

# THE METRO REPORT

OCTOBER 2022



## **INSIDE:**

**Historic Como Community**

page 8

**FWPD's Monica Martin**

page 8

**Cover Feature - Assistant Chief Julie Swearingin**

page 16

**DEI Discussions**

pages 20-23

**And Much More**

**Julie Swearingin and Monica Martin**

*Photo by Rachel DeLira*

FROM THE PUBLISHERS

# Diversity Week and much more

Celebrated from October 9-13, Diversity Week is for professionals who want to learn and understand the need for diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace and explore new ways to ensure it in the workplace. *The Metro Report* is hosting a Diversity Roundtable event on October 25th to discuss just such issues. Our issue this month also features a couple of companies who take time to discuss diversity within their own organizations as well as a short piece on diversity and mental health.

We are proud to feature two women who are making their own strides toward helping diversify the Fort Worth Police Department. Assistant Chief Julie Swearingin and Commander Monica Martin were kind enough to speak with us about their experiences as police officers as they move up the ranks setting a great example for any young ladies looking to pursue law enforcement as a career.

An entrepreneur who trains entrepreneurs is on tap in this issue and we're talking about the great things being done in the Como community led by the community center. Finally, make sure to check out the center spread by Rachel DeLira Photography and our spotlight features for the month.

This issue is chock full of information. We hope that you will be inspired that something that you read.

Until next time,  
*Anjie and Shevoyd Hamilton*



**Publishers Anjie and Shevoyd Hamilton**

# THE METRO REPORT

The Metro Report shines a light on women and minorities in the business community of the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex!

Visit our website  
[www.themetreport.biz](http://www.themetreport.biz)

Follow us on Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/themetreport.biz](https://www.facebook.com/themetreport.biz)

Subscribe to the digital and or print magazine through our website  
[www.themetreport.biz/subscribe](http://www.themetreport.biz/subscribe)

Contact us for information  
[info@themetreport.biz](mailto:info@themetreport.biz)

The Metro Report  
PO Box 60505  
Fort Worth, TX 76115  
Phone (817) 921-6600

CEO & Publisher  
Shevoyd Hamilton  
[Shevoyd@themetreport.biz](mailto:Shevoyd@themetreport.biz)

President & Business Manager  
Anjie Hamilton  
[Anjie@themetreport.biz](mailto:Anjie@themetreport.biz)

**4**  
**TARRANT**



**VOTE**

**Ebony Turner**  
FOR CCC6

**Crystal Gayden**  
FOR 324DC

**Lesa Pamplin**  
FOR CCC5

**MarQ Clayton**  
FOR CCC7

Early Voting: Oct. 24 - Nov. 4

Election Day: Nov. 8

**REPRESENTATION**

**EFFICIENCY**

**FAIRNESS**

**f @4TARRANT ★ 4TARRANT@GMAIL.COM**

# From one entrepreneur to another *by Allen White*

Darlisa Diltz had no plans to become a business owner when she and her family moved to Texas. But, as is often the case, she saw a need and was in a position to provide a service.

Diltz took the traditional path to corporate America from high school, she attended college. She contracted with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in St. Louis, MO. Diltz's hands-on work with the SBDC in St. Louis included developing entrepreneurs by helping them with business plans, getting their LLC, breaking down how to access funding and assisting them with understanding how to structure their business for success.

She transferred to the North Texas branch of SBDC where she discovered things were different. Though there were resources here and people to help, there was no "one-stop-shop" program like what she was familiar with. Businesses were failing and those in underserved communities were not flourishing. The educational piece offered in St. Louis was not present in North Texas and she was not able to be as hands-on as she was accustomed to.

Outgrowing her position at SBDC led Diltz to accept a position with a lending institution only for the job to fall through because of a government shutdown. This opened a door for her to become what she had been teaching through the St. Louis SBDC, an entrepreneur.

“It's about changing the trajectory of low income underserved, underserved and under-represented businesses that want change.”  
- Darlisa Diltz

She began North Texas Entrepreneur Training in 2017. Using money she had saved, Diltz found a space and set up shop. She formed team of advisors, and they developed a curriculum of classes designed to prepare people for entrepreneurship. The original classes lasted six months and included 12 weeks of education learning how to be an entrepreneur and 12 weeks for implementation where the students applied the lessons from the first class. At the end of the second session, students had three choices. They could continue the coursework towards becoming entrepreneurs, go back to work in corporate America or, if they weren't quite ready to open their own business, they could help another entrepreneur implement their plan.

They graduated 2 from their first class before the

pandemic hit.

NTET is the first woman owned, black owned, for-profit business service organization in the metroplex. Diltz and her team strive to be an asset to the SBDC by training people and helping them understand the ins and outs of entrepreneurship and whether their ideas are the basis for a viable business. Keeping the class size between 15-20, the end goal is to make sure these entrepreneurs have a business plan they can explain clearly and have a clearly defined path to getting their business started and sustained. This understanding is necessary before going to the SBDC who is there to see if they are creating jobs and help them obtain funding. The SBDC only deals with people who have a business plan and can provide evidence to show they can grow the business. This is the reason NTET was created, to educate and train on what entrepreneurship really is.

The pandemic exposed a knowledge gap evidenced by the more than 350 entrepreneurs NTET serviced in 2020. The pandemic also took NTET from a local company to a now global company, teaching classes via Zoom all over the world. NTET was able to answer questions about PPP loans and helped many people start their own businesses. The pandemic changed things within NTET. They have scaled back the programs to 6, 8 and 12 weeks and shifted focus from going after entrepreneurs to partnering with organizations to administer their programs.

NTET has diversified their programs because many organizations have now started offering education. Not many programs focus on the true start-up entrepreneur, but NTET has niche programs which cover three categories. They offer business basics to help get an understanding of what entrepreneurship is and help get a business plan together. The core program aids those whose businesses are not moving or are ready to scale upward. The leadership program is for those who have been in business for a while and now need to



Darlisa Diltz, NTET founder  
*Photo by Steve Rochun*

SEE ENTREPRENEUR ON PAGE 7

ROTARY CLUB OF FORT WORTH  
presents

2023

## MINORITY BUSINESS AWARDS



Honoring Fort Worth-based Minority Businesses that have demonstrated core elements of the Rotary 4-way test through leadership, community engagement, and outstanding business practice.

SAVE THE DATE

APRIL 21, 2023

ROTARYFORTWORTH.ORG

# Helping others move forward – The Diverse Collective

by Steve Rochun

It began with a dinner between three people who were born in different cities with different backgrounds and different life experiences. But they had a common denominator, Multiple Sclerosis. Known as MS, Multiple Sclerosis is a disease in which the immune system eats away at the protective covering of nerves, resulting in nerve damage that disrupts communication between the brain and the body.

David Moore, originally from New Jersey, a disabled veteran of the United States Air Force, has been fighting MS since 1998. Moore was a cryptologic linguist in the military and is currently the owner of David Moore Productions. There, he showcases his gifts and skills, passions and creativity through music and writing, using his abilities to connect with others. Though his journey with multiple sclerosis is fraught with challenges, Moore chooses to see what MS offers him. “With the constant pain there are some days that are harder than others, but I show up in hopes of being an inspiration to someone else,” says Moore.”

