



THE ANTIOCHIAN  
*Leader* SUMMER 2023

ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF  
LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE



## Dean's COLUMN

This is a big moment for the Graduate School (GSLC) as we welcome Dr. Amy Rutstein-Riley to our community. As Associate Dean, Amy's primary focus will be as Director of the PhD in Leadership and Change program, bringing her tremendous capacity, experience and excitement to leading the program into its third and thriving decade. Amy will also be working with us all to expand the Graduate School in imaginative ways. To get to know more, please check out the interview (page 3).

From my lens as the founding Director, this moment is full of emotion. I'm thrilled with all the opportunities ahead and have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know Amy. I'm confident she will be great. And ... time passes. While I will remain as Dean of the Graduate School and continue to be engaged with Antioch University, hopefully for years to come, my journey moves forward and there always comes the time to let something go for others to take over. Let's welcome Amy with everything we've got. This is an exciting time. And, I'll still be here, just in a different role.

Other amazing news fills the pages of this newsletter. We have brought in Cohort 23, as bold and diverse and beautiful as every one of the preceding 22 cohorts!! Whew, that's a handful. As of the writing of this column, we have 28 incoming students from virtually every sector and leadership role, and all committed to our mission and purpose. We welcome you all and can't wait to meet you this Summer.

On another note, for years we wanted to expand the GSLC with non-degree offerings. In addition to offering customized certificates to organizations and associations we are thrilled to share that we've just completed "Leading From the Middle to Further Equity and Student Success," a certificate designed for mid-level academic professionals, offered to 13 members institutions of the American Association of Schools, Colleges and University (AASCU). (See page 8.) We hope to offer a second round of this certificate to additional AASCU members this Fall. And, we will continue to look for new opportunities to bring our distinctive approach to theory and practice, reflection and action, to workplaces and communities across the country.

Of course, please check out all the amazing updates on graduates, current students, and of course, our amazing faculty.

Hope to see many of you this Summer at our new residency location, Otterbein University.

In peace, with justice always,

Laurien Alexandre, Dean

# PHD in LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE *welcomes new* ASSOCIATE DEAN

Antioch University is thrilled to announce that Amy Rutstein-Riley, PhD, MPH, will join the Graduate School of Leadership and Change (GSLC) as Associate Dean to lead the PhD in Leadership and Change (PhDLC) program, effective July 1, 2023. Through an extensive search process that began in Summer 2022 and involved all GSLC faculty and staff, colleagues from other Antioch University departments, and GSLC students and alumni at the March residency, it became abundantly clear that Amy was the top candidate. She brings deep wisdom, relevant experience, a mission-driven vision, and tremendous energy to this opportunity to build the PhDLC program forward into its third decade. GSLC Dean Laurien Alexandre recently interviewed Amy. We hope you enjoy the conversation.



**We are curious what you find most appealing about the PhDLC program that convinced you to join us? What is exciting you the most?**

This is a challenging question to answer as there isn't one "most appealing" aspect of the program that convinced me to join Antioch. Rather, the more I learned about the innovative curriculum design, the centrality of the learning partnerships between faculty and students, and the diversity of faculty areas of expertise and scholarly interests really spoke to me and left me feeling energized. Following every step in the search process, I increasingly felt more excited about the opportunity to work with the members of this interdisciplinary learning

community. I was particularly struck by the faculty connectedness, and the overriding care of the students' academic experience in the program. I was also very impressed by the students and alumni I had the opportunity to meet, and by the ways they spoke about their experiences in the program. It was quite evident they wanted me to understand the uniqueness of the program and the need to have the next leader embrace the commitment to the program's values. After my "campus visit" I could envision the PhD in Leadership and Change program becoming the professional home for my next chapter, offering me an exciting space to contribute and grow.

**As an experienced scholar and academic leader for decades, you've been aware of Antioch University for many years. What resonates about this institution, its roots and its values? What do you see as the challenges for universities like Antioch?**

A year from now I will answer this question in a far more nuanced way, but at present I can say I have admired Antioch for its deep and longstanding commitment to social justice, progressive education, and for preparing and supporting learners who are self-authoring and purpose-driven. The alignment of Antioch's portfolio of academic programs with its mission is very clear, preparing learners to advance social, economic, and environmental justice. In 2023 this mission is necessary and urgent with significant social challenges a plenty. Antioch's value for facilitating academic programs that build upon learners' lived experiences and knowledge is particularly meaningful to doctoral students who bring to the academic endeavor significant knowledge and professional background. Antioch's mission, values, and constellation of programs is distinctive and impactful, and that is an asset for Antioch and the PhDLC program. However, in recent years there has been an explosion in low-residency doctoral education, and low-residency, hybrid, distributed models of education more broadly. COVID accelerated this shift, thus adding greater

competition to a crowded marketplace. The challenge for Antioch as well as universities like Antioch, is to own its distinctiveness, regularly study the portfolio and to create processes and structures that advance a nimble approach to planning for new initiatives that are mission-centric and enhance and advance the learner experience.

**You have a deep understanding of and broad experience with feminist approaches and relational leadership? How do you use those frames and models to guide your own leadership practices?**

Many years ago, I participated in a year-long study group on feminist group process at Therapy Training Boston. That study group influenced the way I work in all spheres of my professional practice as a leader and educator. Studying Relational-Cultural Theory and Therapy at the Jean Baker Miller Institute at Wellesley College further shaped my lens on how I work and collaborate with others. I prioritize building relationships, listening to learn, and constructing group norms to guide my work with teams. Authentic collaboration and relational leadership require trust, empathy, and intentionally working with power and power differentials. As an academic leader I think about power a lot, and the role of gender and its intersections with other social identities and how these identities get performed on the teams and groups I lead. I am not a go-it-alone leader. I center dialogue, connection, and collaborative decision-making processes and aim to engage authentically and with care. I am very fortunate to have some wonderful feminist mentors in my life who support my reflexive process as I actively work to check and challenge my assumptions and continue learning and

*"Authentic collaboration and relational leadership require trust, empathy, and intentionally working with power and power differentials."*

developing as a relational leader. Perhaps the aspect of my own leadership work that gives me the greatest “zest” is supporting the development of others on my team, in turn providing me with energy and inspiration.

