



Leadership
Louisville Center

707 West Main Street

Louisville, KY 40202

(502) 561-0458

www.leadershiplouisville.org

For more information, contact:

Holly Prather

Vice President

Office: (502) 753-6503 | Cell: (502) 609-9227

hprather@leadershiplouisville.org



**Bingham
Fellows**

For Immediate Release

Forty-seven community leaders selected for Bingham Fellows Class of 2021

– Topic is “Belonging: Building a Culture of Inclusivity”

Bingham Fellows Class of 2020 to reveal projects on February 25

Louisville, Kentucky (January 28, 2021) – From a very competitive pool of candidates, forty-seven community leaders have been selected to participate in the Leadership Louisville Center’s Bingham Fellows Class of 2021. The topic for the 2021 Bingham Fellows will be: [“Belonging: Building a Culture of Inclusivity.”](#) As with every Bingham Fellows program year, the class is made up of a talented group of local leaders with a broad knowledge base and range of experience on the topic. The 2021 Class will study root causes of racism, connect with leaders in the arena of diversity and inclusion, learn how to communicate across differences, and research solutions. Beginning today, participants will be asked to tap into their imagination and talent, gathering critical resources to create social change.

“Since the program’s creation in 1988, Bingham Fellows have been leading the way as a voice for social justice. Beginning with the creation of The Housing Partnership, it has been part of the formula to address our community’s most complex topics and unite diverse voices toward action,” said Cynthia Knapek, president of the Leadership Louisville Center. “This program acts as a social innovation accelerator because we bring people with very different backgrounds, opinions, and cultures together under the same tent, we create an environment built on trust, and then we challenge participants to think differently. This class not only carries on that tradition but elevates it.”

Throughout the program, participants will work in teams on projects that will be revealed to the public at its completion. The **Bingham Fellows class of 2020** will be sharing their projects on the topic, [“Making Louisville a Top-Tier City”](#) on **February 25 from 4-5 p.m.** This event will be hosted virtually and all are invited to attend – [register here for Bingham Fellows Class of 2020 Project Reveal.](#)

Members of the Bingham Fellows Class of 2021 are ([link to photo roster](#)):

Kat Abner, Fund for the Arts; **Ericka Archie-Conner**, Morgan Stanley; **Lettie Bailey-Johnson**, Gifted By Design Leadership and Consulting; **Tawana Bain**, TBAIN AND CO; **Greg Blakemore**, The Nehemiah Group, LLC; **Kendall Boyd, Esq.**, Louisville Metro Government; **Tiffany L. Bridgewater, Ed.D.**, Louisville Collegiate School; **Freddie Brown**, YMCA of Greater Louisville; **Justin Brown**, Lucia Partners; **Krisy Bucher**, Appriss; **Danyel Clay**, Baptist Health; **Brian Cromer**, Stites & Harbison PLLC; **Wendy Dant Chesser**, One Southern Indiana; **Jennie Jean Davidson**, Neighborhood House; **Ylonda Davis**, Farm Credit Mid-America; **Cherie Dawson-Edwards, Ph.D.**, University of Louisville; **Keisha Deonarine**, Park Community Credit Union; **Hannah Drake**, Author/Public Speaker; **Timothy E. Findley Sr., Ed.D., MBA**, TARC; **Sylena Renee Fishback**, Jefferson County Public Schools; **Christopher Garrett**, LG&E and KU Energy LLC; **Scott Godthaab**, Republic Bank; **Chandra Gordon**, The Library Foundation; **Chris Hartman**, Fairness Campaign; **Nicole Hayden**, Friends of Nicole 50/50 Mentoring Collaborative, Inc.; **Dana Johnson**, Greater Louisville Inc.; **Tracey Johnson**, Brown-Forman Corporation; **The Rev. Kelly Ellen Kirby**, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church; **Gladys Lopez**, Norton Healthcare; **M. Annette Mandley-Turner**, Archdiocese of Louisville; **John Mays**, Yum! Brands - KFC US; **Christie McCravy**, Louisville Affordable Housing Trust Fund; **Sarah M. McKenna**, Dinsmore & Shohl, LLP; **Karen Thomas McNay, Ed.D.**, Sacred Heart Schools; **Donald “DJ” Mitchell Jr., Ph.D.**, Bellarmine University; **Tawanda Owsley**, Hosparus Health; **Angelique Perez**, The Food Literacy Project; **Andrew McDowell Renda**, Humana Inc.; **Victor Rowe**, PNC Bank; **Taylor Ryan**, Change Today, Change Tomorrow; **Chris Sanders**, Bahe, Cook, Cantley & Nefzger; **Allison Smith, Ph.D.**, Louisville Metro Government; **Michael Wade Smith**,