Tamiko “Tami” Ryan, originally from East St. Louis is a small business owner providing affordable housing opportunities in North Texas and is an avid community advocate. Ryan was diagnosed with MS in 2005. She is an MS Ambassador and an activist supporting the National MS Society. “Whether I’m speaking to a large crowd or to just one person, or whether I’m having a good day or a bad day, I get really excited, and my passion shows when sharing information about MS that people may not be aware of, that can benefit them,” says Ryan.



David Moore, Christie Eckler and Tami Ryan, co-founders of The Diverse Collective

advocate and social worker, she does just that while raising awareness, resources, and funding for meaningful causes.

It was at that dinner, as the three were sharing with one another their backgrounds and their passion to help others through the struggles of MS, that they came up with the idea of working together. Says Eckler, “I remember asking the question to David and Tami, what just happened? It sounded like we just came up with a purpose and plan to start a business.”

They agreed that night they wanted to provide a platform to help people amplify their voice and strength during their challenges with MS and inspire others enduring life challenges. They came up with the business name The Diverse Collective. The Diverse Collective identifies their diverse backgrounds qualifying them to discuss various topics in a meaningful way. All three founders have built careers on making connections. Combining those connections and social impact with their diverse experience allows them to have a collective voice to help others.

The partners understand there will be some challenges as The Diverse Collective will be discussing topics that people may not want to talk about. Their plan is to find ways to help people open up through

motivational speaking and a podcast. They expect to encounter a challenge building an audience for their podcast. As of June 2022, there were 2.4 million podcasts, so the market is big. Their goal will be to find their niche in this environment with an underlying theme of helping others.

Though they all have different skill sets, they will work together on each component to make the team more well-rounded. They will also speak on multiple topics such as mental illness, substance abuse, domestic violence, barriers for veterans, homelessness, disabilities, chronic illnesses, healthcare, costs of medications and treatments, politics, race relations and disparities (health, race, etc.)

With all they do and plan to do, they do manage to get some free time. Tami can be found shopping. David can be found on the golf course and Christie can be found with her new grandbaby.

Asked what is the one thing that people would be surprised to know about them? Tami says people may be shocked to know that she loves to be in the muck and dirt just gardening away with her high heels not too far away. David says that people would be surprised to know that he watches soap operas. As for Christie, she believes that people would be surprised to learn that she is a high school dropout and now a college professor.

Moore, Ryan, and Eckler are the chairs for the Yellow Rose Gala in Dallas on April 15, 2023. The Yellow Rose Gala Foundation was first established by founders Dee and Jimmy Wynne in 1986 and from 1986-2001 the gala was one of the most prominent social events in Dallas, netting over \$5.75 million for MS research. Reestablished in 2014, by the children of the Wynnes, the Gala continues its work through the Yellow Rose Gala Foundation, an active 501 (c)(3) whose drive and vision is to forever rid the world of MS. Moore, Ryan and Eckler are honored to be asked to chair such an event for a cause close to all of them.

The Diverse Collective is using their life experiences to help others in an impactful manner. Every person is important. Every connection is meaningful. Every story is worth hearing. They are most excited and fulfilled when they see someone benefitting from their stories or work this is their impetus for continuing to do this work. Their goal is to help others, regardless of circumstances or situations, realize they can move forward.



## Entrepreneur FROM PAGE 4

circle back and help others but need to know how to make connections to corporations. Upon completion of the core class, there are Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI’s) and other lending institutions who are there to provide funds to the organization, especially those from underserved communities. In a nutshell, NTET’s curriculum can be broken down into business plan, funding and philanthropy.

The majority of those who take the classes now are from the underserved communities which include low-to-middle income people. They offer business boot camps which are open to anybody, anywhere and also offer a one-time session to get basic questions answered.

The desire is to make sure the people they help and serve get what they came to NTET for in the first place. “It’s about changing the trajectory of low income underserved, underserved and under-represented businesses that want change,” says Diltz.

For more information  
Website: [www.nteetc.com](http://www.nteetc.com)  
E-Mail Address: [info@nteetc.com](mailto:info@nteetc.com)  
Phone: (817) 618-0229

“

...There are some days that are harder than others, but I show up in hopes of being an inspiration to someone else.

– David Moore

”

Christie Eckler from the DFW area, is a service-driven leader and advocate who has lived with MS since 2011. “There was a time I was unsure how long I would be active and walking around after spending almost a year in a wheelchair. But, with great people, key programming and treatment options made possible by research, I was up and going.” Eckler’s purpose is to help those who help others. As a community

THE METRO REPORT



You are reading this....so are your potential clients.

Reach them by advertising in The Metro Report.

Contact us:

[info@themetroreport.biz](mailto:info@themetroreport.biz)

# Lake Como – The community that helps itself

by Haley Roberts

On the west side of Fort Worth sits a small community filled with a spirit of hope and the motivation to succeed in building citizens who are proud of their neighborhood and eager to help take care of one another.

Lake Como, or Como as it is more commonly known has been in existence since 1889 when the lake was formed with the creation of a dam. The area itself is named after Como, Italy because it was originally intended to be a resort similar to its namesake. An economic depression in 1893 ended the resort efforts and the resulting tank in economy made it possible for many African-Americans to purchase land and build homes in the area. Not long after the influx of African-Americans, city funding to the Como area decreased for schools and community developments and the community struggled to prosper and grow.

While the West side of Fort Worth has experienced an economic boom in recent years and the city of Fort Worth has made infrastructure improvements in the surrounding areas, Como has not yet begun to see the same level of economic improvement. While the city of Fort Worth continues to work towards improving the community, the residents of Como have been quietly taking care of themselves for decades and continue to do so.

One of the mainstays in Como is the community center which offers refuge for many citizens. It is a place to congregate, share stories and help one another. Filled with people of all ages, the community center is a hub for getting things done through programs designed to help the youth, the seniors and everyone in between.



His father was originally a volunteer who later began working on the staff of the community center. Woolen has come back and talked to the kids who participate in community center programs to encourage them in their endeavors.

He and the other NFL players represent just one example of success stories. Many of the youth who have participated in community center programs have gone on to become doctors, lawyers, nurses, entrepreneurs and other professionals and continue to serve the community that served them when they were youths.

The programs offered by the community center benefit not only the children who participate, but also the parents or guardians who bring them. In the Reading Life program, children go the community center for one hour and have books read to them. Brown works hard to bring in the actual author of the book to read to the children, one of whom was Miles Darden. Many times, the author will not only come read, but they will autograph the books for the children to take home. When parents bring the children, the parent receives a gift card valued between \$25-\$50 which they can use in whatever manner they choose. In this way, the whole family is helped.

In addition to the reading program, the center hosts science night, math night and game night. All of these “nights” have some aspect of education included and are a fun way for the youth to learn and have fun at the same time.

These programs, while overseen by the community center director, Clara Kirby, could not run smoothly without volunteers. There is a network consisting of Como citizens set up so that those who wish to volunteer receive notification and can respond to assist where and when they can. There is no shortage when requests are sent out. The center director and community volunteers are instrumental in helping the community center bring programs to the citizens of Como they might not otherwise have access to. Despite what some may believe about the historic Como community, there is a spirit of hope and motivation to succeed in building up this proud community.

