

**National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine**  
Committee on Advancing Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in STEM Organization

**Meeting 3 Panelist Bios**

April 21, 2022: 2:30-6:30pm ET | 1:30-5:30pm CT | 12:30-4:30pm MT | 11:30-3:30pm PT  
April 22, 2022: 1:30-5:30 ET | 12:30-4:30 CT | 11:30-3:30 MT | 10:30-2:30 PT

**Thursday, April 21 from 4:00-5:30 pm ET**

**Panel: Strategies for Diversity in STEMM Organizations**

**Victor Ray** (moderator), F. Wendell Miller Associate Professor, University of Iowa  
Victor Ray is the F. Wendell Miller Associate Professor in the Departments of Sociology and Criminology and African American Studies at the University of Iowa and a Nonresident Fellow in Governance Studies at The Brookings Institution. His research applies critical race theory to classic sociological questions. He is currently working on two book manuscripts: a project focused on race and organizational theory with the University of Chicago Press and public book on critical race theory with Penguin Random House. His work has been published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *American Sociological Review*, *American Behavioral Scientist*, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *Contexts*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *The Journal of Marriage and Family*, *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* and *Sociological Theory*. His work has won multiple awards, including the early career award from the American Sociological Association's Section on Racial and Ethnic Minorities and the Southern Sociological Society's Junior Scholar Award. Victor is also an active public scholar, publishing commentary in outlets such as The Washington Post, Harvard Business Review, and Boston Review. Victor's work has been funded by the Ford Foundation, and the National Science Foundation. His first book *On Critical Race Theory: Why it Matters & Why You Should Care* is forthcoming from Penguin Random House.

**Dawn Bennet-Alexander**, Practical Diversity

Licensed to practice law in DC and six federal jurisdictions, Dawn D. Bennett-Alexander ("Dr. B-A") is a tenured associate professor of Employment Law & Legal Studies, *emerita*, at the [University of Georgia's Terry College of Business](#), and founder of Practical Diversity LLC. A *cum laude* graduate of the Howard University School of Law and a *magna cum laude* graduate of the Federal City College (now the University of the District of Columbia), she has received over 60 awards and recognitions for teaching and service, including a national teaching award and upon her retirement in 2021, the University of Georgia creating the endowed Dawn D. Bennett-Alexander Inclusive Community Award, to annually grant a monied award to a faculty member demonstrating a significant commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Dr. B-A delivered a TED Talk on Practical Diversity that has been viewed nearly 200,000 times. She was also a Fulbright Senior Scholar Fellowship recipient and taught and conducted research on race and gender at the Ghana School of Law in Ghana, West Africa for ten months. Before coming into

academia, Dr. B-A worked in legal capacities in Washington, DC at the, **Federal Labor Relations Authority** litigating federal sector labor law cases; the **White House Domestic Council**, serving as assistant to the Associate Director and General Counsel; the **D.C. Court of Appeals**, the highest court in DC, as law clerk to the Honorable Julia Cooper Mack, the first Black woman to be appointed to a court of last resort in the US, the **U.S. Federal Trade Commission's Antitrust Division**, the **U.S. Department of Justice's Honors Program**, the **University of North Florida**, and the **Antioch School of Law**. Dr. B-A also served as a special master (labor arbitrator) for the **Florida Public Employees Relations Commission** for over six years.

Dr. B-A publishes extensively in the Employment Law area with particular emphasis on race, gender and sexual orientation issues. In 1994 she co-authored a first-of-its-kind textbook, *Employment Law for Business*, (McGraw-Hill, Pub.) which established the discipline in colleges of business and remains, in its tenth edition, the leading text in the country in its discipline. She also co-authored *The Legal, Ethical and Regulatory Environment of Business in a Diverse Society*, (McGraw-Hill) and *The Legal, Ethical and Regulatory Environment of Business* (South-Western Publishing Company, Pub). In 2018 she published her first e-textbook, *Contemporary Contracts*, for Great River Learning. Since 1983, Dr. B-A has conducted Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, as well as Employment Law seminars for the public and private sector for thousands of attendees and has been featured in media around the world for her expertise.

