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## **Dallas Area Funders Introduce the Inaugural Economic Opportunity Leadership Academy Fellows**

*Local leaders selected for the program in partnership with the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program*

October 23, 2019, Dallas – Today, [Communities Foundation of Texas](#), [JPMorgan Chase & Co.](#) and [United Way of Metropolitan Dallas](#) announced the inaugural class of a new program designed to improve local economic opportunity and mobility efforts and create innovative solutions to the challenges faced by workers and businesses.

[The Dallas Economic Opportunity Leadership Academy](#), a 12-month fellowship developed through a partnership with the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program and Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, is designed to strengthen the local network of non-profit, government, academic, and business leaders through a series of retreats and workshops that will introduce the participating Fellows to new tools and strategies. This Academy is the latest in a series of several [Workforce Leadership Academies](#) hosted in communities across the United States and Canada.

The 24 fellows of the Dallas Economic Opportunity Leadership Academy Class of 2019-2020 represent a range of community-based organizations, businesses, post-secondary educational institutions, and government agencies. The Dallas Economic Opportunity Leadership Academy launches today and will culminate with a collaborative capstone project presentation June 9, 2020.

“Collaboration grows at the speed of trust, and today’s workforce development leaders are increasingly being asked to create solutions through collaboration,” said Sheila Maguire, senior fellow at the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program and director of the local network of Workforce Leadership Academies. “This Academy is a rare opportunity for these local leaders to step back with colleagues from Dallas, reflect on their own organizational challenges, hear from

leading practitioners from around the country, and develop the network and trust so essential for success.”

Fellows in the Inaugural Dallas Economic Opportunity Leadership Academy Class are:

- Ralph Adams, Director of Workforce Development, Regional Black Contractors Association
- Rachael Berhe, Program Director, Wilkinson Center
- Richard Brindley, Managing Director, Amplio Recruiting
- Elizabeth Caudill, Managing Director, Higher Education & Workforce Dallas Regional Chamber
- Sharon Davis, Vice President of Business Services, Mountain View College
- Maya Fernandez, Program Manager, Cedar Valley College
- Thomas Foley, Founder and Director, The Study USA
- Genesis Gavino, Deputy Resilience Officer, City of Dallas
- Adan Gonzalez, Executive Director, Puede Network
- Matt Houston, Principal, MLH Enterprises
- Heather Lepasca, Manager III, City of Dallas
- Ben Magill, Executive Director, Labor Market Intelligence Center, Dallas County Community College District
- Sheila Marks, Chief Executive Officer, Inspiring Tomorrow's Leaders, Inc
- Linda Munoz, Director, Finance and Career, WINGS
- Sheridan Nixon, Director of Parent Promise/Project Lead of Partner Relations, Dallas County Community College District
- Rick Ortiz, President/CEO, Greater Dallas Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Symone Redwine, Attorney and Founder, My Record is Clean
- Wana Sekander, Director of Employment Services, Goodwill Dallas Industries
- Amber Sims, Director of Regional Impact, Leadership for Educational Equity
- Dottie Smith, President, The Commit Partnership
- Ken Smith, President, Revitalize South Dallas Coalition
- Dana Townsend, Associate Director of Partner Relations, Year Up
- Bernadette Trail, HR Generalist, Methodist Health System
- Maiya Winston, Inclusive Diversity Consultant, Allstate Insurance Company

“As Dallas continues to grow and change, we want to equip even more local leaders with tools they can use to advance economic opportunity for all,” said Sarah Cotton Nelson, Chief Philanthropy Officer, Communities Foundation of Texas. “We’re excited to be able to offer, in partnership with JPMorgan Chase and United Way of Metropolitan Dallas, professional development through the Academy to help leaders learn and think critically about economic challenges and develop sustainable solutions to address those.”

The Academy will create and support a peer-learning community of economic opportunity and workforce leaders with a one-year educational and networking experience to help them manage the challenges they face in addressing changes in technology, business norms and policy. These senior-level fellows will work with leading practitioners from around the US, learn about practical planning tools and collaborate to reflect on and develop effective strategies to strengthen the Dallas community. Alumni of the Academies become part of the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunity Fellows Network.