Despite what some may believe about the historic Como community, there is a spirit of hope and motivation to succeed in building up this proud community.

The community center is home to youth sports programs including four peewee football teams, basketball, baseball and cheerleading programs. They are proud of all the young men and women who have participated in the sports programs and can boast about a few young men who have gone on to play professional football in the NFL. EJ Speed of the Indianapolis Colts, A’Shawn Robinson of the Los Angeles Rams and Milton Williams Jr of the Philadelphia Eagles are only a few success stories. Tariq Woolen of the Seattle Seahawks is also a product of peewee football in Como.

**M-PAK**  
TACTICAL | PACKAGING | MEDICAL  
**proudly supports Como through  
Como Lion’s Heart and every life it’s touching.**



**Como:** A rich history and character of building through family, education, love and opportunity.

► **Como IS strong!** ► **Como IS proud!**  
► **Como IS progressive!** ► **Como IS Community!**



m-pakinc.com  
817.696.0004

# The Center NTX by Haley Roberts

Work-from-home employees, small home-based businesses and new entrepreneurs are often in the position of needing office space away from home to conduct business, have meetings or host small networking events, seminars or workshops. These same people also need a physical address to set-up their business and receive mail or packages, access to wi-fi and printing services and other business offerings not available at home. The Center NTX is made especially for such businesses. Located at 5555 Rufe Snow Drive in North Richland Hills, Texas, The Center offers memberships to businesses and people who need these services at affordable rates on a monthly subscription basis.

Providing a space for entrepreneurs, The Center offers low-cost amenities, a physical address, a place to connect with others, somewhere to unwind and a facility to get work done. It is also a place meet other professionals or seasoned entrepreneurs to share experiences, ideas and business advice often with the advantage of avoiding professional consulting fees. The idea is to create a community of help for people who are just getting started in business and help them get comfortable.

Small business entrepreneurs, people who have tired of working from home post-pandemic, those not disciplined enough to work from home and those who simply want to be in the vicinity of others are perfect members for The Center. The facility creates an external place for people for whom working from home is less than ideal and rental of office space is cost prohibitive.

The facility offers three membership levels. Mail members can use The Center as a physical address for mail delivery and package pick-up at a rate of \$15 per month. A virtual membership is \$30 per month and has the physical address options along with access to flexible workspace 8 work-days per month. Center members have unlimited access during business hours, mail service and package pick-up along with dedicated access 6 days a week and complimentary conference room reservations for the low rate of \$100 per month. These are just the basics in the packages offered by The Center NTX.

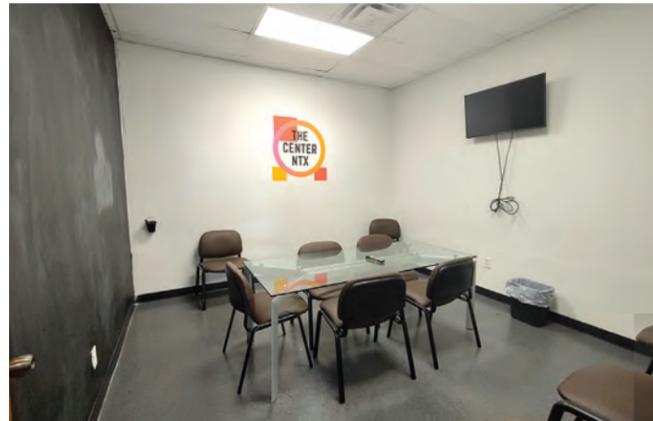
The Center NTX is owned by Darlisa Diltz and was created because she saw a need that was not being met. Her own needs were the impetus behind the company's creation and it serves the area well. The Center currently has 60 members and memberships are available at all levels.

For more information about The Center NTX or to purchase a membership:

Website: [www.thecenterntx.com](http://www.thecenterntx.com)

Phone: 817.231-9789

E-Mail: [info@thecenterntx.com](mailto:info@thecenterntx.com)



**L - Darlisa Diltz, owner, The Center NTX**

**Top R - Meeting room**

**Bottom R - Interior**

*Photos courtesy of The Center NTX*



*you belong here*

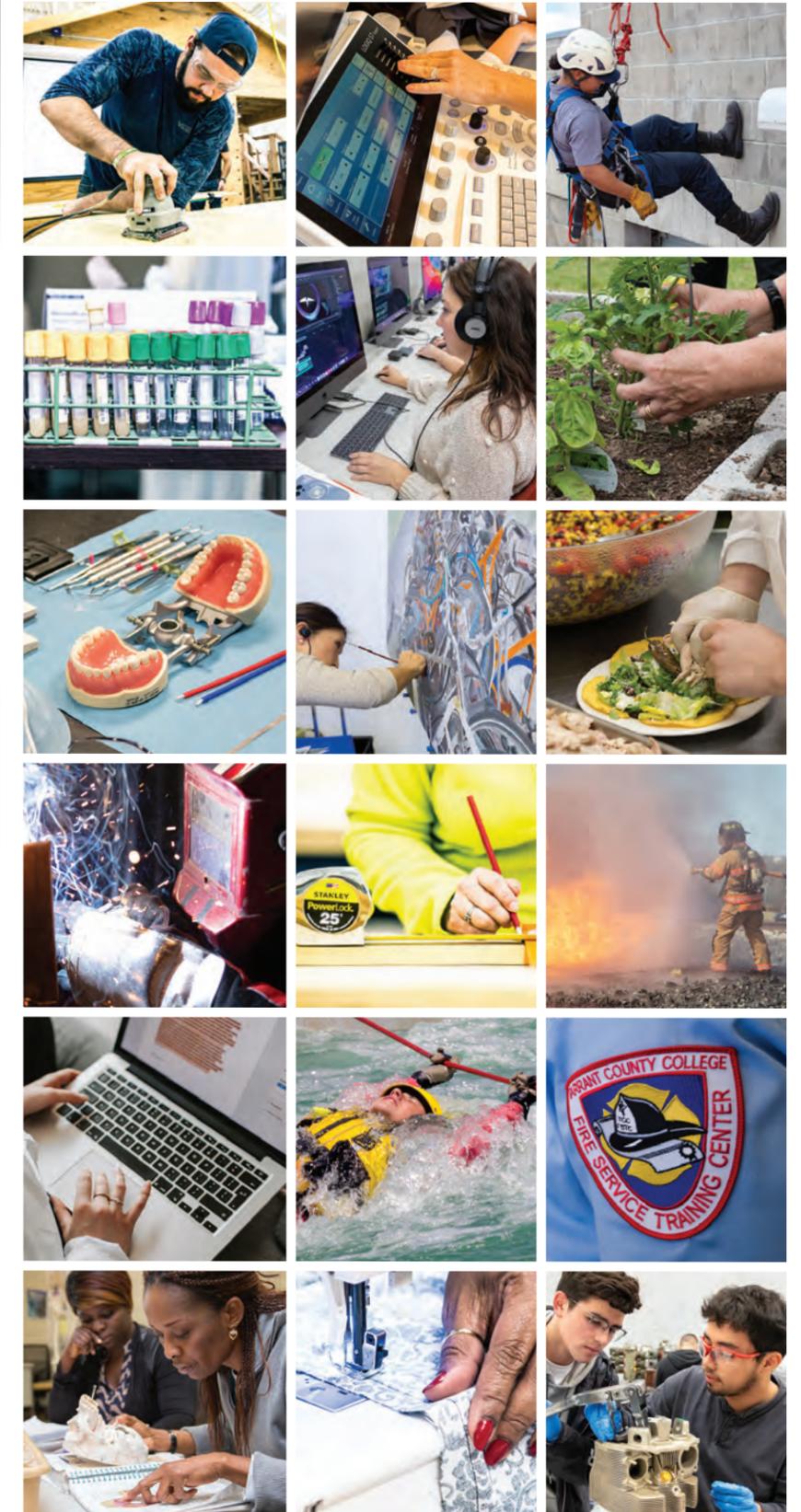
**No matter where you are in life, Tarrant County College has something for you.**

