Cynthia Alfaro
Chief Operating Officer, My Block My Hood My City

Cynthia serves as the Chief Operating Officer at My Block My Hood My City (M3). In this role, she is tasked with keeping M3’s high-level strategy front-and-center while understanding the details of day-to-day execution to ensure what needs to happen does happen. Cynthia leverages close to 20 years of HR experience with a focus in leadership development in helping her team grow. Prior to joining M3, she worked in corporate HR at Pepsi and the Department of Education in New York City.

In a volunteer capacity, Cynthia advocates for and supports moms as the founder of Moms Winning, her online community of moms. She hosts online mom chats, delivers workshops and creates a space for best practices to be exchanged. Cynthia is a proud alum of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign where she received her BS in Finance and Master in Human Resources and Industrial Relations.

Dennericka Brooks
Director, Housing Practice Group, Legal Aid Chicago

Dennericka Brooks is the Director of Legal Aid Chicago’s Housing Practice Group. In her role, Dennericka aims to secure and protect the housing rights of low-income and vulnerable individuals and families. Dennericka litigates complex legal matters and engages in housing advocacy in different venues, leveraging community partnerships and collaborations. It is Dennericka’s goal to ensure that tenants live in decent, safe, and affordable housing that is free from discrimination.

Currently, Dennericka serves as an Adjunct Faculty Member at Loyola University Chicago School of Law where she teaches Trial Practice and Professional Identity Formation.

In 2019, Dennericka was named a member of the Chicago Daily Law Bulletin’s “40 Under 40” class as well as Legal Aid Chicago’s Jerold S. Solovy Equal Justice Award Recipient. Dennericka has also received awards from Loyola University Chicago School of Law (Norman C. Amaker Award of Excellence ’14 and the St. Bellarmine Award ’14) and the Chicago Bar Foundation’s Kimball and Karen Public Interest Law Fellowship (’07). Dennericka earned her BA from Grinnell College and her JD from Loyola University Chicago School of Law.

Maggie Clemons
Deputy Commissioner, Chicago Public Library

Maggie Clemons was named Deputy Commissioner of Chicago Public Library (CPL)’s Department of Library Operations and Patron Experience in 2019. She oversees staffing, operations and public service delivery across 76 library branches, 3 regional hubs, and a 750,000-square-foot central facility, as well as strategic planning for new libraries and renovations of existing facilities. In her role she has led an unprecedented implementation of an additional day of service at all libraries, expanding library access across Chicago. During the COVID-19 shutdown in 2020, Maggie led the City’s response to food insecurity and led CPL’s reopening plan to safely return staff and resume library services.

Maggie is a dedicated public librarian with experience in a variety of leadership positions, previously working in Chicago communities as a librarian and branch manager. She recently was selected to receive the Kathy Osterman Award for Outstanding Leader from the city of Chicago. Maggie holds a BA from Miami University and a MLIS from Dominican University.
Daniel Cruz  
**Senior Director, Government and External Affairs, Chicago Housing Authority**

Dan Cruz is the Senior Director of Government and External Affairs at the Chicago Housing Authority, where he leads intergovernmental initiatives, legislative strategy, and engagement with local and national stakeholders. He also oversees critical projects on affordable housing, economic development, social services, and public policy. Dan's experience spans high-profile issues, including corporate social responsibility, telecommunications, banking, and government operations. Before joining the Chicago Housing Authority, he led his own public affairs consulting practice assisting national nonprofits and public relations firms with policy and strategic communications initiatives.

Prior to his consulting practice, Dan helped the telecom tech startup Ligado Networks navigate federal regulations. He served under the Obama administration as a spokesperson at the U.S. Treasury Department and General Services Administration in Washington, DC. Before his move to Washington, he worked on workforce and legislative issues for the Massachusetts state government. Dan received a BS in Political Science from Northeastern University in Boston.

