 to the present. As one who was homeless and needed CCNV in 2004, I strongly believe in the CCNV mission statement to provide the best possible chance to help the poor and homeless to get back in the mainstream society. Now going in to the future CCNV and I have started the construction project("The Homeless Services Complex") on our parking lot (.84acre) with other partners to build a "new shelter facility" and lots and lots and lots of much needed "new affordable housing" in DC for the poor and the homeless in this city.



Roxanne L. Murray

Echelon Community Services Director, Kia's Place IV Extended Transitional Housing Program

Roxanne L. Murray is a career long civil rights advocate committed to the transformative power of racial equity, diversity, inclusion, and social and economic justice to reduce and eliminate the impact of institutional and structural impediments to quality-of-life options for low income, marginalized people, and their communities.

As the Director of Kia's Place IV ETH Program, Ms. Murray utilizes strategic, operational, and organizational leadership to work within existing structures to serve District of Columbia youth experiencing significant barriers to independence. Additionally, Ms. Murray is an experienced workforce and economic security professional with extensive expertise and deep knowledge of coordinated service delivery and economic-based practices that secure pathways to sustained independence for the populations she serves.

Prior to her employment with Echelon Community Services, Ms. Murray served as the Director of Education, Employment & Senior Services in San Francisco where she managed 4-departments; designed and implemented poverty mitigation programs, integrated systems to streamline operations, lead strategic planning initiatives to assess and evaluate capacity and growth potential, managed budgets and grants to ensure fiscal integrity and sustainability, recruited, supervised, supported and trained staff and volunteers, and leveraged and maintained partnerships/professional relationships to positively impact and advance policy and organization interests.

Ms. Murray earned her law degree from The American University, Washington College of Law, and an undergraduate degree in Political Science from the University of Rhode Island.



Tobie-Lynn Smith, MD, MPH

Dr. Tobie Smith is an Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine in the Department of Family Medicine at Georgetown University School of Medicine. She is the Co-Chair of the Subcommittee on Community Engagement at the Georgetown Center for Health Equity and is a Medical Director for the HOYA clinic, a Georgetown student-run free health clinic. Dr. Smith is the Founder and Executive Director of Street Health DC, an all-volunteer non-profit that provides medical care directly on the street to persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Washington, DC. Prior to this, she spent six years as Medical Director at Health Care for the Homeless in Baltimore County. She is a past member of the American Academy of Family Physicians Board of Directors and served on their Commission on Health of the Public and Science. Dr. Smith currently serves as the Board Chair for the United States Anti-Doping Agency, which promotes the principles of justice, equality, and fairness for all athletes in competing safe, healthy, and clean. Dr. Smith has a BA and an MEd in Kinesiology from the University of Texas, an MD from Stony Brook University School of Medicine, and a Master's in Public Health from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She completed a Community Health Leadership Development Fellowship at Georgetown University School of Medicine.



TONIA WELLONS (BUSINESS/PRIVATE SECTOR CATEGORY, REAPPOINTMENT)

Tonia Wellons is the President & CEO of the Greater Washington Community Foundation, the largest public foundation in the region with over \$460 million in assets and \$70 million in annual grants. Under her leadership, The Community Foundation developed a bold 10-year strategic vision that will leverage our resources and expertise to lead our community in addressing the most catalytic opportunity of our lifetimes: closing our community's racial wealth gap.

Tonia has over 20 years of experience in public and private partnerships, financial access and inclusion, and international development. Prior to her role at The Community Foundation, Tonia served as a political appointee for the Obama Administration as head of global partnerships at the Peace Corps and a fund manager at the World Bank Group.

Tonia serves on the board of Leadership Greater Washington, Philanthropy DMV, and Bishop McNamara High School. She is a member of the Federal City Council, and The Economic Club of Washington, DC. She was recently named to the Washington Business Journal's 'Women Who Mean Business' Class of 2023 and named one of Washington's Most Powerful Women' by Washingtonian Magazine. In 2020, she was named a Hero of the Crisis by Washingtonian Magazine, Nonprofit Leader of the Year by the Washington Business Journal, and the 2020 Philanthropist of the Year by the AFP DC chapter.

Tonia is a 20+ year resident of Prince George's County and a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. She has a master's degree in Public Administration and International Development Policy from the University of Delaware and a bachelor's in Political Science from North Carolina A&T State University.