**You have focused a lot of your attention inside and outside the academy on women’s identity and girls’ development. Can you share a bit more about this work?**

Well, this is probably the subject of a much lengthier conversation, but I will try to preview a bit here. I am a graduate of a women’s college. It was in the women’s college environment that I developed my voice and quickly recognized the importance of gendered spaces for supporting the development of voice, identity, and agency. Since then, many of my academic pursuits, research, service and volunteer activities focus on girls’ and women’s development. Throughout my college years I worked at Planned Parenthood of Massachusetts as a peer educator. I traveled the state speaking with high school students and with youth participating in community-based organizations on the topics of sexual health and HIV/AIDS. This transformative experience solidified my commitment to public health, and to issues of particular importance to adolescent and young adult women – risky health behavior, health decision-making, health communication, reproductive health, sexual harassment and violence, and mental health. These issues remained consistently present throughout my academic career as a faculty member teaching

courses and leading programs, leading Lesley's Women's Center and Women's Studies Steering Committee, serving on the Lesley University Title IX committee, and as a co-recipient of the Avon Grant for the prevention of sexual assault on college and university campuses, advancing faculty development and student supports on sexual assault prevention. The Girlhood Project was born from my intersecting interests on girls’ and young women’s development, as is the LEAD (leadership, enrichment, and development) program for women faculty I co-developed with two colleagues, Drs. Diana Direiter and Stephanie Spadorcia. Outside of academia, I have served on the Massachusetts Women's American Council of Education (ACE) Board of Director's, and currently on the leadership of the Boston Chapter of the American Association of University Women. The common thread woven through these examples is my commitment to mentoring and supporting girls and young women, and frankly, women of all ages, in the work of identity development.

**Would you be willing to share what you’re reading right now – what’s sitting on your bookstand or kindle?**

Admittedly, my main addiction is to books. I do not read on a kindle, and I have tried! I am often reading a bunch of different things at the same time. Fiction, memoir, academic, non-fiction. The blend of titles from the bookstore and the library includes, in no particular order:

Exciting happenings abound throughout Antioch University!  
Learn more all about the wonderful news from our campuses  
and program here

 **[commonthread.antioch.edu](https://commonthread.antioch.edu)**

Janice Carello and Phyllis Thompson, *Lessons from the Pandemic: Trauma-Informed Approaches to College, Crisis, Change* (Palgrave, 2021)

Rebecca Kaiser Gibson, *The Promise of a Normal Life* (Arcade, 2023)

Leigh Gilmore, *The #MeToo Effect: What Happens When We Believe Women* (Columbia, 2023)

Elizabeth Holcombe, Adriana Kezar, Susan Elrod, Judith Ramaley, and Nancy Cantor, *Shared Leadership in Higher Education: A Framework for Responding to a Changing World* (Stylus, 2021)

Mary Marcy, *The Small College Imperative: Models for Sustainable Futures* (Stylus, 2020)

Katherine May, *Enchantment: Awakening Wonder in an Anxious Age* (Riverhead Books, 2023)

Kim Samuel, *On Belonging: Finding Connection in an Age of Isolation* (Abrams, 2022)

Bessel Van Der Kolk, *The Body Keeps Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* (Penguin, 2014)

If we were doing this interview a few years from now (and I hope we do!), and I asked you to look back on your time with us, what would you have liked to have learned? Done? In what ways would you like to have seen yourself grow?

Ok...best guess. First, I hope to come to *belong* in Antioch and in the PhD

in Leadership and Change program. Transition takes time, and currently I am learning about the people and the program from an outsider standpoint. I hope the next time we interview that I will have moved from an outsider to an insider position and will have learned and embodied the norms and values of the place and helped to co-construct new norms and values as well. I am a lifelong learner and am eager to be collaborating and learning with faculty, staff, students, and alumni. I am also excited by ideas and co-creating new opportunities for the Graduate School of Leadership and Change. I am hopeful about building upon the ideas of the last comprehensive program review and moving the agenda on curriculum innovation, decolonizing the curriculum, and building new initiatives and partnerships that fit with and advance the mission and values of the PhDLC program and GSLC. It is hard to know how I envision my growth while I am concerned with planting my feet in a new place, however, I am open to all the new possibilities and opportunities and am excited about growing in and through connection with my new colleagues.

"I am a lifelong learner and am eager to be collaborating and learning with faculty, staff, students, and alumni."

I was struck by your commitment to change and your belief in the power of individual growth, positive self-images, and robust understanding of race-class-gender in the lives of women and girls. I wonder how you've been able to hold onto hope during these most difficult times with fundamental attacks on women's health and reproductive rights, with racist violence across the country, and with increasing economic inequalities undermining the health and wellbeing of so many. Where do you find strength and hope these days?

Well, honestly, it is very hard. Some days I want to go hide under the covers and not get out of bed. But the way I find hope is in connection with the very girls and young women I care about. I remain connected to my former students, many who have graduated long ago. I am actively engaged with current and former colleagues who are doing the real work in the public health space, in K-12 education, in mental health and health care settings, and I provide supportive partnership for dialogue and problem-solving. The anger and despair I feel motivates me to not look away and hide. I connect and continue to advocate and do so locally. Being in a relationship with many girls and young women, and with those who work with them, keeps me moving forward in the face of these overwhelming challenges.

Would you please share something about yourself that you would like our community to know that they wouldn't learn from your CV?

Ok, a couple of things. Not only do I love books, but I adore independent bookstores. I often spend free time in bookstores, and if there is a coffee shop in the bookstore...well, utter delight. In my next chapter perhaps a job in a bookshop. I also recently bought a new camera to revisit an old love of mine. It has been a very long time since I last used a camera that was not part of a phone. I am going to engage my beginner's mind and start taking photos again. Please ask me about this at our next interview in a few years.

## GSLC's Professional Certificates!

Offering a series of programs to learn creative and just approaches to leadership and change in fully customizable formats for your organization or workplace. Now anyone can learn with Antioch's world-class faculty – our customized certificate programs offer the exciting interdisciplinary wisdom, critical leadership skills, and bold action focus that the Graduate School shares in our PhD in Leadership and Change. These certificates are available in fully online, hybrid, and face-to-face formats, where you participate in customized courses and earn a certificate. These certificates and courses can be customized to meet individual, team, and organization development needs. Please contact Dr. Aqeel Tirmizi ([atirmizi@antioch.edu](mailto:atirmizi@antioch.edu)) with inquiries or to request any additional information regarding customized programs.