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Megan Cunningham  
**Managing Deputy Commissioner, Chicago Department of Public Health**

Megan Cunningham is the Managing Deputy Commissioner for the Chicago Department of Public Health, where she oversees the Department’s strategy, development, and external affairs. Her focus is on implementing Healthy Chicago 2025, a citywide, cross-sector plan to close Chicago’s life expectancy gap by addressing the root causes of health, including structural racism. Megan previously worked as the Senior Director of Operations/COO for HHC ACO, Inc., an accountable care organization serving patients of New York City’s public hospital system, as well as Staff Attorney at the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers. She started her career teaching 6th grade Language Arts in Newark, NJ.

Megan has been honored as a “40 Under 40 in Public Health” by the de Beaumont Foundation and as an Aspen-Aetna Healthy Communities fellow. She is a graduate of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and the NYU School of Law.

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Rodolfo De Jesus  
**Community Engagement Manager, Magoon Institute for Healthy Communities, Lurie Children’s Hospital**

Rodolfo De Jesus is the Community Engagement Manager with the Magoon Institute for Healthy Community at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago. In his current role with the Magoon Institute, Rodolfo focuses on developing comprehensive partnerships with community stakeholders throughout the city of Chicago. He connects hospital resources and expertise with local partners to support children where they live, learn, and play. He joined Lurie’s with over 5 years of experience in Chicago municipal government.

Rodolfo De Jesus is a proud product of the Chicago Public School system and has a BA in Political Science from Augustana College.
**Rachel Fink**  
Executive Director, Lookingglass Theatre Company

Rachel L. Fink is the Executive Director of Lookingglass Theatre Company. She joined Lookingglass as its administrative leader in 2018. A strong advocate of leadership development and cultural policy, she most recently was the Managing Director of Theatre Bay Area, serving more than 300 theatres and 2,000 artists across the San Francisco Bay Area. Rachel also spent 16 years at Berkeley Repertory Theatre where she founded its School of Theatre, providing training and educational arts experiences for over 23,000 students annually.

Rachel has held professional distinctions including selection as the US delegate for the British Council's Cultural Leadership International Programme, as a member of the American Express/Aspen Institute Fellowship for Emerging Nonprofit Leaders inaugural class, and as a 2016 artEquity cohort member. She is a League of Chicago Theatres board member, has served on the board of Theatre Bay Area, and has planned numerous national professional convenings, including the Berkshire Leadership Summit. Rachel holds a BA in Theatre Arts from Case Western Reserve University and a MFA in Theater Management from the Yale School of Drama.

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**Nyla R. Diab**  
Chief Strategy Officer, Chicago Commons

Nyla Diab is Chicago Commons’ first Chief Strategy Officer in its 128-year old history. In this role, Nyla leverages the agency's high-performing programs and operations to identify new communities, partnerships, and resources to support better outcomes for children, seniors, and families. Nyla has over a decade of experience leading community and programmatic development, focused on entrepreneurial strategies that establish long-term financial sustainability and create systems that reduce barriers to families’ ability to access high-quality programs.

Nyla serves on the Boards of Esperanza Health Centers and Greater Southwest Development Corporation. She holds a BA in Political Science from Loyola University Chicago.

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**Sav Felix (AB’09, MSW’16)**  
Director of Legislative and External Affairs, Law Office of the Cook County Public Defender

Savannah “Sav” Felix is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and serves as the Director of Legislative and External Affairs at the Law Office of the Cook County Public Defender. Prior to this role, Sav served as Program Coordinator at the Cook County Justice Advisory Council where Sav managed Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle's criminal and juvenile justice legislative and policy reform agenda. Sav has over a decade of experience providing direct services to and policy advocacy alongside justice-involved youth and young adults.

Sav received a BA and a Master's degree in Social Service Administration from the University of Chicago. In 2020, Sav was appointed to the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission.
Luis Gonzales
Director of People and Culture, One Million Degrees

Luis Gonzales is the Director of People and Culture at One Million Degrees (OMD). At OMD, Luis oversees staff development and engagement, enhancing employee relations, administering compensation and benefits, and supporting organizational growth both regionally and nationally. Prior to OMD, he worked in the Human Resources Department at Wilbur Wright College and later transitioned to the Office of Instruction where he served as the Director of Student Support Services. Luis has a wealth of experience in higher education, housing counseling, financial literacy, human resources, and equity development.