- Comprehensive Two-Year College • Online Degrees • Continuing Education • Six Campuses • Career and Technical Education • Workforce Training • Night Classes • Weekend College • Senior Education • College for Kids • Youth Enrichment Programs • Early College High School • Community Outreach • Veterans Resources • Career Services • Financial Aid • Student Life

**At TCC, we believe everyone is college material!**

**TCC** | Tarrant County College  
SUCCESS WITHIN REACH.

Equal Opportunity/Equal Access Institution



**TCCD.EDU**

# It Chose Me: Monica Martin

by Allen White

Commander Monica Martin of the Fort Worth Police Department (FWPD) did not set out to be a police officer. In fact, she worked as a property manager prior to making the career change. She wasn't quite sure law enforcement was something she would fall in love with, but 17 years later, she's still serving and protecting and she does in fact love it.

Commander Martin has a bachelor's degree and is currently working on obtaining her master's from TCU. Selected by Chief Neil Noakes Lt. Monica Martin was appointed to serve as Commander of the East Division. This selection is one for the history books because she is the first Black female police officer appointed to the executive staff of the Fort Worth Police Department.

Commander Martin has worked in multiple areas of the department, including Patrol, Backgrounds, Internal Affairs, Recruiting and Municipal Courts. According to Noakes, "She is a natural born leader who cares about the community and improving relationships between officers and citizens."

Martin stated in her letter of intent, "I work with a great group of men and women who selflessly come to work every day and give it their all, even in the most complex and frightening situations, and they do it without any complaint." This alone shows she is ready to work as a member of her own team to get the job done.

Having been an officer for so long and now serving in an area she lived in for many years, she believes one of her greatest strengths is her love for people of all backgrounds and races. It has shaped her career and allowed her to progress up the ranks. Originally from Overton, Texas, Martin moved to Fort Worth in 1993 with her mother and stepfather. She graduated from Eastern Hills High School and her connections with the alumni have tied her to some key stakeholders in the community she now serves in the East Division. The area she once lived in is filled with more mature residents now. "There are not a lot of kids in the area, the way it used to be," says Martin.

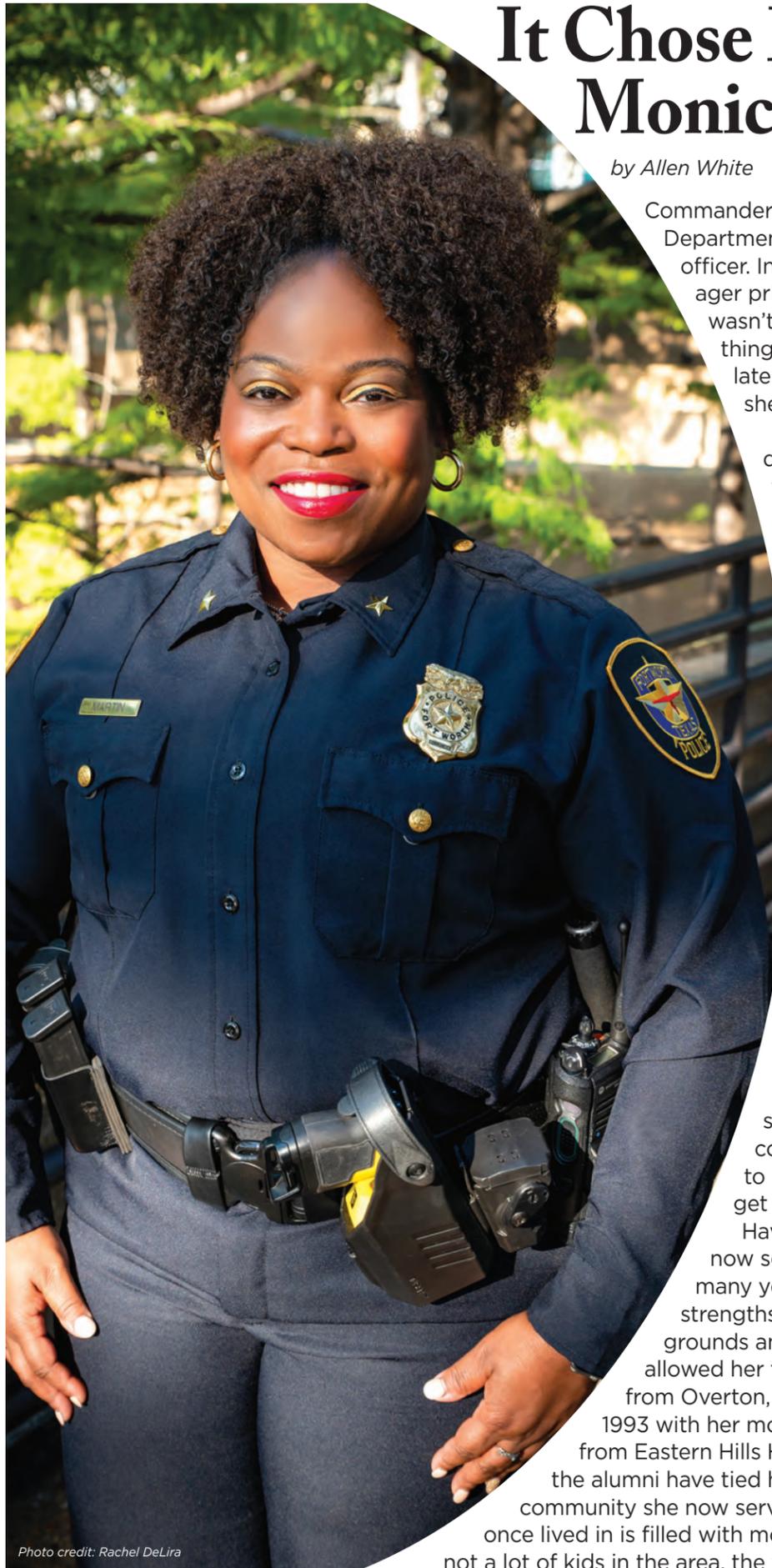


Photo credit: Rachel DeLira

For many years, the police force has been populated with mostly men. Martin says, "Trying to navigate through a predominately male environment can be a daunting task if you allow it to be." She found that if she stayed true to herself, did her job and treated everyone fairly, people were drawn her and didn't create unnecessary obstacles and barriers. She earned much respect because of her manner.