Advancing Conscious Leadership

Building the Resilient Organization

Leading for Inclusion and Racial Justice

Leading Transformative Change

# ***"Leading from the Middle to Further Equity and Student Success,"* a GSLC Certificate designed for the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (ASSCU)**

In the wake of the George Floyd murder in 2020, college campuses were quick to issue statements decrying racism and supporting efforts to promote racial justice. In most cases these statements led to little structural change, however. Deep transformative change often comes slowly in universities. Research on change in higher education and other organizations has revealed that while proclamations by leaders at the top may be important, real transformative change depends significantly on those in middle-management roles, such as deans, department chairs, and division heads. These people hold both front-facing and behind-the-scenes roles with students, and they are a major factor in student success; and yet, they are often new to leadership roles and often do not enjoy a seat at the table when major decisions are made.

In the Spring of 2023, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) contracted with the GSLC to design and deliver a workshop series specifically for mid-level leaders in AASCU institutions. Participants consisted of two-person teams from 13 institutions,





plus the central office of the Texas A&M University System. Participating universities were diverse in geography, mission, and ethnic diversity, and included Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs), Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and Hispanic-serving Institutions (HSIs).

Titled, “Leading from the Middle to Further Equity and Student Success,” the six-module virtual workshop series ran roughly bi-weekly from February through April 2023. Jon Wergin, GSLC Professor Emeritus, served as the series coordinator. Each session was facilitated by a two-person team, all from the GSLC’s faculty and experienced alumni. Session titles included: “Learning the Landscape to Navigate Change,” “Strategic Thinking with Equity in Mind and Heart,” “Leading Change Through Relational Practice,” “Building Inclusive Teams for Inclusive Institutions,” “Communicating Through Data to Advance System Change,” and “Creative Imagination, Deep Thinking, and Action Steps.” Each session was offered on Zoom for two hours, on Wednesday evenings. Suggested readings were listed for all sessions, and the participant guide contained a fuller bibliography as part of the series’ Toolkit. In addition to Professor Wergin, session

facilitators included GSLC Professors Lem Watson, Mitch Kusy, Harriet Schwartz, Fayth Parks, Lize Booyesen, Aqeel Tirmizi, and Beth Mabry; and alumni Drs. Brittany Motley and Julie Johnson.

All six sessions were highly rated by participants, enjoying average ratings of at least 8 on a 10-point scale. Participants found the readings and presentations relevant and the group discussions engaging and thought-provoking, and especially appreciated the opportunity to share ideas with colleagues on other campuses. Everyone completing the series and submitting a plan for follow-up work was awarded a certificate from the GSLC.

This initial series was so successful that the GSLC will be conducting a similar workshop series with a second cohort of AASCU universities in the Fall of 2023, along with “booster” sessions and possible campus consults with Spring participants.

## **Join Us for an Informational Webinar!**

We welcome you to join us for an upcoming webinar session.

Learn more and register today!

[antioch.edu/visit/visit-gslc](https://antioch.edu/visit/visit-gslc)

# Upcoming Commencement Celebrations 2023



The Graduate School of Leadership and Change 2023 Commencement will take place at Riley Auditorium on the campus of Antioch University in Westerville, Ohio on Saturday, July 29th.

In addition to the ceremony on the 29th we plan to gather the night before and welcome you to join us for a cross-cohort meet and mingle with all faculty and our new Associate Dean and program Director, Dr. Amy Rutstein-Riley.

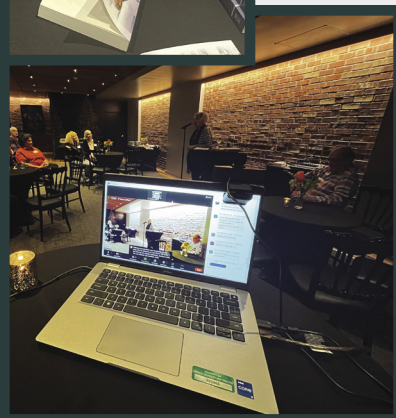
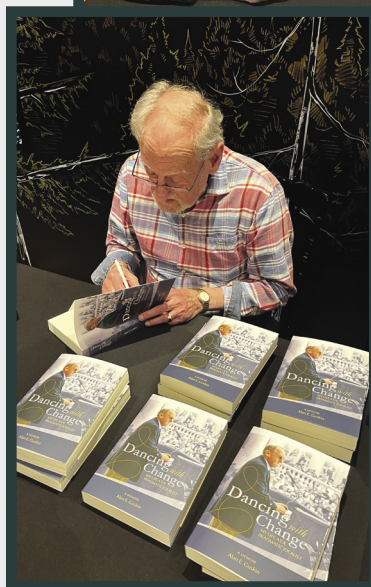
For details and to RSVP please contact Les Creighton ([lcreighton@antioch.edu](mailto:lcreighton@antioch.edu)) or Jen Swartout ([jswartout@antioch.edu](mailto:jswartout@antioch.edu)).



## UNIVERSITY MISSION

Antioch University provides learner-centered education to empower students with the knowledge and skills to lead meaningful lives and to advance social, racial, economic, racial, and environmental justice. To learn more visit: [antioch.edu](https://www.antioch.edu)

# Dr. Al Guskin's Special Mix of Mission and Pragmatism



On May 10, 2023 the Graduate School of Leadership and Change had the honor of hosting a special event and book signing in celebration of Dr. Al Guskin and his newly published memoir, *Dancing with Change: My Life as a Pragmatic Idealist* (Orange Frazer Press, 2023). A leading national voice in higher education, Al shared a 30-year career with Antioch dating back to the mid-1980s, when he was simultaneously President of Antioch College and Antioch University from 1985 to 1994 and after a university reorganization, Chancellor of Antioch University from 1994 through 1997. He then became a founding faculty member of the PhD in Leadership and Change, where he served as Core Faculty through his retirement in 2015. Over the years he has brought vision and humor to our Graduate School of Leadership and Change doctoral experiment, and he is now a

Distinguished University Professor of our PhD in Leadership and Change program. With dozens of students, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends in attendance on-site and through livestream, Al shared thoughts and stories from his amazing journey, a life-long path framed by a synergistic mix of mission-driven dreams and astute pragmatism. Proceeds of the book were generously donated to GSLC's Founders' Fund ultimately raising over \$2,000 in support of pre-candidacy students in the PhD in Leadership and Change program. If you are interested in obtaining the book and making a contribution to our Founders' Fund as a part of this effort please make your donation of \$50 or more at [alumniandfriends.antioch.edu/support-antioch](https://alumniandfriends.antioch.edu/support-antioch)! Note "GSLC Fund" in the Designation field and note "Dancing with Change" in the *Comments* section.