**Fidan Kurtulus**, Professor, University of Massachusetts

Fidan Ana Kurtulus is a Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where she is also a founding director of the University of Massachusetts Center for Employment Equity. She has published research on a variety of labor economics topics including the causes and consequences of gender and race diversity at U.S. workplaces, the impacts of U.S. Civil Rights legislation and anti-discrimination regulation, broad-based employee share ownership and democratic workplace practices.

Professor Kurtulus has been a Women and Public Policy Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and a Wertheim Fellow at Harvard Law School. She has won numerous awards for her research including a Beyster Fellowship on Democratic Workplaces, and an Early Career Research Award from the Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. She has been awarded grants from the National Science Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation, and the Arnold Foundation, among other sources.

Professor Kurtulus received her A.B. from the University of Chicago, graduating with high honors in economics. She obtained her Ph.D. in economics from Cornell University.

**Román Liera**, Assistant Professor, Montclair State University

Román Liera (Ph.D., University of Southern California) is an Assistant Professor of Higher Education in the Department of Educational Leadership. He designed his research program to study how college and university practices and policies perpetuate racial inequity and how faculty and administrators can transform such practices and policies to advance racial equity. His current projects focus on understanding how race operates in doctoral education

socialization, the academic job market, hiring, and tenure and promotion. His research appears in the Journal of Higher Education, American Educational Research Journal, Teachers College Record, among others.

**Friday, April 22 from 1:30-3:00pm ET**

**Panel: Systemic and Culture Change Theories and Practices**

**Kecia Thomas** (moderator), Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, University of Alabama Birmingham

Kecia M. Thomas is the Dean of the UAB College of Arts and Sciences and Professor Emerita of Psychology at the University of Georgia (UGA). Dr. Thomas is an expert in the psychology of workplace diversity who relishes her scientist-practitioner identity. Her scholarship and institutional engagements focus on the issues of strategic diversity recruitment, diversity resistance (especially in STEM workplaces), and understanding the career experiences of marginalized workers like high potential women of color (e.g. Pet to Threat). Dr. Thomas received a B.A. in Psychology and Spanish from Bucknell University and her M.S. and Ph.D. in I/O Psychology from the Pennsylvania State University. She is also a graduate of the HERS Management Institute at Wellesley College, the SEC Academic Leadership Development Program, and the University System of Georgia Executive Leadership Institute.

Dr. Thomas is the author of numerous articles and book chapters and the first I/O diversity textbook, *Diversity Dynamics in the Workplace*. Thomas has edited six scholarly volumes and her work has been funded by federal agencies, for-profit and non-profit institutions, and corporate foundations. She is an elected-Fellow of the American Psychological Association, the Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race, and the Society of I/O Psychology. She is also a recipient of the Janet Chusmir Award for Distinguished Service from the Academy of Management. Dr. Thomas currently serves on the national change team for the NSF-funded Aspire, the national alliance for inclusive and diverse STEM faculty in addition to supporting the important DEI efforts of the National Academies of Science (NAS), the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP).

**Alex Cortez**, Bellwether Education Partners

Alex Cortez is a Partner with Bellwether Education in its Strategic Advising practice. Alex brings 17 years of experience in education leadership, including as a school operator, a consultant, a funder, and in nonprofit board governance. His most recent work, as a Managing Partner at New Profit (a Boston-based venture philanthropy), focused on parent power and systems change, and scaling the direct and widespread impact of various K-12 models, including tutoring, whole child supports, and postsecondary advising. He also previously served in multiple roles with KIPP, including as Chief of Staff, Strategy and Execution with KIPP Houston Public Schools, and as a Regional Director of Network Growth and Sustainability with the KIPP Foundation. He began his career in for-profit consulting and then served as a Manager with The Bridgespan Group. Alex serves on multiple nonprofit boards and serves his community as a

member of the MA State Board of Higher Education. Originally from New Orleans, Alex has a BA in political science from Columbia University and an MBA and MPA from Harvard University.