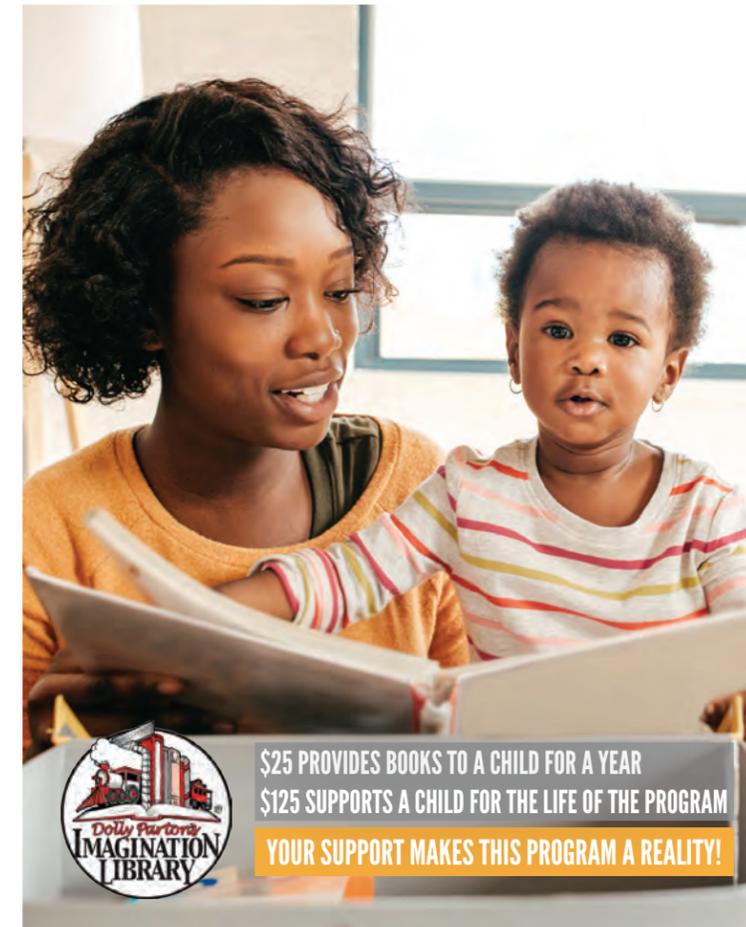
“ Trying to navigate through a predominately male environment can be a daunting task if you allow it to be. – Monica Martin ”

Assistant Chief Julie Swearingin was complimentary of Martin. "I had the opportunity to meet with Monica several years ago when she first started promoting through the ranks," she said. She continued, "I remember her sitting in my office, asking all the right questions and giving all the right responses about being a

leader." Swearingin saw in her the qualities of a strong, intelligent, caring and compassionate leader. She went on to say, "In the short time she has been appointed to a Commander, she has displayed incredible leadership and has been effective in inspiring her troops to provide the best service to our communities and to their colleagues. It has been a pleasure to work with Monica and an honor to see her continued growth and commitment to the City of Fort Worth."

Martin gains personal satisfaction from her job by knowing that a prayer she prayed as a young girl has been answered. "I would always pray that my life would not be in vain," she says. She continues, "I found that my prayer has been fulfilled in my position as a police officer because I'm able to be a servant to officers and citizens alike."

Martin is mother to an energetic 6-year-old and in her free time, juggles raising her child, doing homework and writing papers as she works towards her masters. People might be surprised to learn Martin not only loves to sing but can sing very well. But she wants people to know that she is very humble and will go out of her way to help anyone. That's what we want to hear from and about one of Fort Worth's finest.



United Way United Way of Tarrant County WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS FOR TARRANT COUNTY

## DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

Through this **FREE** program, a new, carefully selected book will be mailed in your child's name directly to your home each month. There is no cost or obligation to your family.

### HOW DO I REGISTER OR DONATE?

Eligible children under the age of five who reside in the designated zip codes listed online will receive their first book eight to ten weeks after the registration form has been received.

Please visit the website below to register your child for free, or please consider donating to this vital program to support Tarrant County children!

[UNITEDWAYTARRANT.ORG/DOLLYPARTON](http://UNITEDWAYTARRANT.ORG/DOLLYPARTON)



# IN THE METROPLEX STYLE

Charming Moments in our Cities



Highlights from the  
Linbeck, LLC  
and the  
City of Fort Worth's  
Council Chambers  
Groundbreaking, 09/15/2022



# The perfect fit: Assistant Chief Julie Swearingin

by Allen White

Some people know at an early age what profession they will pursue. That wasn't the case with Assistant Chief Julie Swearingin. But Swearingin had always had respect for those working in law enforcement and desired a career where she could support her young children, be a positive role model for them and help others and found the perfect fit in law enforcement.

She received a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Tarleton State University, is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, has a master peace officer license and a Texas Commission of Law Enforcement Instructor certification all of which make her imminently qualified for her current role as Assistant Chief.

Swearingin's law enforcement career includes work as a Tarrant County Constable and a Mansfield ISD police officer. She has been a member of the Fort Worth Police Department for more than 27 years and has had a relatively smooth journey being promoted through the ranks at a steady pace. She is the first Latin American woman to achieve the rank of Lieutenant in the FWBP, as well as the first to hold the position of Assistant Chief. Her tenure with the Fort Worth Police Department includes assignments in the following: Patrol, Gang, Training Academy, School Liaison, Detective office, Internal Affairs, Criminal Investigations, Special Victims Section, Chief's Office, Special Investigation, Tactical Operations and Operational Command.

Swearingin has received multiple awards and recognition during her tenure with the department, including: Bureau Officer of the Year, Bold Woman Award, First Responders First in Excellence Award, Women of Worth Award, Hispanic National Law Enforcement Outstanding Achievement Award, Fort Worth Business Press Woman of Influence and was honored by the United Hispanic Council of Tarrant County. In addition, she received the Trilogy Award for completing the FBI-Leadership Executive Development series.

She currently oversees the department's Finance/Personnel Bureau which consists of the Training Division, Professional Standards Division, Program Support Division, Communications Division and Quality Assurance.

When she chose this career, she aspired to become Captain, but her hard work, dedication, commitment and rapport with her fellow officers earned her an appointment to Assistant Chief, of which she says, "I was honored and humbled to be selected for this promotion." Nicknamed "Chili Pepper" by one of her sergeants, Swearingin has a red chili pepper trophy in her

office with a nameplate that reads, 'Julie "Chili Pepper" Swearingin.' Typically, only the well-respected earn nicknames that no one is afraid to say out loud, so this speaks well of her relationship with her fellow officers.

Swearingin's approach to her job has not changed in the years she has worked in law enforcement. "I have always treated people the way I want to be treated," she says. This has earned her the respect of her fellow officers. A typical day for her includes lots of meetings, phone calls, e-mails, problem solving and administrative duties. She also makes time for face-to-face interaction with her teams. "I believe it is important to be accessible and available if needed," says Swearingin.

The perception of those in law enforcement is not always the best, especially in underserved communities, but Swearingin is working to change that. She believes intentional recruiting is part of the solution and has created the initiative "Be the Change" to focus on recruiting women and minorities.

