



L I F E S T Y L E  
E D U C A T I O N &  
R E S O U R C E  
S E R V I C E S

## LEERS Summer Women's TEA & TALK

Sunday, July 12, 2020 – Saturday, July 25, 2020

This year LERS nominated eight distinguished women who exemplify the embodiment of service and enhancement to their communities through education, giving of their time, talents, and gifts to those who would be blessed by their engagement. We just want to say thank you for your investment by being the hands and feet of a Greater Power, by sharing a sincere love for people and enhancing our community!



Pictured: Danyelle Holmes, Stephanie Esco, Jacqueline McClendon, Amanda Jones, Sharon Brown, Rukia Lumumba, Cheronda Minor, Angela Mallette

## **Women's Tea & Talk Virtual Conversation Topics**

1. What have you seen women in your communities do on a large or small scale that have positively impacted your life or the lives of those around you?
2. What do you think we can do as community members to impact solving community problems and issues through a plan, an action or speaking out on behalf of our fellow community members?
3. What sources do you rely on to get up to date and accurate health information?
4. How can we as parents, grandparents, loved ones and friends, encourage our young people to not only succeed in their educational pursuits, but competitively excel?
5. There are so many ideas about what success should look like in today's time. What is your idea of what it takes to be successful in today's world?
6. Is education enough to decrease gun violence in our communities? If not, what programs or initiatives do you think will work to address this issue?
7. What social justice issue in your community is of most concern for you? Why?
8. Are there barriers that prevent women from actively encouraging, supporting, and celebrating each other's dreams aspirations, goals, and accomplishments? If so, what are they?

## **Sharon Brown**



Sharon Brown is a native Mississippian and mother of one daughter. Currently, Sharon is an HIV/Aids Consultant, Co-chair of MS Poor Peoples Campaign, and is a Steering Committee Member & Lead Organizer for the Mississippi Prison Reform Coalition. Sharon is the former Director of One Flag for All and Sponsored Initiative 55 to remove the "Confederate" emblem from the MS State Flag. She was one of the first responders in providing over 4,000 meals to the children within the Jackson area during the COVID-19 pandemic. Sharon Brown's religious preference is nondenominational. She is a community advocate and has "Unwavering love for the people."

## **Stephanie Esco**



Stephanie Esco is a Registered Nurse at Merit Health Central in Jackson, MS. She completed her Bachelor's Degree at Mississippi College and her Master's Degree at Walden University. She has been a nurse for 16 years and counting. She has worked in Antepartum, Postpartum, Cardiac, Psychiatric and ICU during her career. Currently, she works in the COVID-19 ICU. Her greatest passion is the work she did in her family's crisis pregnancy center for 10 years. Her ultimate goal is to reopen the center in the near future to continue to reach out to the women and their families. Her greatest accomplishment is being the mother of four (4) amazing young people! She always says she is blessed to work in a field where her work schedule doesn't conflict with her children's.

## **Danyelle Holmes**



Danyelle Holmes, a National Organizer with Repairers of the Breach and the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival, is a native of Greenwood, Mississippi, and currently resides in Jackson, MS. Danyelle is a graduate of Greenwood High School and attended Tougaloo College. She has worked in various fields but feels very deeply that God has called and ordained her to be a voice that will uplift those disproportionately impacted by society's systemic ills. Danyelle has fought on the front lines of many political battles here in the state of Mississippi demanding our legislators fully fund public education, removing the confederate state flag, prison reform, living wages, immigration, labor rights, and various other issues in the State. Miss Holmes is committed to fighting to ensure that Mississippi will one day soon rise.

## **Amanda Jones**



Amanda Jones is a mother, daughter, sister, friend, publicist, and servant for God. With each role, she recognizes the responsibilities that no one really is prepared for. Amanda is a Public Relations Specialist who works with individuals and small businesses to help them get their stories in front of their target audience by growing their professional brand via media outlets. She also works for Innovative Workforce Development where she is the Community Outreach

Coordinator. Amanda believes in helping others to find their version of success. She is dedicated to serving the community. She understands that is how you connect and communicate with everyday people in order to obtain their trust.