**SAVE  
THE  
DATE!!**

## **Alumni Convening and Mini-Residency at the International Leadership Association (ILA) Conference October 12-15, 2023**

The PhDLC's long-standing relationship with the International Leadership Association (ILA) means we've been involved with annual conferences in various ways since their inception in the mid-90s. This year we will again host a mini-residency and alumni convening surrounding the ILA Conference, which has been our tradition since 2011, disrupted for the two years by COVID-19.

The ILA conference is an unparalleled event that brings together leadership scholars and practitioners from all over the world. This transdisciplinary conference offers an opportunity to learn about the latest research in leadership, share best practices, gain new insights, and network with experts and influencers from various sectors and industries, including business executives, public leaders, authors, researchers, scholars, educators, coaches, and organizational development professionals.

The upcoming in-person conference entitled, "Cultivating Leadership for a Thriving Future," will be held in Vancouver, October 12-15 ([ilaglobalconference.org](http://ilaglobalconference.org)). As always, many of our graduates, faculty and students will be attending as well as presenting. Our Antioch mini-residency will consist of a social event on October 11, the evening prior to the conference, several opportunities for connecting and networking during the conference, and specifically at our own Antioch reception event with our new program Director and Associate Dean, Dr. Amy Rutstein-Riley. Lastly, after the ILA closing ceremony around 2:00 pm, faculty will do a debrief with the students, and a prominent leadership scholar will conduct a 2-3-hour workshop/seminar open to both alumni and students, followed by a cocktail hour the evening of October 15.

More details to come as soon as possible. For now, if you have specific questions about the ILA, please be in touch with Lize Booyesen ([abooyesen@antioch.edu](mailto:abooyesen@antioch.edu)). If you have questions about the planned events or student and alumni attendance, please be in touch with Leslee Creighton at ([lcreighton@antioch.edu](mailto:lcreighton@antioch.edu)).



### ***Now Accepting Applications for Summer 2024!***

The PhD in Leadership and Change program admits 25-30 students in the cross-sector cohort each year, with the academic term beginning July 1. Applications are accepted year-round. Early review of complete applications occurs after October 1st each year. Review of subsequent complete applications begins after February 1st each year and continues through mid-May and/or until the cohort is full.

**For more information or to RSVP for an upcoming information meeting, please email**  
**[admissions.gslc@antioch.edu](mailto:admissions.gslc@antioch.edu)**

# Effecting Change in Higher Education through Meaningful Leadership

Antioch's University news website **Common Thread** featured six alumni who are making positive changes in higher education.

By Georgina Marie Guardado

These alumni are each doing important work, from identifying and lowering barriers faced by today's student populations to developing intentional ways to create a sense of belonging, from cultivating intercultural conversations to fostering in youth a spirit of giving back, and from leading mindfully to helping Latinx students thrive. They are building on the skills they honed in the PhD in Leadership and Change, they are using insights and processes they developed while researching and writing their dissertations—and they are making positive impacts on their institutions.

One quality each of these alumni has in common is a passion for important work that makes a difference in the lives of students, faculty, and staff. But each is also doing inspiring work that is specific to them, to their story, and to what they have to offer.

## Cultivating Student Leadership



For Mea Ashley, her study of leadership applies directly to her students. She currently serves as Director of Student Life at Mississippi University for Women, where her duties include overseeing student organizations, social and Greek life, community service, and leadership programs.

In this work, one of her main goals is to cultivate student leadership. Yet in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd and the protest movement that arose in its wake, she realized she needed to weave leadership with more dedicated Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts. “We had to think more critically,” she says, “about how to serve students and... how to lead students through challenging times and racial reckoning.”

In the PhD in Leadership and Change, she was able to explore these questions in a collegial environment. And she says that it was exactly this feeling that her classmates and cohort mates were colleagues and friends that made her experience outstanding. The feelings of mutual respect allowed the program to be less stressful than she had worried and more fulfilling. “People who are leaders already have high expectations for themselves,” she says. “The leaders at Antioch treat you as equals, and it takes some of the pressure off.”

This, in turn, has inspired her ongoing approach to treating the students whose social lives she has such influence over in her job. She endeavors to treat them the same way she was treated in her PhD program by being a great mentor and advisor.

And the part of her work where she oversees Greek life has also been informed by her dissertation, which ended up being titled: “Because God Said So”: A Thematic Analysis of Why People Denounce Black Greek-Letter Organizations.” For this research, she wanted to ask the question of why BGLOs—fraternities and sororities that serve Black students—were facing a wave of criticism claiming that they were anti-Christian. In this, as in so much, she has been able to take her doctoral study back into her work, paying it forward.

## Creating a Culture of Giving Back



Félix Alonso, who was in the same cohort as Ashley, decided to come to Antioch in part because the diversity of the PhD in Leadership and Change spoke to him, offering a diversity of experience and background in his cohort that was, for him, a new experience. “The ability to be in dialogue was important,” he says,

“and my cohort did so well in relationship building that I found a sense of belonging. Leadership is about relationships and being in relationship with others.”

For Alonso, who graduated in 2022, the importance of relationships has been clear throughout his career. He is currently the Director of Student Philanthropy at The Ohio State University, where he works to teach altruistic behavior and create a culture of giving back both to the university and to the communities that sustain students. This can mean financial giving but also volunteering and serving nonprofit organizations. “We also offer education for citizenship, encouraging students to be global citizens, good alumni, engaged in their communities,” he explains. “And,” he adds, “to be changemakers.”

For Alonso, part of the change he has worked to see in higher education is for there to be more diversity so that students don't have the experience he had earlier in his studies, of often being the only man of color in a classroom. When he came to the PhD in Leadership and Change, he was still grappling with the self-doubt that he attributes to this feeling of being, in some way, the only one. But he says that program faculty treated his cohort as scholars and equals, modeling collaborative education, which allowed faculty to learn from the cohort as much as students learned from faculty. And he felt that faculty and staff wanted him to succeed and would support him at every step. Ultimately, completing the degree required completing a great deal of reading and writing, but at the same time, its program's flexibility made it easier to balance doctoral study with being a father and a husband while also maintaining a career.

His dissertation research ended up being deeply relevant to his current position. He titled the final publication “Education for Citizenship: A Study of the Effects of Cocurricular Student Philanthropy

Education on Prosocial Behavior,” and now he is putting its findings into action: restructuring his team, adding new curricular components to team training, and offering more research and presentations. He has also presented his findings with Indiana University's Experiential Philanthropy Program.