The initiative incorporates a personal outreach component offering support and mentoring, physical fitness preparation and guidance for those interested in joining the police department. The support starts at the very beginning of the process and carries through until the applicant graduates and becomes a police officer. Swearingin says, "I see the value in diversifying the police department, not just diverse demographics, but diverse perspectives, experiences, opinions and upbringing."

“ If being a police officer is truly your goal, believe in yourself. Do not let YOU get in the way! ”  
- Julie Swearingin

With the short time this program has been in place, the department has witnessed positive results and diversity numbers have slightly increased. Swearingin whole-heartedly believes that "Be the Change" will enhance the departments diverse recruiting efforts while strengthening police/community relations in our city.

Currently, Fort Worth's police force is 14 percent women, 24 percent Latino and 10 percent African-American. It is believed Swearingin's initiative will continue to increase these percentages, but in addition to



Photo credit: Rachel DeLira

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

the initiative, the FWPD also is being deliberate in their recruiting efforts. While they have been used social media and advertising as their main means of recruitment, in the last year, they have focused their attention locally. They have visited or plan to visit Commerce Texas A&M, a Fort Hood military community hiring event, the Weatherford College public safety recruitment expo, a Fort Worth Tarrant County College tour at the police academy, an event with radio station 105.3 FM at Panther City BBQ, and an event with Tarrant County Sheriff's Office and other agencies for a career fair, a FWISD College/Career night at Will Rogers, the University of Texas at Arlington, a Crowley career fair and a event at Dallas-Paul Quinn college (HBCU). These events are gearing towards recruiting police officers for the FWPD and lean strongly towards those in underserved communities.

Job satisfaction is important to Swearingin and she gains hers through knowing that she has had a positive impact on someone's life. She also gains personal satisfaction knowing that she is working daily to change the public perception towards law enforcement while doing a job she loves and is accomplished in.

Swearingin views her achievements as examples to help encourage all women, especially young minority women in the community, to pursue their goals and dreams. She has made speaking about education,

overcoming obstacles and pursuing goals a personal commitment. Her community involvement and servant heart is always weaved into everything she does. She has acted as a teacher, speaker, mentor, counselor, and friend to many. She ensures that she takes the time to mentor and speak to female officers in the department, encouraging them to promote and become leaders in the department. She is also thoughtful when approaching young ladies who have an interest in becoming law enforcement officials. "If being a police officer is truly your goal, believe in yourself," says Swearingin. She continues, "Do not let YOU get in the way! No matter how tough or challenging it might be, stay committed and do not give up." She concludes with this, "You can and will make a difference serving others."

Away from work, Swearingin is happily married to husband Ralph Swearingin and between them, they are blessed to have five children and nine grandchildren. In what spare time she has, she can be found working out and doing indoor rock climbing and has recently taken up gardening. Asked what she wants people to know about her, Swearingin remarked, "I am a caring, passionate woman that truly cares about people and that I am extremely grateful and blessed to achieve what I have accomplished in this profession and will never take it for granted."

**THE METRO REPORT**

Don't miss stories about diverse people in business in the latest issue!

*Order your print subscription now!*

Click the link below to

**SUBSCRIBE**



**5TH ANNUAL**

**CELEBRITY GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Benefiting the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2022**

8:00 a.m. Tee Off | 7:00 a.m. Registration



**THE GOLF CLUB FOSSIL CREEK**

3401 Clubgate Drive | Fort Worth, TX 76137

**TEAM & INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION**

\$800 Team Registration

\$200 Individual Registration

**JA05THANNUALGOLF.EVENTBRITE.COM**



Each year, The Women's Center helps more than 110,000 women, men and children confront crisis, and find healing, strength and resources to positively transform their lives.



**RAPE CRISIS & VICTIM SERVICES**

**VIOLENCE PREVENTION & EDUCATION**

**EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS**

**GENERAL COUNSELING**

Our mission is to inspire and empower women, men and children to overcome violence, crisis and poverty.

**HOPE STARTS HERE**

1723 Hemphill St • Fort Worth, TX 76110 • 817.927.4040 • [womenscentertc.org](http://womenscentertc.org)



# The Intersection Between DEI and Mental Well Being by Shivaun Palmer

I recently had coffee with a close friend who is a former HR executive. She retired at the very top of her field and had seen it all in her 40 plus years of working with large corporations, sitting on a variety of boards, and engaging with a wide cross section of C-Suite, middle management and frontline employees.



SHIVAUN PALMER

The topic of mental health in the workplace came up and she told me it was now a “huge” issue that employers needed to address immediately or face losing and/or recruiting key talent, and “more importantly” their culture. She shared story after story of employees coming to her who had been discriminated against because of their race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or

religious affiliation. At a weekly meeting with her top managers in March of 2020, two African American men (both graduates of top Ivy League Universities) recounted the indignities they endured on-a-daily basis (both at work and personally) due to the color of their skin and how it impacted their mental health, self-esteem and in some cases, work performance. A female manager shared how she continually felt marginalized by her male colleagues to the point she had developed an anxiety disorder and dreaded coming into work and a Muslim man (who led a large team of engineers) had received hateful messaging regarding his religious faith. When someone’s identity and sense of who they are is constantly questioned, their mental and physical health is affected. When these incidents happen within and outside the workplace, the employee and company suffer.

Mental health in the workplace is now a “huge” issue that employers need to address immediately.

Their stories brought my friend and many members of her team to tears and motivated her to work with leadership in the C-Suite to put policies and practices

in place to ensure that everyone at the company could feel safe, valued and that their voices were heard. Ongoing training and having employees share their unique lived experiences with one another was a technique that proved to be successful. She was the quintessential empathetic leader, something we need more of in today’s polarized environment.

What has become clear is that organizational leaders must include mental health services with a special lens/focus on underserved and high-risk populations to ensure an inclusive, healthy, work environment. Organizations would be well-served to take an audit of their DEI strategy. Where does it address mental health/wellness? How are we as a company making mental health a priority for ALL of our people? Are we taking time as a company to learn about the various lived experiences of our greatest asset, our people?

A community and workforce’s access to mental wellness education and services (especially for underserved populations) is a DEI issue. Period.

Shivaun Palmer is a co-founder and the Chief Business Development Officer of DEI Consultants, LLC, a Fort Worth-based Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training company. She specializes in workforce well-being and is a nationally certified Suicide Prevention Trainer. [www.deiconsultants.com](http://www.deiconsultants.com)

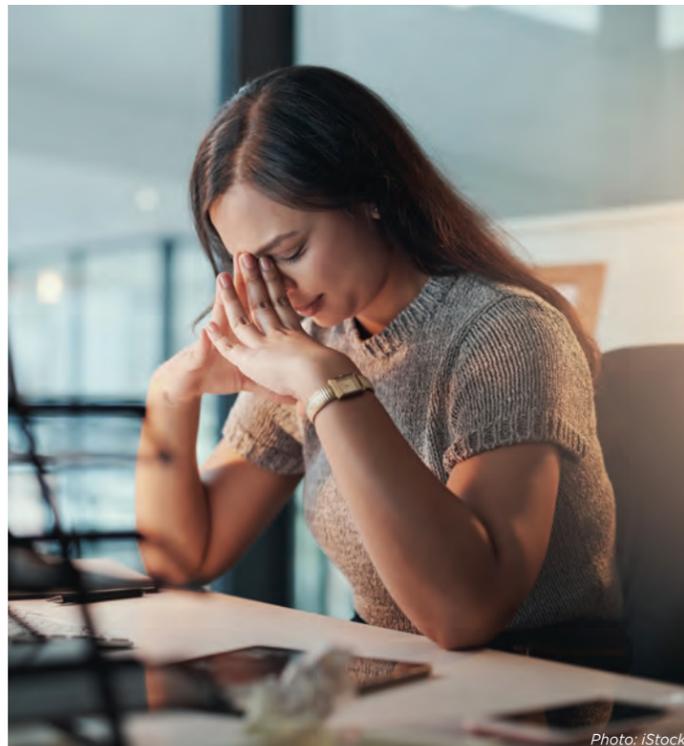


Photo: iStock



“ Lisa masterfully negotiated a difficult transaction, during difficult times, with grace. I am so thankful for her hard work and dedication in getting me the home of my dreams. I highly recommend her to anyone in the area looking to buy or sell their home. She really is amazing! ~ LINDA G.