Luis currently volunteers as a coach with One Million Degrees and serves on the board of directors for MOSAIC Educational and Arts Program in Greenville, South Carolina. Luis has a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) certification and received his BA in History from Furman University and a Master of Public Administration from DePaul University.

Jurema N. Gorham
Founder & Executive Director, Burst Into Books

Jurema N. Gorham is the Founder and Executive Director at Burst Into Books. In this role, she helps develop and lead the services offered through the organization. The mission of Burst Into Books is to rebuild our village through the arts, advocacy, educational and family programming. Over 3,000 children have received free books to add to their home libraries. Jurema has been an educator since 2008 with experience ranging from Kindergarten to 12th grade.

In March 2020, Jurema was recognized by WGN-9 as a finalist for the national Nexstar Remarkable Woman Contest. In February 2020, Jurema received the Humanitarian Award from the Far South Community Action Council for her work with families and community outreach. In addition, she was honored by the Drew Barrymore Show as a “Drew Gooder” for their Mother’s Day special. Jurema earned her Bachelor’s Degree in Elementary Education from Chicago State University and two Master in Education degrees (Differentiated Instruction and Educational Leadership) from Concordia University Chicago. She is a doctoral candidate in Curriculum and Instruction at Concordia University Chicago.

Ashley Greer Shambley
Assistant Public Defender, Law Office Of the Cook County Public Defender

Ashley Greer Shambley is an Assistant Public Defender with the Law Office of the Cook County Public Defender. She is currently assigned to the Homicide Task Force Unit. Ashley is responsible for providing legal representation to people arrested and charged with murder and other felony offenses. This representation includes investigating the circumstances surrounding the arrest of her clients, investigating their social history, negotiating plea agreements, interviewing witnesses, and representing her clients at trial. Ashley has over a decade of experience as a criminal defense attorney.

Ashley is a current board member of the Illinois Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and the National Coalition of 100 Black Women. She is also an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, the Top Ladies of Distinction, and Black Women Lawyers Association. Ashley serves the community by mentoring the youth and teaching the urban community about the law. Ashley has a BA in Communication and Culture from Howard University and a JD from DePaul University College of Law.
Gerald Blake Hankerson
Outreach Coordinator, Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) - Chicago Office & Illinois Chapter

Gerald Hankerson is the Outreach Coordinator at the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) Chicago office and Illinois chapter. He leads community outreach, civic engagement, intercultural and interfaith engagement, global exchanges, and youth development. Prior to this role, Gerald was the New Programs Development Coordinator and Policy Debate Head Coach-Program Coordinator in Chicago Public Schools. Gerald is a founding member currently serving on the African American Advisory Council at the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC). He also is a founding member of the first UIC alumni affinity network, Umoja: Black Legacy Alumni Coalition.

For his years of service and activism, North Park University (Chicago) recognized Gerald as a “Man of Excellence.” With 15 seasons supporting the urban debate movement and his activism with CAIR-Chicago, Gerald was named the 2015 Alum of the Year by Chicago Debates and the Chicago Debate Commission. Gerald graduated as an Illinois State Scholar with very high honors from Lindblom Technical High School in Chicago. As a UIC President’s Scholar and Social Justice Initiative Pipeline to Justice Fellow, Gerald earned a BA in Communication.

Bradly Johnson
Director of External Affairs, BUILD Inc.

Bradly Johnson serves as the Director of External Affairs at Broader Urban Intervention and Leadership Development (BUILD Inc.). Bradly grew up in the Austin neighborhood and has nearly 30 years of youth development experience working with youth and young adults. Prior to joining BUILD, Bradly worked with St. Joseph Services, a nonprofit serving youth, and adults in Austin and Humboldt Park neighborhoods. During his time at SJS, Bradly served in various leadership roles and was an integral part of developing the program design and community collaborations, and building the organization’s profile. Early in his career, Bradly worked for 12 years serving detainees at the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center.