**Jennifer Martineau**, Leap and Inspire Global

With over 25 years of experience in the leadership development field, Jennifer has served leaders, organizations, and communities globally including healthcare, government, military, educational, community leadership, pharmaceuticals, and energy. Through organizational change, impact evaluation, high impact design, delivery of programs, and research, she brings a deep expertise in leadership research and how to apply it in practical, powerful ways for leaders and organizations. A co-author of the highly regarded book *Kick Some Glass: Ten Ways Women Succeed at Work on Their Own Terms* with Portia Mount, Jennifer is passionate about helping women to break through their proverbial glass ceilings and move toward understanding and attainment of their unique definitions of success

Jennifer is the president and founder of Leap & Inspire Global LLC, an organization focused on helping individuals and organizations achieve their full potential through coaching, consulting, and development. A key area of focus for Jennifer is on equity, inclusion, and diversity. Jennifer's passion is in helping organizations do the hard work required to become inclusive and equitable, and helping individuals in traditionally underrepresented groups identify and break through the barriers they confront in their leadership journeys. Jennifer works with organizations to create inclusive cultures that sustain diversity of leadership at all levels for all types of leaders. She also serves as an Honorary Senior Fellow for the Center for Creative Leadership as well as an adjunct professor at High Point University (High Point, NC) and National University (La Jolla, CA).

Jennifer earned a B.A. in psychology from North Carolina State University and a M.S. and Ph.D. in industrial and organizational psychology from the Pennsylvania State University.

Jennifer is a member of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology and the Women Business Collaborative. She serves on multiple boards and committees locally and nationally. Jennifer and her husband Jim are the proud parents of three adult children who are living their own lives of leadership.

**Aaron Thomas**, Professor and Director of Indigenous Research and STEM Education, University of Montana

Dr. Thomas works closely with Native undergraduate and graduate students while establishing relationships with the tribal colleges and reservation communities in working towards better Native STEM education and STEM research collaborations. His research involves the study of gas separations on the macroscale and biological separations (DNA) on the microscale for lab-on-a-chip work, but his work has more and more focused on Native STEM education and providing pathways for Native students in STEM fields. He has established the Montana American Indians in Math and Science Program (MT AIMS) which engages Native middle and high school students in STEM to prepare them for higher education. Before transferring to the University of Montana in January 2013, Dr. Thomas was an Associate Professor of Chemical

Engineering at the University of Idaho for 11 years. He also was the director of the Idaho Space Grant Consortium and NASA EPSCoR during his time there.

**Friday, April 22 from 3:00pm-4:40pm ET**

**Panel: Operationalizing ADEI in STEMM Organizations**

**Mirian Graddick-Weir** (moderator), Principal, WeirGroup LLC

Mirian Graddick-Weir is formerly the executive vice president, Human Resources at Merck, where she had responsibility for all aspects of human resources for 68,000 colleagues located in over 90 countries. She joined Merck in 2006 from AT&T, where she was executive vice president of Human Resources and Employee Communications. Prior to that role, she spent 20 years at AT&T holding numerous positions in HR and multiple operational roles. Dr. Graddick-Weir received her B.A. in psychology from Hampton University, a master's degree and Ph.D. in industrial/organizational psychology from Pennsylvania State University.

Dr. Graddick-Weir is a member of the Board of Yum! Brands, Inc. and Booking Holdings, Inc. She serves on the Foundation Board of the Society for Industrial/Organizational Psychology (SIOP) and is a senior advisor to the Jersey Battered Women's services (JBWS) organization. Previously, she served as the Chair of the HR Policy Association and the National Academy of Human Resources (NAHR). In 2001, she was elected as a NAHR Fellow and in 2016 she was elected as a Distinguished Fellow of the Academy, the highest honor in the HR Profession.