**Lisa Logan**  
REALTOR®

817.296.1600  
lisa@leaguere.com

**LEAGUE** | REAL ESTATE

INNOVATIVE COLLABORATION | MEANINGFUL SERVICE

# YMCA Thought Leader Q&A

**How do you see DEI positively affecting your industry?** The YMCA of Metropolitan Fort Worth has begun the work of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion over this past year. In early 2019, the YMCA Board of Directors outlined eleven vision statements as they planned the future outcomes for the organization. Of the 11 outcomes, one of them reads, “Assuring our community that “family” is user-defined and all are welcome, embracing diversity at every level: age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, sexual identity and socio-economic levels.”

We have a long way to go as an organization, however, the Board and our leadership team have embraced our vision and the conversation has begun. We have seen a dramatic change in a welcoming environment for our boards, our staff, and our participants.

As a part of our vision, I have announced that we will hire our first ever Executive Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. We have paused this hire because I want to be educated and fully capable of supporting the leader and the work. I refuse to hire someone, so that I can announce it on social media and claim that we are doing the work. In addition, it is important that we are at the table in the community and that we find the right leader to assist in this next phase of our vision.

I am excited about the future. While I know that it cannot be done by one person, it is important that I find my value and space in DEI work. Then and only then can I stand tall, and educate, advocate and activate change in our organization and in all the communities we serve.

You asked for positive change, and I believe that having 100% support from my board of directors as an achievement of our board leadership and a commitment to our organization and its leaders.

**Are there specific practices that your company has implemented address and improve DEI efforts?** The practices implemented have mostly been around the how...we are in discussions with leaders across the county that have had true success. By finding comfort and support from my board it is allowing us to activate the hiring of a DEI leader and begin changing or re-designing policies in the organization. We have worked 18 months to improve culture by investing in our teams and ensuring that our teams reflect the citizens of our community. We still have a long way to go...and the work has only just begun. I would argue that people try to make DEI a program or a task and I believe its deeper than that. It must be woven in our culture and activate change in the way we think and do our work. We must continue to evaluate policy,

we must make our attempts to hire team members that reflect our community, and we must come together and address our bias, ask our questions and educate each other on our thinking, our differences and our scars. The next step for me is to find the safe place to have these conversations and begin the dialogue. At the end of the day, I need to see action. I need to see more than conversations and look back to see how our work has changed the culture of our organization.

**How do you envision the impact of DEI in the near future?** Wow, I may have started to answer this question already, but its simple. When you can walk into our organization and see a diverse group of people working together to achieve community results. When you see people feeling welcome into the YMCA without the fear of other members or participants chastising you because you don't look, act or feel the way they do. When donors, volunteers, staff, members and participants are able to engage in the DEI conversation and action plan without fear, so much that it's become a way of the culture. And when the Y is invited to the community conversation. Then the future will be remarkable. The future will be accepting. The future will be modern day advancement in equity work, so much that leaders in our country take notice and see a model of love, care, and friendship truly can change an organization and an entire region.

**Do you think DEI will be a factor or focus for your industry in the next 10-15 years? Why or why not?** Absolutely! This is not a fad. This is a behavior. This is a culture shift in our organization, and our communities. It took years, many many years of pain for people. And it will take years to reverse it. It will take commitment and leadership to create safety for people.



Mike Brown, YMCA of Metropolitan Fort Worth  
Photo courtesy of YMCA



# Fort Worth Opera Thought Leader Q&A

**Name:** Afton Battle  
**Company Name:** Fort Worth Opera  
**Title:** General and Artistic Director

**What can organizations gain from committing to a diverse, equitable and inclusive culture and business model?** A commitment to DEIA means an organization is committing to its community. I don't know any functioning organization that can survive, thrive, grow and evolve without its community. When we commit to DEIA, and therefore our community, we become embedded in our communities as part of the DNA, therefore being an added value to the lives of our communities.

**What are your organizations primary goals regarding DEI and how do you know you are reaching them?**  
PRINCIPLE ONE: Since cultural institutions throughout history have promoted, and in some cases upheld, exclusion based on class, race, gender, and other forms of social division, Fort Worth Opera commits to: Break down barriers that limit access to opera experiences and creative expression. PRINCIPLE TWO: Since great art reveals hidden truths and asks that we open ourselves to the perspectives and lived experiences of others, Fort Worth Opera commits to: Foster open and productive dialogue with, and in support of, our performances and programs. PRINCIPLE THREE: Since every individual deserves to experience the joys and sorrows of fine art with dignity and respect, Fort Worth Opera commits to: Celebrate our shared humanity. [www.fwopera.org/deia](http://www.fwopera.org/deia)

**What is the biggest challenge your organization has faced regarding DEI and what did you learn from it?** The biggest challenge FWO has faced has been getting our entire community on board with the importance of DEIA principles. From Board to donors, we continue to initiate trainings, discussions and learnings to further dive into our principles and our commitment to serving our community.

**How can organizations that don't have dedicated DEI staff or initiatives start their own DEI movement?** Create a committee, comprised of board, staff and community members, who can come together and be led in conversation that will help this group create and draft a DEI statement and from there they can grow into DEIA guiding principles.

**What pitfalls should they avoid?** Aligning movements such as BLM, Stop Asian Hate, LGBTQIA etc. with your individual DEIA work. You cannot say “We Support Black Lives Matter” and not take the steps to address racial inequities that continue to suppress the BIPOC



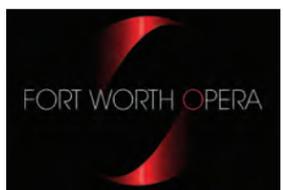
Afton Battle, General and Artistic Director, Fort Worth Opera  
Photo courtesy of Fort Worth Opera

and LGBTQIA communities. Similarly, you can't say “Our organization is fully practicing and growing in DEIA work” and not understand that BLM, AAPI and LGBTQIA groups are necessary.

**What is something your organization is doing very well that could be replicated elsewhere?** As far as for Opera companies, FWO is truly leading and building the People's Company. We have built a performing arts institution that is reflective of the community we serve, that provides engaging, impactful and entertaining programming for the entire family. And we are an organization that is in servitude to the people of Fort Worth.