Bradly currently co-chairs the Public Safety Committee of the Austin Quality of Life Plan, is a founding member of Westside Rising Coalition, and sits on the board of Austin Coming Together. He has also participated in the United Way Board Leadership Institute (Spring 2020). Bradly earned his BA in Nonprofit Leadership, and Master of Public Administration at DePaul University.

Robert Kline
Assistant State’s Attorney, Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office

Robert Kline is a trial supervisor in the Juvenile Justice division of the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office. In addition to handling murder and violent crime prosecutions involving juvenile offenders, Robert onboards new prosecutors to the division and works to produce the division’s training schedule. Having been with the office since 2007, Robert has significant experience prosecuting felony offenses and has worked strenuously to strengthen our communities.

Robert is also a faculty member for the Illinois Juvenile Prosecutor’s Institute and the National District Attorney’s Association. Robert earned his bachelor’s degree from Indiana University and his JD from the DePaul University College of Law.
Eilene Ladson  
Vice President of Program and Clinical Supports, Ada S. McKinley Community Services

Eilene Ladson is the Vice President of Program and Clinical Supports at Ada S. McKinley Community Services. In this role, Eilene supports the organization’s Child Development and Youth Service programs through collecting qualitative and quantitative data that she uses to build trauma-informed organizational systems for program participants and staff alike. Her work has helped build internal communication and referral systems that promote cross-team collaboration, information and resource sharing, as well as the development of a document repository to maintain historical knowledge. Prior to joining Ada S. McKinley, Eilene collaborated with trauma movements throughout Illinois to assist youth-serving organizations and systems in increasing their capacity to provide culturally competent, trauma-informed services.

Eilene is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist with extensive experience working with youth in care, their biological families, and their foster families as well as Black service members, veterans, and their families. She has a BA in Psychology from DePauw University and a MS in Marriage and Family Therapy/Counseling from Purdue University Calumet.

Lisbeth Leanos  
Legislative Coordinator for State & Federal Affairs, Office of Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle

Lisbeth Leanos works for The Office of Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle as the Legislative Coordinator for State and Federal Affairs in her Government Affairs team. She has passionately worked on behalf of underserved communities through her positions in nonprofit and government sectors. Prior to joining the County’s Government Affairs team, she spent 13 years working for the Illinois residents in improving Workforce Development and Unemployment Insurance accessibility. She is deeply involved with Illinois Unidos, The Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation (ILLC) and the Illinois Hispanic Association for State Employees (IHASE).

Lisbeth serves as a board member for The Illinois National Public Radio and the University of Illinois Alumni Association and is an Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership Training Academy Alumni from the Class of 2019. Lisbeth is the proud daughter of Mexican immigrants and a first-generation college graduate. She holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Illinois Springfield.

Ricardo Magallon  
Manager of Air Inspection Division, Cook County Government - Department of Environment and Sustainability

Ricardo Magallon is the Manager of the Air Inspection Division at the Cook County Department of Energy and Sustainability. In this position, he works to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other major pollutants from permitted businesses located within Cook County. He has worked across the country in roles that helped develop his systems thinking, behavior change, and marketing and communications skills. Ricardo’s most notable work in sustainability began when he worked as a Green Operations Specialist for San Francisco International Airport’s Environmental Operations Division where he managed both the Green Business and Construction & Demolition Debris Management Programs and supported other airport environmental programs and initiatives such as zero waste to landfill, green cleaning, and airport tenant water conservation.