**Charles Bridges**, Executive Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer, CorVista

Dr. Bridges received A.B. in Engineering and Applied Physics from Harvard College *magna cum laude* at age 19 after entering Harvard Medical School at age 18 in the Harvard-MIT Program in Health Sciences and Technology, graduating with honors for the MD degree. He received a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science and a Doctor of Science in Chemical Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as a Whittaker Health Sciences Fellow. He was formerly the Chief Technology Officer and Head of Cross Enterprise Innovation for the Cardiovascular/Metabolism/Retina and Pulmonary Hypertension Therapeutic Areas at Janssen Pharmaceuticals, where he led the development of novel therapeutic and diagnostic devices and novel applications of advanced data science/analytics.

Dr. Bridges was the first African American Full Professor of Surgery at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the Bioengineering Graduate Group, Chief of Cardiac Surgery at Pennsylvania Hospital, and Professor and Chairman of the Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery at Carolina's HealthCare System with the University of North Carolina. Dr. Bridges has over 170 peer-reviewed publications and 15 patents (issued and pending). Today, Dr. Charles Bridges is the Chief Scientific Officer and Executive Vice President of CorVista Health, Inc, a digital health company dedicated to improving cardiovascular disease diagnosis through non-invasive diagnostic solutions.

**Lisa M. Leslie**, Stern Business School, New York University

Lisa M. Leslie is a Professor of Management and Organizations at the Stern School of Business, New York University. She received her A.B. in Social Psychology from Princeton University and her M.A. and Ph.D. in Organizational Psychology from the University of Maryland. Prior to joining Stern in 2013, she spent six years as an Assistant Professor at the Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota. Professor Leslie's research focuses on diversity in organizations, and specifically understanding why organizational diversity initiatives often produce unintended consequences and what can be done to make them more effective. She also has secondary research interests in cross-cultural organizational behavior and conflict management. Professor Leslie has received many awards for her research, which has appeared in journals spanning a number of different disciplines, and served as an Associate Editor for the *Academy of Management Journal*.

**Sanaz Mobasseri**, Assistant Professor of Management and Organizations, Boston University and

Associate Director for the Antiracist Tech Initiative at the Center for Antiracist Research  
I am an Assistant Professor of Management and Organizations at Boston University's Questrom School of Business and the Associate Director for the Antiracist Tech Initiative (website coming soon) at the [Center for Antiracist Research](#). My research investigates how organizational and social network processes shape race and gender differences at work. I do this by examining the roles of culture, cognition, and emotion in organizations using field experimental and computational research methodologies.

I completed my PhD in the Management of Organizations Department at UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business. Prior to my PhD, I worked in finance in the U.S. and U.K. I also hold a Master of Public Policy from UC Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy and a Bachelor of Science in Finance from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

**Alicia Nicki Washington**, Professor of Practice of Computer Science, Duke University

The daughter of a retired computer programmer and K-12 administrator, Dr. Nicki Washington was exposed to computer science (CS) at an early age, including programming in BASIC and PASCAL before high school. However, it wasn't until she attended Johnson C. Smith University that she realized how unique her path to computer science was; specifically, how unique it was to have a mother and entire village of Black engineers surrounding and supporting her since she was born. After completing her B.S. ('00), Nicki pursued her M.S. and Ph.D. from North Carolina State University ('02, '05), becoming the first African-American woman to receive a Ph.D. in computer science from the university.

While her career has spanned both industry and academia, including IBM, The Aerospace Corporation, Howard University, and Winthrop University, Nicki has often found herself one of the few Black women, if not the only, at the table. Based on her personal, academic, and professional experiences in CS, Nicki realized the paradigm required shifting. She has devoted her career to changing what, and more importantly WHO CS looks like to students of color.