Moving forward, he wants to keep looking into qualitative research for lived experiences, such as what makes a student feel a sense of belonging or what makes them want to continue being involved in communities. And he has some experience with this, as his relationships with students over the years have been so positive that he has attended more than 40 weddings for past students and, later this year, will be officiating another student's wedding. “Transformational leadership is about inspiring the impossible,” he says. His aim, always, is to help students “perform at levels they never imagined and to dream big.”

## Celebrating the Success of Others



Ashley Benson's primary factor in deciding to enroll in the Antioch PhD was the program's flexibility. As a full-time professional and parent, she was confident that the program would fit her timeline and her busy schedule. But she also chose it because the program's priorities clearly aligned with what

she wanted to study: leadership theories, principles, concepts, and the wisdom and experience to know when to use them.

Ultimately, though, much of what made the PhD in Leadership and Change a powerful and transformative one was the people she met along the way. And this is in keeping with so much else in her career.

Today, Benson serves as Dean of Student Engagement at Luther College, where her list of responsibilities is long: she oversees student activities, resident life, student emergencies, counseling, wellness, student conduct, aspects of Title IX, diversity efforts, and even some academic work. Her role, she explains, is “woven into the fabric of what it means to be a student, helping students to gain a sense of comfort and home with the intention to be successful within and outside of the classroom.” And in this position, she keeps her former classmates close, both as professional contacts, as friends, and sometimes even having the opportunity to invite members of her Antioch cohort to Luther College as guest speakers.

As a leader, she tends to focus on the positive. For her dissertation, she researched first-generation college students and how they succeed. In framing this work, she decided to reject the concept of deficit and instead looked at first-generation college students

from the perspective of “Why are they graduating?” Using this positive framing, she explored cultural concepts and social structure, eventually completing the work titled “An Exploration of Factors Influencing First-Generation College Students’ Ability to Graduate College: A Delphi Study.”

Since graduating, she has been able to use this research to guide institutions she works with on how to best work with first-generation college students, how to review and update policies and procedures with a different lens, and how to do away with unnecessary barriers. She has also sat on a dissertation committee as a subject matter expert.

But the highlights of her career all come down to the relationships Benson has with students. And clearly, the effect she’s having is notable on their end, too. Students she has supported sometimes send her holiday cards, inform her of positive life changes, and even invite her to their weddings. She’s particularly proud of the accomplishments of her former students, some of whom have begun studying for their own PhDs, found acceptance into medical or law school, or even started out in newly emerging fields, like working as a Fashion Psychologist. She loves to watch her students overcome odds and adversities to graduate. And she continues to remain there to encourage her students long after their formal relationship has ended. As she says, “When they don’t have the confidence or someone else told them they can’t, I will help walk them to it.”

#### Belonging and Education as a Career Focus



After more than a decade-and-a-half working in nonprofits that served youth, in 2010, Angela Wellman shifted to work in higher education. Working in the Multicultural Center at The Ohio State University, she found purpose and satisfaction in creating community, facilitating intercultural programming, and

building programs that help staff and students feel connected to their educational institution. Work promoting equity-mindedness and understanding at this level suited Wellman, and over the ensuing decade, she rose from Intercultural Specialist to Associate Director and then, last fall, to Director of Belonging and Education for Student Life.

This rise coincided with her progress in and graduation from the PhD in Leadership and Change. This job and her doctoral studies are connected in other ways, too. Her role at The Ohio State University is staff-focused, prioritizing learning, development, and staff engagement. Her approach to her current work has been influenced by the dissertation she wrote at the GSLC: “Exploring Supervisory Needs of First-Generation Professionals Working in Higher Education.” By completing this work, she says, she is “better equipped to talk about class and socioeconomic status.”

When it comes to honing in on what staff need from their supervisors to promote their well-being and success, “we have a value system focused on increasing access and reducing the number of

barriers impacting staff in their work with students,” says Wellman. At Antioch, she developed greater awareness and knowledge of social justice and equity, perspective-taking, and leadership. This translates into her current work addressing the ways staff experience belonging, creating space for growth and engagement on campus, and affirming all of her community.

#### Cultivating Mindful Leadership



For James Van Auken, a 2019 graduate of the PhD, his work and personal interest have both led him to focus on the intersection of mindfulness and leadership. For seven years, he served as the Vice President of Academic Affairs and, more recently, as President of Atlantic

University in Virginia. In fact, he even coordinated the team of faculty there who together created the curriculum of what would become Atlantic University’s Mindful Leadership graduate program. And today, he is working for his own business, which focuses on Executive Leadership Coaching. In each step of his career, Van Auken has brought a grounding in and passion for mindful leadership.

This deep interest in a subject that not everyone took seriously at the time is part of what led him to Antioch. As he looked for an education program that would equip him with leadership theory and practice, he also knew that he wanted to be part of a community of learners that would be supportive of him and, in turn, where he could support others. He found that at Antioch.

A mindfulness practitioner before his career in higher education, Van Auken credits his practice as giving him what he describes as “awareness that helped me integrate the many separate parts of myself.” The desire to study mindfulness in the context of leadership studies led him to focus his dissertation on leaders who practice mindfulness. He asked questions about what it means to bring presence into leadership, and this, in turn, he says, “intersects with leadership theories such as authentic leadership theory, adaptive leadership theory, and many others.” A big question in leadership studies is, What happens when we encounter challenges? Mindfulness, Van Auken found, offers space for presence without leading to an immediate reaction and not needing to retaliate. In his final dissertation, “The Relationship Between Mindfulness and Leadership: How Mindfulness Practices Affect Leadership Practices,” he found that mindful leaders carry personal resilience and recovery from the internal landscape to the group and, ultimately, to the leadership function.

In addition to leadership theory and practice, the experience of studying for his PhD also gave Van Auken important lessons about how to understand his unearned privilege. “The learning community was generous, supportive, safe, and deep,” he says. While some might assume that a program and university emphasizing racial justice would judge white students more harshly, Van Auken experienced the

opposite. He says that “even as a white man,” he felt “supported in raising a hand and admitting he didn’t truly understand unearned privilege.” He was able to see perspectives from different angles he otherwise may not have had the opportunity to consider.

Today, Van Auken is a leadership development coach, helping individuals to grow and develop their leadership skills and find their authentic sense of self as a leader. His collective work enables more people to encounter these ideas and resources, ultimately helping many to be more mindful leaders.