Ricardo was honored as a 2018 GreenBiz 30 Under 30 while working at San Francisco International Airport for his work on the Airport’s Zero Waste initiative. Ricardo holds bachelor’s degrees from Loyola University Chicago in Biology and Environmental Science. He has a MS in Environmental Management from the University of San Francisco where he completed coursework focusing on Environmental Law & Policy and Sustainable Business at Urbana-Champaign, and a Master of Divinity from Oral Roberts University.
**Victoria Marzullo**  
**Sergeant of Police, Chicago Police Department**

Sergeant Victoria Marzullo joined the Chicago Police Department in 2006. She is assigned to the Office of the First Deputy Superintendent where she implements logistics and organizational strategy for 13,000 Chicago police officers. She supports the distribution of Department personnel and equipment and supervises the Officer Involved Shooting Program and Training Oversight Committee. Victoria started her career as a patrol officer and was later assigned to the Narcotics Division. She also worked as a Patrol Supervisor in the Ogden District, responsible for direct supervision of patrol officers and interaction with the community. Victoria was then recruited for the Special Functions Division and subsequently assigned to the Bureau of Counterterrorism.

Victoria earned her Associate's Degree from the College of Lake County, her Bachelor's Degree in Biology from Barat College, a Master's Degree in Criminal/Social Justice from Lewis University and a Master's Degree in Police Psychology from the Adler School of Professional Psychology. She has earned numerous Department Service and Training Certificates including successful completion of the School of Police Staff and Command at the Northwestern University Center for Public Safety.

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**Caitlin McElroy**  
**Deputy Chief of Staff, Cook County Board of Commissioners - 15th District**

Caitlin McElroy is the Deputy Chief of Staff at the Cook County Board of Commissioners 15th District Office. In this role, she leads legislation development and strategy along with serving as the lead staff member for the Cook County Technology & Innovation Committee. Prior to her role at Cook County, Caitlin held positions in government and community affairs at the city of Chicago and multiple nonprofit organizations.

Caitlin McElroy serves as a Board Member of Lorde, Rustin & Bates, an organization that works in coalition towards justice and equity that centers Black and Latinx LGBTQ people, people living with HIV, and other marginalized groups. Caitlin has a BA in Secondary Education and History from DePaul University and a Master of Public Policy from Loyola University Chicago.

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**Dion McGill**  
**Communications and Community Outreach Manager, Strengthening Chicago’s Youth, Lurie Children’s Hospital**

Dion McGill is the Manager of Communications and Community Outreach for Strengthening Chicago’s Youth (SCY). In this role, he is responsible for developing and implementing a communication and outreach strategy to support Chicago’s largest violence prevention collaborative. Prior to joining SCY, Dion worked with the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence where he managed and facilitated the ICHV’s education initiatives and programs.

Dion is a licensed Illinois state educator with experience teaching at both the middle and high schools levels. He is also a US Army veteran. Dion holds a BA in Social Sciences from Saint Xavier University, where he was the Outstanding History Department Scholar for the 2010 graduating class. BA in Political Science and JD from the University of Toledo.
**Daveed Moskowitz**  
**Juvenile Justice Manager, Chicago Public Schools**

Daveed Moskowitz is the Juvenile Justice Manager in the Office of Student Support & Engagement at Chicago Public Schools (CPS). In this role, he leads a team that has revamped the district’s support of court-involved youth, and increased the successful school re-entry rate of detained students. He created and implemented a comprehensive restorative re-entry model with training, coaching, resources, and interventions, which decreased school mobility of re-entry students by almost half. Prior to this role, Daveed served as Manager of Student Engagement Research for CPS, leading the district’s partnerships with universities to design and implement randomized control trials of promising interventions in CPS schools.

Prior to CPS, Daveed worked as Professional Development Coordinator at Youth Connection Charter School and as an English teacher in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Daveed holds a BA in Psychology from Yale University, and an MA in Social Sciences and Health from the Institute of Social Medicine at the State University of Rio de Janeiro.

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**Robin C. Owens**  
**Deputy Commissioner, City of Chicago Department of Assets, Information & Services**

Robin Owens, is the Deputy Commissioner for the City of Chicago Department of Assets, Information & Services (DAIS). In this role, Robin is responsible for leading the Bureau of Architecture, Engineering & Construction (AEC), including all design and construction related matters for the City’s facility portfolio. Robin oversees this bureau and implements the design and construction parameters for project development, procurement and delivery for citywide facilities in need of maintenance, optimization, and new constructions. Under Robin’s leadership, this bureau facilitates design and construction services for more than 350 facility projects, helping to execute the City’s 5-year $1.4B capital program.