**How did the pandemic influence your organization's work and commitment to DEI?** Upon arriving at FWO in September 2020, there were no DEIA initiatives, statements or work being done.

**Can you share a personal story related to your work in equity that makes you hopeful?** I was at a lunch meeting a few weeks ago, and a young woman came up to my table. She introduced herself and said she saw our production of *A Night of Black Excellence* last year, and it was the first time she heard and saw Black people sing opera. She went on to say, that she loves to sing and act, but never believed that she could do that “for a living”. After that show, she asked her mom to take her to our next show, which was *La Traviata*. It was her first opera, and when she saw young people and people of color on stage singing and acting; she felt it opened the doors for her to follow this dream. This is my biggest hill that I will gladly die on: Representation Matters.



# DEI Dignity, Empathy & Integrity CONSULTANTS. in service of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



Cathy Holt

Estrus Tucker

Shivaun Palmer



Dr. Danon Carter

Sharon Herrera

Marjeanna Burge

Engagement practices that encourage a culture of inclusion, dignity & well-being.

[deiconsultants.com](http://deiconsultants.com)

SPOTLIGHT ON:

## Willie Wiggins

**Company:** Department of Homeland Security

**City of residence:** Cedar Hill

**City of birth:** Portsmouth

**Spouse:** Angela Wiggins

**Children:** Maurice, Ashley, and Brandon

**Twenty years ago, I never knew:** protecting what we cherish in life would be so hard.

**What was your favorite TV show as a kid?**  
The Flintstones

**What is your favorite Netflix or Prime binge?**  
Prime comedy shows

**What's your favorite vacation spot?** Myrtle Beach, SC

**Whom do you admire most?** My mother

**If you could have any car in the world, what would it be?** Ferrari

**What's worth paying for?** Success in life

**Wine or drink of choice?** Kendall Jackson Chardonnay

**What is your most treasured possession?** Coins that were given to me from my great-grandmother.

**What's your favorite children's book?** *The Cat in the Hat*

**What are you afraid of?** The Boogie Monster

**What causes are important to you?** Injured military veterans and children's education

**What is your music of choice?** Jazz

**What excites you most about the future?** Watching my children and grandchildren change the world.

**What are your must-haves on a road trip?** Pork skins, candy, good music, and a bottle of 5-hour energy.

**What do you collect?** Coins and stamps

**What does success look like?** A journey through which I can help others and make them smile.

**If you could learn a new skill, what would it be?**  
Carpentry

**Where do you get your inspirations?** My wife

**What advice would you give your younger self?** Don't ever let anyone tell me, "I can't."

**What book would you recommend to everyone?**  
The Bible

**In 10 years, I hope to be:** retired and living a peaceful life.



Photo credit: Steve Rochun

# THE METRO REPORT

## DEI Roundtable: A Critical Conversation

*Thanks to our Sponsors*

We couldn't have done it without you!

*Presenting Sponsor*



THE RIOS GROUP

*Round Table Sponsors*



*Star Sponsors*



*Event Sponsors*





**Leadership Fort Worth**  
**CELEBRATING 50 YEARS**

We proudly introduce our 50th Anniversary LeadershipClass



photo credit: Rachel DeLira

CRYSTAL ALBA | TARRANT REGIONAL WATER DISTRICT  
 DOMINIQUE ANDERSON | BLISSFUL SKY STUDIO  
 BRITTYN BRENDER | JUNIOR LEAGUE FORT WORTH/TOLLESON WEALTH MANAGEMENT  
 KRIS CANFIELD | GIRLS INC. OF TARRANT COUNTY  
 NYDIA CARDENAS | CARDENAS COACHING  
 KAAMILYA CARTER | JAMES L. WEST CENTER FOR DEMENTIA CARE  
 DR. JAN CLAYTON | TARRANT COUNTY COLLEGE DISTRICT - NW CAMPUS  
 GLENDA DIAZ | DFW INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
 KATIE DOUGLASS | FORT WORTH CHAMBER  
 LAURA DURDEN | INSPIRUS, LLC  
 DANIEL EGUINA | PIKE ELECTRIC, LLC  
 ORI FERNANDEZ | CITY OF FORT WORTH  
 ANTONIO FLORES | ONCOR  
 DANIKA FRANKS, MD | COMMUNITY FLOURISH  
 DIANNA GIORDANO | CITY OF FORT WORTH  
 LACHELLE GOODRICH, MA, LPC | FORT WORTH HOUSING SOLUTIONS  
 MICHELE GORMAN | FORT WORTH PUBLIC LIBRARY  
 KELLY HANLEY | LOCKHEED MARTIN  
 DREW HAYDEN | THE WORTHINGTON RENAISSANCE HOTEL  
 NEKISHA HENRY | GIRL SCOUTS TEXAS OKLAHOMA PLAINS  
 BRYAN HIETT | TARRANT AREA FOOD BANK  
 DR. ANTHONY JOHNSON | SURVIVE AND THRIVE EDUCATION  
 MEGAN KORNS RUSSELL | TCU NEELEY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
 DANIEL LEAL | CITY OF FORT WORTH  
 ERMA LEE | COOK CHILDRENS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM  
 DR. MONICA LYNOTT | JPS / ACCLAIM

AMY MANN | TEXAS CAPITAL BANK  
 JEANETTE MARTINEZ | TARRANT COUNTY PRECINCT ONE  
 TRACY MARTINEZ | TEXAS HEALTH HARRIS METHODIST HOSPITAL ALLIANCE  
 JAY MCCALL | THE RAINWATER CHARITABLE FOUNDATION  
 KIM NEAL | OFFICE OF POLICE OVERSIGHT MONITOR, CITY OF FORT WORTH  
 TAMARA NOEL | BNSF RAILWAY  
 AUSTIN PERROTTI, MRES | CHARLESTON'S  
 JASSMINE POSADA | FORT WORTH ISD - OFFICE OF INNOVATION  
 TIMOTHY POTYRAJ | JACOBS ENGINEERING  
 LORI PRESTWOOD | THE WORTHINGTON RENAISSANCE HOTEL  
 LAUREN PRIEUR | CITY OF FORT WORTH  
 STEFANIE RICKS | FORT WORTH POLICE DEPARTMENT  
 KATRINA RISCHER-CARPENTER | CARPENTER'S CAFE AND CATERING  
 ERICA ROBINSON | UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON  
 MYRA SAVAGE | BANK OF AMERICA PRIVATE BANK  
 AMBER SHIVE | FORT WORTH MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND HISTORY  
 AUSTIN SPENI | CADENCE BANK  
 WILLIE SUBLET III | RSM US, LLP  
 CARLENE THOMAS-KING | TYBRION REALTY AND CANCER CARE SERVICES  
 RYAN THOMPSON | LONGHORN COUNCIL, BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA  
 BARBARA WALKER | TEXAS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY  
 EVA WILLIAMS | TRINITY METRO  
 SHERRY WILLIAMS | CRIADO AND ASSOCIATES, INC.  
 DR. ERIN WILLIAMS | TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY AND DESIGN IDEAL CONSULTING

LFW TEAM: SARA FAIRLEY AND JENNIFER TREVIÑO

FOLLOW OUR SOCIAL MEDIA 

[www.leadershipfortworth.org](http://www.leadershipfortworth.org)