#### Dedication to Latinx Success



Another recent graduate, Sarah Villareal, also came to the PhD in Leadership and Change because of a need for a flexible program that fits with a preexisting career in higher education. For Villareal, who graduated earlier this year, the caliber of faculty stood out to her and offered her beneficial exposure

to expertise, tools, and practices to lead students to success. “My program transformed my identity into a scholar-practitioner,” she says. “I’m grateful for the exposure to literature and theoretical frameworks and the ability to engage in those conversations as a peer.”

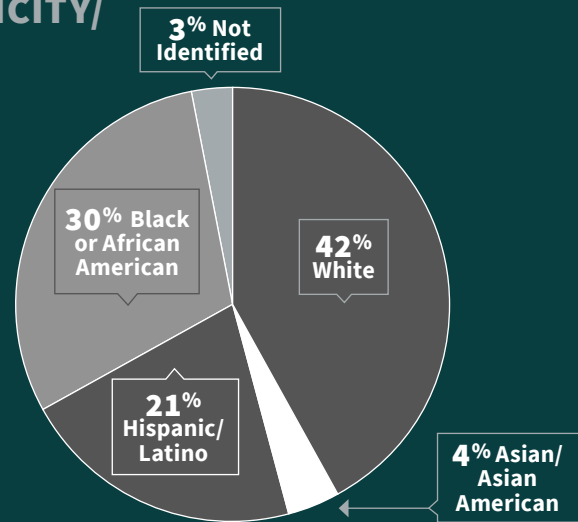
Today she serves as Chief of Staff in the Office of the President of California State University San Marcos. Cal State San Marcos is a Hispanic serving institution with a large Latinx population, and Villareal is committed to making systemic changes and providing more opportunities to students. She feels she can do more for incoming students to have a sense of belonging with faculty and peers. This is why, for her dissertation research, she chose to focus on the ways that the U.S. higher education system fails Latinx undergraduates, as she puts it, “more often than other students.” The final dissertation, titled “A Narrative Inquiry of Latinx Undergraduates’ Participation in High-Impact Educational Practices,” examines this problem with a focus on identifying evidence-based practices that can help reduce these inequities.

The work of researching and writing the dissertation has helped her put these factors into practice in her current roles. As she explains, “The impact of Antioch personally and professionally allows me to approach everything through a lens of critical thinking and application of research to help me do this work.” Ultimately, the work of studying in the community over the years, of deeply researching with guidance from faculty mentors, and of completing and publishing her dissertation has been a transformative experience for Villareal—as it was for the other alumni we spoke with. As changemakers, each is taking their passion and accumulated skills to impact the field of higher education. They are focusing on belonging, inclusion, cultivating community and mindfulness, celebrating success, and giving back. And it’s clear that these works are building hopeful progress in the field of higher education—seeds sown today that will be transformative over the coming decades.

# COHORT 23 DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

(\*AS OF MAY 4, 2023)

## ETHNICITY/ RACE

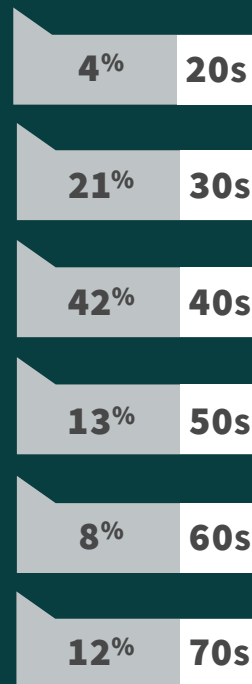


## LOCATION

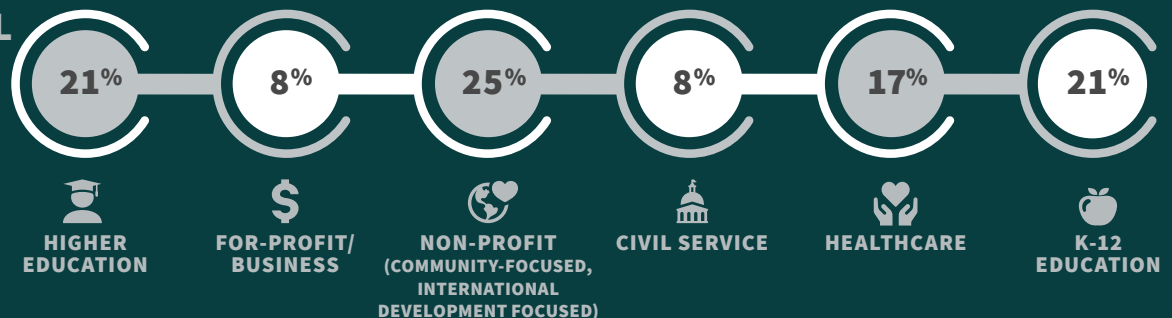


■ Canada and 16 states - with the following states having more than one person (Ohio, Indiana, Washington, New York); rest includes Illinois, Minnesota, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Nebraska, Michigan, Maine, Minnesota, California

## AGE



## OCCUPATIONAL SECTOR



# LEARNING COMMUNITY NEWS: LEADING CHANGE WORLDWIDE

## COHORT 2

**Dr. Scott Allen** has published *Discovering Leadership: Designing Your Success*, Second Edition (Sage, 2023). It is a comprehensive practice-based introduction to leadership that can help students develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for leadership success.

**Dr. Luane Haggerty** will receive the Essie Calhoun Diversity in the Arts Award. Dr. Haggerty is the principal lecturer in the Rochester Institute of Technology's National Technical Institute for the Deaf Department for Performing Arts and is a 2017 graduate.

## COHORT 4

**Drs. Jan Byars and Laura Santana's** article: "**What Is Integral Leadership: Notes From the Field**" was published in *Integral Leadership Review* (ILR) Vol 22 Issue 1.

**Drs. Jonathan (Joc) Clark** (Cohort 4) and **Janet Rechtman** (Cohort 2) ran into each other by chance at the Chico, California Farmers' Market about eight years ago. Four years later, they reconnected after Janet moved to Chico to be near family. As Janet's Chico mentor, Joc has organized connections with like minded consultants, local nonprofits, and most recently the North Valley Community Foundation, in Chico, California. With the Foundation, they helped organize and deliver LEAD, a week-long leadership development program focused on increasing collaboration and capacity building for nonprofit leaders. They've partnered on several projects with local nonprofits focusing on leadership, change, and strategic planning. One of the organizations, The Chico Housing Action Team (CHAT), has been successful in providing housing for over 200 of the areas formally unhoused residents. They are



especially appreciative that Janet will be joining their Board of Directors soon. The two Dr. J's plan to continue their collaboration for community leadership development.