She has worked with authors, producers, motivational speakers, nonprofit organizations, and other business owners. She is a member of Stilettoes on the Pavement, an organization created to bring professional business women together to support one another in business and life.

Amanda holds a degree in Public Relations from Mississippi College.

## Rukia Lumumba



Executive Director of the People's Advocacy Institute, co-coordinator of the Electoral Justice Project, and co-manager of the successful Committee to Elect Chokwe Antar Lumumba for Mayor of Jackson, Mississippi, Rukia Lumumba is a transformative justice strategist and human rights advocate.

Named a "New Activist" by Essence magazine and an "Emerging Leader" by the Congressional Black Caucus, the daughter of community justice icon the late Mayor Chokwe Lumumba and Nubia Lumumba, Rukia continues the Lumumba family's rich history of advancing issues and initiatives that elevate the legal

economical, health and educational rights of individuals, families and communities.

For more than 18 years, she has worked within and outside the system to foster justice for all, especially as it relates to criminal justice disparities for people of color. She has served as director of two of New York state's largest criminal justice nonprofits, CASES (the Center for Alternatives Sentencing and Employment Services) and the Center for Community Alternatives, providing visionary leadership and building community and system partnerships to help break the prison pipeline. During her leadership tenure, more than 4,200 youths received supportive community-based services including housing, education, job, and health and well-being services, in lieu of incarceration. She also served as co-chair of the Anti-Violence and Criminal Justice Working Group and steering committee member of the first Young Women's Initiative in the United States dedicated to developing gender equitable policies in New York City, particularly for young women of color. Her work contributed to the development of She Will Be, a 144-page report of recommendations from stakeholders across New York City, including but not limited to community-based organizations, advocates, policy experts, and young women themselves.

A graduate of Howard University School of Law, Rukia clerked for the Juvenile Rights Division of the Washington, DC, Public Defender Service where she represented children and collected data on human rights violations at the former Oak Hill Youth Detention Center, one of the nation's worst juvenile facilities. The data was included in a report that contributed to the closing of the facility. She was program director of Parents Watch, Inc., a Washington-based nonprofit that assists parents in advocating for their detained child's release. During her tenure, she helped launch the first parent resource center housed within a detention facility. She served on the board of directors of the National Conference of Black Lawyers, an association of lawyers, activists and legal workers who defend human rights and expose the criminal justice disparities for people of color. She served as national coordinator of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, a membership-based organization dedicated to promoting human rights and self-determination. She co-founded Katrina on the Ground, an initiative that organized over 700 college students to participate in post-Katrina relief efforts in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama. She launched the Community Aid and Development Day Camp, an education and cultural enrichment program for over 200 children ages 6-16 in Jackson, Mississippi.

Rukia currently serves as co-chair of the Jackson People's Assembly, a community led-governance process which works to (1) increase community access to city government and (2) to institutionalize People's Assemblies as community governing models that enable a deep democratic participation of people in their own governance. She serves on the boards of Operation Shoestring, a Mississippi based early childcare non-profit, the Edward W. Hazen Foundation dedicated to youth-of-color leadership development, and Black Voters Matter which is committed to increasing political power in Black communities. She was selected as one of the brightest and most promising women of color by New York University Wagner School of Public Service and she is a 2011 Youth for Justice Leadership Fellow for the National Juvenile Justice Network.

Rukia holds family very dear and is most proud of being a wonderful mother to her son Qadir. She was instrumental in the successful and revolutionary mayoral campaigns of her father and brother. Her assistance to elect her brother Chokwe Antar Lumumba as mayor of Jackson united people across generations and cities, moving as brilliantly among the grassroots as it did among the grasstops.

Rukia holds a bachelor's degree in political science with an emphasis in international relations from Tougaloo College in Mississippi. She holds a Juris Doctorate from Howard University School of Law in Washington, D.C. and has studied law and politics in South Africa at the University of Fort Hare and the University of the Western Cape.