Robin holds a BS in Architecture from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and is a graduate of the American Institute of Architects TransFORM Program for Leadership & Business in the AEC Community.

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**Michelle Rashad**  
**Executive Director, Imagine Englewood if...**

Michelle “Chellee” Rashad is the Executive Director of Imagine Englewood if (IEi). She has developed programs to provide trauma-informed care for youth, leveraged strategic partnerships to expand supportive services for families, and activated vacant lots in the community to promote healthy living. Under her leadership, IEi has successfully engaged over 2,500 children and over 5,000 families total, with more to come. Michelle’s story is truly a full circle journey as she developed her love for service as a teenage graduate of IEi’s Growing Citizen Leaders program in 2009.

Michelle helped build the award winning Greater Englewood Toastmasters Club, enhancing communication and facilitation skills of residents and local leaders. She was also appointed community representative on the Local School Council for her alma mater, Lindblom Math & Science Academy. Michelle was honored by the Chicago Foundation of Women as the recipient of their 2021 Pioneer Impact Award. She is a member of the Chicago chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals and a recent graduate of the newly organized Black Bench Chicago. Michelle holds a BA in Telecommunication Management and Business Administration from Howard University.
Cindy Chan Roubik  
Acting Deputy Commissioner, City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development

Cindy Chan Roubik is the Acting Deputy Commissioner for the Central, North, and Northwest Planning Regions at Chicago’s Department of Planning and Development (DPD). In this role, she leads the economic engine of the city of Chicago and the fastest growing downtown in the country. Cindy manages planning initiatives, community engagement, and the planning and design review process for large scale development proposals. Cindy has over 15 years of experience with DPD and some of her recent achievements include leading the Central City Recovery Roadmap initiative, managing the $3.8 billion Bronzeville Lakefront project, updating the Fulton-Market Innovation District Plan, and the Chicago River Design Guidelines.

Prior to civil service, Cindy worked as a project designer for a local architecture firm on several high-rises and historic rehabilitation projects. During that time, she became a LEED accredited professional and received her architectural license in Illinois. Upon graduation from McGill University’s School of Architecture in 1999, Cindy was awarded the AIA Henry Adams Medal for the top student in her graduating class and the RAIC Gold Medal Award for most outstanding thesis. Cindy was also awarded the Alpha Rho Chi Medal Award for leadership and service merit award.

Yaritza Sandoval  
Director of External Partnerships, Urban Alliance

Yaritza Sandoval is the Director of External Partnerships at Urban Alliance. She oversees the recruitment and stewardship of job partners and mentors in Chicago in order to create equal access to skills training, paid work experiences, and professional networks for youth of color. Prior to joining Urban Alliance, Yaritza was the Associate Director of Community Engagement at Cradles to Crayons where she mobilized more than 10,000 community members in high-impact volunteering activities and collection drive initiatives. She was also the Manager of Partner Relations at Cradles to Crayons where she built more than 50 partnerships with other community-based organizations to help serve more than 400,000 Chicagoland kids since opening in 2016.

Yaritza was a part of the inaugural Community Leadership Corps cohort at the Obama Foundation in 2018. She currently volunteers as an academic tutor in the Austin community through the nonprofit, Cluster Tutoring. Yaritza is a first-generation college graduate from Northwestern University where she studied Latinx Studies and Environmental Policy and Culture.

Scott Smith  
Chief Communications Officer, Cook County Assessor’s Office

Scott Smith is the Chief Communications Officer with the Cook County Assessor’s Office (CCAO). In this position, he is responsible for developing trust, transparency, and accessibility in all the CCAO’s communications work. Through outreach, education, and relationship building, the Office’s communications goal is for property owners and the agency’s partners to develop a more meaningful understanding of the CCAO, whether in-person, online, or in print. Scott’s previous professional work involved communications and editorial strategy at marketing agencies and at Chicago media organizations like Chicago Magazine and Time Out Chicago.