**Dr. Cara Meixner** recently presented "Methods Braiding and Diffractive Analysis: Two Approaches to Revisiting Researcher Positionality" at the QRM Conference in Albuquerque. Additionally, the integrated qualitative methods course/text that she authored as qualitative content expert for the American Psychological Association's (APA) PsychLearn was just made available through an APA partnership with edX, an online course provider created by Harvard and MIT. It is now a stand-alone course on their platform. Finally, she just co-authored the chapter entitled, "**Mixed Methods Research in Global Public Health**" in the *Handbook of Social Sciences and Global Public Health* (Springer, 2023).

## COHORT 5



**Dr. Laura Santana** is adjunct teaching faculty at Tsinghua University Beijing's Schwarzman Scholars Global program (2022-2023 academic year). Designed to facilitate understanding between Eastern and Western mindsets, this Master's program includes 130 students from around the world. She teaches the modules on leadership, learning agility, immersive inquiry, and social identity. She is also a Coach for two Tsinghua University

Capstone Teams: a) Impact Investing: How Private Equity and Venture Capital Can Help and b) United Way Sponsored China's Small Scale Farmers' Wellbeing Index. Master's students come from China, Malaysia, Romania, Italy, Canada and USA. Additionally, Dr. Santana has embarked upon a multi-year Organization Development partnership with Menorca Inmobiliario Housing provider in Latin America. Headquartered in Peru and achieving B-Corp Status, they disrupt the market by designing and building sustainable dwellings which advance the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, sustain environment, increase education, and provide clean water as they serve those invisible to current banking and housing industry practices. In her role, Laura collaborates with the entire C-Suite and is Executive Coach for the President and Chief Legal Advisor.

## COHORT 6

**Dr. Cheryl Jordan's** new memoir, *Hang on Tight. Pray: A Journey from Perfection to Peace* (Hasmark Publishing International, 2023), was recently featured in *Ebony* magazine. The book explores her experiences providing care for her ailing mother while navigating the complex, and often lacking, long-term-care system. *Hang on Tight*



offers an honest depiction of the difficulty of caregiving, finding peace when faced with seemingly insurmountable situations, and the love that exists between a parent and their child.

**Dr. Naomi Nightingale** has established the Oakwood Preservation Coalition (OPC), a non-profit corporation created to develop, uphold and support social, educational, economic, and environmental justice in the historic Black coastal community of Oakwood in Venice, California, and to build a coalition of organizations to support the mission of Oakwood Preservation Coalition. The organization's first project is to build a Community Honors Walk to memorialize individuals who have made outstanding social justice, cultural or historical contributions to the Venice community. Naomi works alongside fellow PhD in Leadership and Change learning community member **Jay Jolliffe** (Cohort 21). Jay, who serves as Vice President of the Board of Directors, brings a wealth of experiences in market research and ethnic consulting.

## COHORT 9



**Dr. Andrea Hernandez** was on the research team for Next Gen Donor Learning's report entitled, *Lessons for Effective Programs from Houston and the Field*, which examines ways in which to lead the engagement of youth in philanthropy. Additionally, she recently completed her tenure on the Grantmakers for Effective Organizations Board of Directors as the Governance Committee Chair grappling with reimagining what governance looks and feels like when centering racial equity.

## COHORT 10



**Dr. Froswa' Booker-Drew** has been honored with the 2023 *Maura Women Helping Women Award* from the Texas Women's Foundation. The award recognizes leaders throughout Texas who advance opportunities to improve the lives of women and girls. She and her work was also recently featured on Medium's series Social Impact Heroes. The article entitled, "*Why & How Dr Froswa' Booker-Drew & the R2 Foundation Is Helping To Change Our World*". Her book entitled *Empowering Charity: A New Narrative of Philanthropy* (Baylor University Press, 2022) has been awarded a 2023 Nautilus Book Award. The award recognizes books that bring inspiration and highlights books for a better world. Dr. Froswa' Booker-Drew is the President and CEO of *Soulstice Consultancy* and is also the Founder of the Reconciliation and Restoration Foundation.

## COHORT 11

**Dr. Amy Climer** recently authored the chapter "The Power of Metaphors" in the new book entitled, *Virtual Facilitation: A Collection of Lessons Learned to Facilitate Magic Virtually* (Healthy Learning, 2023). The chapter highlights the ways in which individuals can develop their own metaphors using the Climer Cards app, which she developed, with virtual and hybrid groups to deepen learning, connection, and conversation. You can find the book at [climercards.com/book](https://climercards.com/book). Amy also keynoted and emceed the 2023 IACC Americas Knowledge Exchange in April. Her keynote was titled "Leading Deliberate Creative Teams" and shared the model she created for her dissertation that explains how teams can be creative together.

**Dr. Tami France** has just co-authored the chapter entitled, "Transformational Learning in an Interprofessional Health Care Environment" in the new book, *Challenges and Opportunities in Healthcare Leadership Voices from the Crowd in Today's Complex and Interprofessional Healthcare Environment* (Information Age Publishing, 2023). Tami is an experienced executive coach, leadership development facilitator, and talent strategist.

**Dr. Ruta Shah-Gordon** was awarded a reciprocal exchange grant from the United States Department of State and the International Research and Exchanges Board to work with Mandela Fellow Charlene Chekenya to collaborate on strengthening responses to sexual harassment in higher and tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe.

## COHORT 12

**Dr. Mohammed Raei** received his International Coaching Federation Associate Certified Coach credential. Additionally he presented "Spirituality, Meditation, and Kundalini: Almost Everything You Wanted to Know But Were Afraid to Ask" for The Interfaith Center at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. Additionally, Dr. Raei was co-presenter on *Phronesis: Practical Wisdom for Leaders*, a podcast hosted by PhD in Leadership and Change Cohort 2 alum **Dr. Scott Allen**. Dr. Raei's episode entitled "The Diverse Drivers of Trust" highlights his expertise in adaptive leadership and navigating change.

## COHORT 14

Director at Apricus Australia & Reclaim Energy, **Dr. Chris Taylor** has led his team and the organization to receive 2023 National Banksia Awards finalist status. The prestigious recognition and awards are aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the global blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.

## COHORT 17

**Dr. Greta Creech** has accepted a tenure-track position as an Assistant Professor for Intelligence and Security Studies at The Citadel. Her teaching and research areas will be information operations in intelligence and leadership in national security.

**Dr. Kathy Hoffman** has been named the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board's first Research Manager. In this new role, she will be developing the agency's first research program, working closely with our universities and partners, while building the program and our research agenda from the ground up.