(more)

Ed.D., University of Louisville; **The Rev. Frank M. Smith Jr., D.D.**, Simmons College of Kentucky; **Todd Soderquist**, Humana Inc.; **Judy Splan-Larin, PsyD**, Brinly-Hardy Co.; and **Geoff White**, Frost Brown Todd.

More about the 2021 Topic – “Belonging: Building a Culture of Inclusivity”

Our city, like our country, continues to grapple with the legacy of racism and bias. We have debilitating income and wealth inequality, and we are geographically and often socially segregated. These inequities, particularly those faced by the Black community, have led to a lack of diversity in leadership positions in our major institutions and employers.

U.S. businesses spend nearly \$8 billion each year on ‘diversity and inclusion’ trainings and initiatives, but the needle isn’t moving. Why? Because hiring diverse talent by itself does not create an inclusive culture where all people can thrive. That requires a sense of belonging. When employees feel like they belong, their companies experience a 56% increase in job performance, a 50% drop in turnover risk, and a 75% reduction in sick days.* Institutions who create cultures of belonging build diverse leadership pipelines at all levels, creating psychological safety on teams that allow everyone to reach their full potential.

Increasing belonging inside organizations is critical, but in order to truly address wealth inequality, the business community must reach out across Louisville to ensure inclusivity is a valued part of our identity. If we are to affect the physical and social segregation that holds us back, everyone must learn to communicate across differences. We need to hold ourselves accountable to making real change, making sure we are properly defining and measuring success along the way.

This is where the Bingham Fellows come in. We know our community is filled with leaders who are ready for change and are willing to step up and be part of the solution. Leadership Louisville Center’s Bingham Fellows program will gather these leaders from every sector to examine these issues and make an impact. The diverse group selected for the Class of 2021 will study root causes of racism, connect with leaders in the arena of diversity and inclusion, learn how to communicate across differences, and research identified solutions.

They will examine and amplify the work that is already underway in our community, including the work of the city, the collective petition, “A Path Forward for Louisville,” the work of GLI’s Business Council to End Racism, and inside employee resource groups (ERGs) within organizations. The class will create safe spaces to learn and grow amongst themselves, and ultimately form project teams to take action and help create the best version of Louisville for everyone.

**BetterUp, September 2019 study*

About the Bingham Fellows program:

The Bingham Fellows program is the advanced leadership program of the Leadership Louisville Center. Created in 1988 through a \$500,000 endowment from the Mary and Barry Bingham Sr. Fund, the Fellows are social entrepreneurs who have the imagination and talent needed to gather critical resources and create social change. Side by side with peers, participants work to develop dynamic and innovative solutions to our community’s most pressing challenges. The 2021 cohort will be the 29th class, and the Bingham Fellows have had an impressive track record of providing community issues with visibility and momentum.

The Fellows don’t ponder what might be. They roll up their sleeves, shine a spotlight on an issue, and put new ideas to work. Their recent impact includes projects such as the West Louisville community development organization OneWest, regular Café Louie conversations with elected officials at Louisville Free Public Library locations, a sustainable model for neighborhood ‘Little Free Libraries,’ and City Champs, a talent attraction and retention program now managed by Greater Louisville Inc. The impact of the Fellows goes back to the 1990s with the creation of The Housing Partnership, construction of the Presbyterian Community Center, growth of local farmers’ markets, and numerous other positive outcomes.

ABOUT THE LEADERSHIP LOUISVILLE CENTER

The Leadership Louisville Center is the region’s most valuable resource for leadership development and civic engagement. With a purpose to inspire and equip leaders to be better and do better, it has graduated over 10,000 through its civic programs since 1979. The Center is recognized as a national best practice and is known for its dynamic programming and strong community connections. Programming includes five social impact leadership programs (Leadership Louisville, Focus Louisville, Ignite Louisville, Bingham Fellows and Encore Louisville), leadership skills training courses presented through the Leadership Green Room, and events designed to connect leaders and motivate positive change. Learn more at www.leadershiplouisville.org.