An active participant in civic life within the neighborhoods of Beverly and Morgan Park, Scott has been a board member with the Beverly Area Planning Association and the Southwest Chicago Diversity Collaborative. He is also the host of The Frunchroom, a South Side storytelling series produced in collaboration with the Beverly Area Arts Alliance. Scott has a Bachelor’s Degree in Communications from Ohio University.
José “Che-Che” Turrubiartez
Paralegal, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund

José “Che-Che” Turrubiartez is a paralegal at Lambda Legal. In this role, Che-Che provides critical services for impact litigation throughout the United States that seeks to overturn discriminatory laws against the LGBTQ+ community and people living with HIV. For nearly a decade, Che-Che previously led community-focused, outreach teams for HIV testing. He expanded HIV critical-care services to underserved communities in Chicago and connected uninsured patients to healthcare through the Affordable Care Act.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation recognized Che-Che’s work with the 2019 Award for Health Equity. He currently serves as an Auxiliary Board Member for Forward Momentum Chicago, a nonprofit bringing dance education programs to children with limited arts access. Che-Che is also an elected community member of Lozano Bilingual Elementary School’s Local School Council. Additionally, he serves as a Recruitment Co-Chair for the New Leaders Council Chicago Chapter. Che-Che holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Political Science from the University of San Diego.

Sana Iftikharuddin Syed
Director of Strategic Initiatives, Inner-City Muslim Action Network

Sana Syed is the Director of Strategic Initiatives at the Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN). Sana is responsible for the organization's big impact, innovation and mission advancement opportunities such as Go Green on Racine, a neighborhood revitalization effort in the heart of Englewood that includes a Fresh Market, an innovative repurposing of a closed CPS school, and advancing a larger housing and transit advocacy vision. She leads projects and partnerships through the innovation, incubation and institutionalization lifecycles. Prior to her work at IMAN, Sana has worked as a theologian, architect and community organizer with diverse global communities through several nonprofits in Sweden, Egypt, Yemen, Spain, Somaliland, India, Switzerland, and the United States.

Sana is a recipient of the Emerging Leader Award by Caux Dialogue for Land and Security, Switzerland, and the Extraordinary Service in Leadership Award by the Chicago Theological Seminary. She serves on the board of the Oasis Initiative, and the Strategic Planning Committee at the Chicago Theological Seminary. Sana has a BA in Architecture from Mumbai University and a MA in Religious Leadership for Social Transformation from the Chicago Theological Seminary. She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Ministry at the Catholic Theological Union.

Roy Walker III
Dean of Health Sciences & Career Programs, Malcolm X College - City Colleges of Chicago

Roy Walker III is the Dean of Health Sciences & Career Programs at Malcolm X College. In this role, he is responsible for the visionary leadership of the Health Sciences & Career Programs department, leading a team of over 125 faculty and staff and supporting more than 25 certificate and degree programs in the healthcare fields. His department holds the second largest market share of healthcare program completers from a nonprofit institution in the region. This is on track to increase as Roy currently heads innovative expansion initiatives with the Chicago Public Schools Early College Program, Malcolm X College’s West Side Learning Center, and Gift of Hope initiative in the Chatham neighborhood.

In the midst of COVID-19, he ensured Malcolm X College did its part to fight the pandemic, steering his team through the development of the Contact Tracer Training Program to educate and train a workforce of nearly 1000 individuals to mitigate the impact of the pandemic in Chicago. He directed the development of a no-cost Vaccine Ambassador course designed in the lens of the community acknowledging inequity, distrust and historical racial disparities. More than 4200 participants from across the world completed the training. Roy has a BS in Kinesiology from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and a Master of Exercise Science with an emphasis in Exercise Physiology from Georgia State University.