**Dr. Stacey Guenther** has authored the chapter "The Intersubjectivity of Personhood and Leadership: I am Who I am, Because We are Who We are" in the newly released book entitled, *Exploring Personhood in Contemporary Times* (Information Age Publishing, 2023). The book is edited by Antioch University's Graduate School of Leadership and Change Professor of Inclusive Leadership and Change, **Dr. Lem Watson**.

## COHORT 19

**Dr. Bonnie Curtis** recently was featured on the podcast *HR Superstars*. The episode entitled "Developing a Win-Win Dynamic with Frontline Managers" highlights her research and reminds listeners of the ways in which support and self-leadership can impact success. Dr. Curtis is Chief Executive Officer of Golden Spike LLC. She is an experienced executive leader with particular business acumen, broad technical expertise and leadership success in diverse functional areas and cultures.



Integrative Sustainability Coach, Consultant, Speaker, and Trainer **LauraLynn Jansen** has been awarded the Academy of Management's 2023 Promising Dissertation Award. The award supports doctoral candidates working in the domain of Management, Spirituality, and Religion (MSR) to develop quality dissertations that can integrate management with spirituality and/or religion, and also reflect novel and/or

significant evidence-based theoretical and/or applied contributions to the field. LauraLynn's dissertation research focuses on elements of humanizing relational interaction, investigating humanizing moments and the intersection of thoughts, actions, and ways of generating meaningful humanizing experiences between individuals.

## COHORT 20



COHORT 20 MEMBERS GATHER FOR THEIR LAST RESIDENCY TOGETHER IN SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.

Founder and lead consultant of Partnering Resources, **Maya Townsend** will be teaching Negotiation and Conflict Resolution in the Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning at Tufts University in the coming term.

## COHORT 21

**Lynn Horan** presented her research on the sacrificial scapegoating of female clergy at the Global Center for Religious Studies' e-Conference on Religious Trauma. She was joined by a panel of other female clergy who were participants in her co-creative research on mimetic theory and its application to female clergy scapegoating. Lynn's research and presentation summary will also be included in the upcoming edition of the peer-reviewed journal *Socio-Historical Examination of Religion and Ministry (SHERM Journal)*. For more details visit [gcr.org/rt-conference](http://gcr.org/rt-conference). Additionally, Lynn will be presenting at the International Leadership Association's

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Virtual Summit on Diversity, Equity and Belonging this June 21-22. Her presentation is titled "Mimetic Scapegoating and the Executive Derailment of Female Clergy," which will be the focus of her upcoming dissertation. Lynn is also contributing a chapter titled "Activism, Performance and Spiritual Ritual: The Roots of Embodied Social Change" in the edited volume *Leadership at the Spiritual Edge: Emerging and Non-Western Concepts of Leadership and Spirituality* (Routledge, 2023). Book editors are GSLC alumni **Drs. Mohammed Raei, Stacey Guenther** and **Lisa Berkley**.



**Techa Smalls Brown** (Cohort 21), **LauraLynn Jansen** (Cohort 19), and **Ileya Grosman** (Cohort 19) are 2023 recipients of Fetzer Scholarship Awards. In partnership with The Academy of Management and the Fetzer Institute, a private foundation created by John E. Fetzer in 1962 with a vision of a transformed world, powered by love, in which all people can flourish, the awards recognize research and scholarly work that involves management, spirituality and religion.

**Jessica Warrior** was recently a featured speaker on the *IREM: From the Front Lines*, a podcast series that highlights real estate business leaders and the critical issues facing their teams and the broader industry. Jessica's episode, entitled "Finding Your Gifts" shares ways to recognize and cultivate each individual's unique gifts. With a focus on leading purpose-driven lives, this conversation provides a way leaders and teams can engage fully in this volatile and complex environment. Jessica has decades of experience within the commercial real estate profession, overseeing markets throughout the United States, and she is currently the Director of Property Management for Granite Properties.

**Nicole Williams** is working to address food justice in Philadelphia as the co-managing director of Mt. Airy Community Fridge Pantry. The mission of this neighborhood initiative is to reduce food insecurity, offer necessities to community members, and reduce food waste -- at no cost. "Food justice is environmental justice, which is racial justice, which is what I believe in," said Williams. "As a Black person, a nonbinary person and Mount Airy resident who has grown up and seen many racial injustices ... being able to be a part of the solution in the ways that I can is really important."

## COHORT 1 - HEALTHCARE

**Dr. Jody Levison-Johnson** was recently featured on the podcasts *Leadership with Heart* with Heather Younger and on "*In the Ring with Hector Colon*".

## FACULTY

**Dr. Mitch Kusy** recently facilitated three webinars with **Dr. Renee Thompson** of The Healthy Workforce Institute. The first webinar with over 800 registrants was entitled "Helping Healthcare Professionals Understand How to Address Abusive Behaviors from Patients and Families." The second webinar was entitled "How to Engage Physicians in Culture Change Initiatives"—identifying the most immediate and practical strategies for successful culture change. The third webinar, "What Is a Speak-Up Culture and Why Is It So Important?" provided top evidence-based tips for engagement and application to professionals in organizations.

**Dr. Harriet L. Schwartz** was interviewed and quoted recently in the article "University of Oxford Bans Intimate Relations Between Students and Staff: UK Institution Joins Many Universities Worldwide in Enacting Policies to Protect Students' Rights and Prevent Power Abuses" that was featured in *Nature*, the weekly international journal publishing peer-reviewed research in all fields of science and technology.

**Dr. Aqeel Tirmizi** has co-authored the article titled, "**More Human, Not Less: Global Relevance of Values-Based Leadership**" in the *Humanistic Management Journal*. This empirical study examines the relevance of values-based leadership within and across different national cultural settings. In addition, it also explores its relevance in a variety of work contexts including the social, public, and private sectors. Additionally, he just published the article entitled "**Developing Courageous Leadership**" in the *Ivy Business Journal*.

**Dr. Lem Watson** Dr. Lem Watson has published two pieces in *Medium* entitled, "**Raising Our Consciousness For Leading Through Trauma**" and "**Using Phenomenology In Leadership Studies**." Additionally, he has recently published three articles entitled, "**How to Make the Most of Intergenerational Diversity**" and "**Pride Month: A Celebration of All Our Differences**" both appearing on *Higher Ed Jobs* and "**Understanding the Work of DEI in Today's World**" for the Institute for Organizational Mindfulness on *Medium*.



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