## Jacqueline McClendon



Jacqueline McClendon is a native of Cincinnati, Ohio. She received her B.S. degree in Elementary Education from Jackson State University. She has worked with children of diverse backgrounds and special needs for over nineteen years.

Jacqueline was a Director of Learning Opportunities Daycare where she helped develop and write curriculum for their Pre-Kindergarten program. She also worked at an in-house treatment facility where she provided lesson plans and assisted daycare workers with at risk children. Jacqueline is currently working as an elementary school teacher/interventionist in the

Jackson Public School District. She has and is currently serving as grade level chair, has planned and developed lessons for her district's mathematics curriculum, and has worked on several committees to help focus and enhance student achievement. She has received state level Common Core training in mathematics, and helped conduct professional development sessions that focus on classroom management and math instruction to interventionists as well as other educators. She also received training in the area of Restorative Justice that focuses on using Peace Circles to build and restore positive relationships with both children and adults. Most recently, Jacqueline currently serves as the immediate past President of Jackson Association of Educators. She served four years advocating for great public schools for every child by empowering members, providing services and promoting parental/community involvement.

Jacqueline believes how well a child succeeds depends on the support and encouragement received. When that support is strong and caring, learning is a journey of wonder and discovery. To aid in this discovery, she believes that a child should learn in an environment where he/she can work both, independently and cooperatively in a group setting.

## Angela Mallette



Angela Mallette is the Executive Director of the Mississippi Harm Reduction Initiative and founder of the Mississippi Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Project. She is formerly the Outreach Coordinator for the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. She is also a subject matter expert for the Opioid Response Network through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration.

She is a graduate of the University of Mississippi with a Bachelor's in Civil Engineering. Angela serves as a State Leader for the national Recovery Advocacy Project, and acts as liaison to Recovery Community Organizations statewide. She was also named a Mississippi 2018 Champion in Recovery.

Angela is a graduate of the 20th Judicial District Drug Court and a person in long-term recovery. She found recovery from alcohol and drugs in 2016, and has since used that experience to further conversation about addiction across the state of Mississippi. Angela is originally from Jackson County, Mississippi, and now lives with her daughter in Ridgeland.

## **Cheronda Dior Minor**



Cheronda Dior Minor is the Vice President of Sales and Marketing for ElectricWorks Inc., a construction company specializing in electrical contracting. Before planting her feet at ElectricWorks Inc., Cheronda managed Multi-Family housing communities in the metro area. For more than seven years Cheronda helped to revitalize communities, build occupancy, and provide a comfortable living environment for residents. During her time as Property Manager, Cheronda learned the importance of providing superior service, managing and protecting assets, and most importantly serving people.

Though learning a new specialty was challenging, Cheronda managed to find her way. Within the second year of employment at ElectricWorks, Cheronda developed a new division for the company that would provide niche lighting for special events.

Cheronda is a trusted consultant for many businesses and individuals seeking seamless and impactful events. She enjoys designing lighting plans for weddings, parties, and corporate events. These opportunities have allowed her to meet new people and explore new ideas. In efforts to broaden the network opportunities in Jackson, Cheronda formed "SHE," a women's social group designed to inspire and empower, while building healthy professional and personal relationships amongst women. Through "SHE", Cheronda has produced a number of successful networking events, campaigns and business opportunities for women.

During the planning of a local event, Cheronda was introduced to a life-changing opportunity to work with Methodist Children's Home Mississippi. With the belief that if you just trust God, He will align your footsteps and guide you on the path to your true purpose, Cheronda discovered her purpose-- and that was serving the community at Methodist Children's Home of Mississippi. Cheronda serves on the development committee and oversees the Prom Drive for the youth girls and boys on campus.

In April 2017, Methodist Children's Home of Mississippi awarded Cheronda Minor "Volunteer of the Year". This esteemed achievement has propelled her forward in her desires to serve, and currently has allowed her to walk the path of some of Jackson's greatest leaders. Cheronda is a member of Junior League of Jackson and Leadership Greater Jackson.