“Making meaningful progress on an issue as critical as improving economic opportunity and mobility requires non-traditional approaches and a lot of non-traditional thinking. That’s why bringing this class together is so important. I am confident these 24 talented Fellows will make a lasting impact on our community,” Anne Motsenbocker market leader and head of Middle Market Banking for JPMorgan Chase in Texas.

“Together, with our valued partners Communities Foundation of Texas and JPMorgan Chase, we are leading the charge toward expanding opportunity and mobility for all North Texans,” said Jennifer Sampson, McDermott-Templeton President and CEO, United Way of Metropolitan Dallas. “The Academy has extraordinary potential to achieve lasting results for Dallas by equipping and empowering families to become financially stable.”

The Dallas Economic Opportunity Leadership Academy will be led by Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, Leung Consulting LLC, and the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program and an Advisory Council that includes:

- **Bryan Carter**, Concord Church
- **Cynthia Yung**, Boone Family Foundation
- **Dena Jackson**, Dallas Women's Foundation
- **Dr. Froswa' Booker-Drew**, State Fair of Texas
- **Dr. Myriam Igoufe**, Dallas Housing Authority
- **Drex Owusu**, Dallas Regional Chamber
- **Eric Ban**, Dallas County Promise
- **George Tang**, Educate Texas
- **Greg Mangum**, United Way of Metropolitan Dallas
- **Jason Liekart**, AT&T
- **Jerry Hawkins**, Dallas Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation
- **Dr. John Siburt**, CitySquare
- **Kathy Alfano**, Frito-Lay/Pepsico
- **Linda McMahan**, TREC
- **Mark Porter**, Harmony CDC
- **Michelle Thomas**, JPMorgan Chase
- **Roy Lopez**, Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
- **Sarah Cotton Nelson**, Communities Foundation of Texas
- **Susan Hoff**, United Way of Metropolitan Dallas
- **Suzanne Smith**, Social Impact Architects
- **Tori Mannes**, Childcare Group
- **Wende Burton**, Communities Foundation of Texas

Biographical information on the Dallas Fellows is available at <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/team/dallas-economic-opportunity-leadership-academy-class-of-2019-2020/>

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### **About Communities Foundation of Texas**

With the goal of building thriving communities for all, [Communities Foundation of Texas](#) (CFT) works locally and across the state through a variety of charitable funds and strategic initiatives. The public foundation professionally manages 1,000 charitable funds for individuals, families, companies and nonprofits in addition to powering several key initiatives such as [Educate Texas at CFT](#), [W. W. Caruth, Jr. Fund at CFT](#) and [CFT's North Texas Giving Day](#). CFT has awarded more than \$1.9 billion in grants since its founding in 1953. Learn more at [cftexas.org](http://cftexas.org). Follow us on Facebook ([facebook.com/CFTexas](https://facebook.com/CFTexas)), Twitter ([twitter.com/GiveWisely](https://twitter.com/GiveWisely)) or Instagram ([instagram.com/communitiesfoundationoftexas/](https://instagram.com/communitiesfoundationoftexas/)).

### **About JPMorgan Chase & Co.**

JPMorgan Chase has more than 12,000 employees in Dallas/Fort Worth, making it one of the region's top employers. As part of its commitment to the DFW market, Chase has built a world-class campus at Legacy West in Plano. Phase One of the campus is complete and will be home to 6,500 workers – about half of all of our DFW employees. This summer, the bank started construction of a 12-story building in Plano, an expansion that will bring campus employment to almost 11,000. Earlier this month, JPMorgan Chase announced a \$6 million commitment to help revitalize three Dallas neighborhoods challenged by blight. For more information about JPMorgan Chase in Dallas, go to [www.jpmorganchase.com/dfw](http://www.jpmorganchase.com/dfw).

### **About United Way of Metropolitan Dallas**

United Way of Metropolitan Dallas is a community-based social change organization that puts opportunity in the hands of all North Texans. Working with our determined supporters, we lead the charge to improve education, income and health—the building blocks of opportunity. We invite all change-seekers in our community to Live United to achieve lasting results right here at home. To give, advocate or volunteer, visit [UnitedWayDallas.org](http://UnitedWayDallas.org).