



**United Way
of Greater Rochester
and the Finger Lakes**



Emerging Leaders Society

United Way of Greater Rochester
and the Finger Lakes

Community Leaders Breakfast

Wednesday, October 27

7:30-9:00am

Memorial Art Gallery

Register [here](#).

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Name: Kim Allen
Company: DS + CO
Title: Chief Executive Officer

Kim puts our people front and center, building on empathy and quick decision-making that have served her teams well. She started her career at Mower and soon found her home with DS+CO, where she led our public relations team and expanded her skillset into consumer, B2B, telecom and human services. In 2020, she took the helm, guiding our agency into a new era. She's a Forty Under 40 and ATHENA Young Professional, is DEI certified, and sits on the boards of the American Heart Association of NY, Mercy Flight Central, Alfred University and the RIT Advertising & Marketing Program.

Motto: There are no problems, only solutions.

Fun Fact: My husband is Josh Allen!



Name: Jason Barrett
Company: Black Button Distilling
Title: Founder and President

Growing up, Jason spent a lot of time working with his grandfather in his family's button factory in Rochester, New York. Their buttons were known around the world for their superior quality, and he imagined himself running the factory one day, carrying on the family tradition. But there was one little problem - Jason is color blind. Since making nothing but black buttons was not an option, he decided to honor the values of hard work, entrepreneurship, and community that his grandfather taught him by pouring them into his passion for crafting spirits. In 2012, Jason founded Black Button Distilling. Black Button is Rochester's first grain-to-glass distillery since prohibition. In the last few years, Jason has taken Black Button from a start-up distillery to a globally recognized force in the industry.

Motto: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; Courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference."

Fun Fact: I am a bee keeper!



Name: Mubarak Bashir
Company: Greyston
Title: Regional Director

Mubarak Bashir has extensive experience in nonprofit management, including program administration, strategic planning, and building effective partnerships. Prior to joining Greyston as regional director of its Rochester Center for Open Hiring, he worked at the Urban League of Rochester for over 11 years in a variety of roles, most recently as head of its workforce development programs. At Greyston, he is introducing Greyston's innovative Open Hiring® model to the Rochester community,

to assist local businesses in creating more inclusive workforces and job opportunities for individuals who face barriers to employment.

Mubarak holds an MPA from the College at Brockport, where he was inducted into the Pi Alpha Alpha Honors Society, and a bachelor's in sociology/criminology from Millersville University in Pennsylvania. He serves on the boards of Urban Choice Charter School, Willow Domestic Violence Center, Conscious Capitalism Rochester and as a board observer at the United Way of Greater Rochester. He is also a graduate of United Way's 2019 African American Leadership Development Program where he was nominated by his peers as the class representative. Mubarak was also recognized as one of Rochester Business Journal's 2020 Forty Under 40.

Motto: "Without struggle there is no progress"

Fun Fact: I've played basketball since I was young and I can still dunk



Name: Julie Camardo
Company: Zweigle's Inc.
Title: CEO

Julie Camardo serves as the 5th Generation owner and CEO of Zweigle's Inc. She was born in Rochester, NY and attended Mercy High School and received her BA degree from Providence College.

Under Julie, Zweigle's expanded three times and continues to grow in product diversification, sales and employees. The company is guided by four core values of quality, caring, accountability and continuous improvement.

Zweigle's leverages its strength in flexibility, innovation and woman owned business and our history to expand in private label, co-packing and branded sales.

Julie is committed to the community where she lives and works. She sits on the Board of Directors for MCC Foundation, ESL, Rochester Chamber of Commerce, Holy Childhood, Special Touch Bakery and current 2020 United Way Campaign Chair.



Name: Kesha Carter

Company: Coordinated Care Services, Inc. (CCSI)

Title: Chief Diversity Officer

Kesha Carter is a CDP (Certified Diversity Professional), she also holds a Six Sigma Green Belt from Villanova University and a PHR (Professional Human Resources) certification from the Human Resource Capital Institute. Kesha has broken barriers as the first ever Chief Diversity Officer for CCSI. She is responsible for implementing

efforts to change the scope of the employee landscape in ways that increases diversity in recruiting and inclusive retention practices. She is also leading the charge to increase representation of underrepresented groups in crucial leadership positions. Kesha is leading CCSI through a multi phased approach with each new level on the spectrum of diversity & inclusion resulting in growth and new experiences for individual employees and the organization. Kesha was a Democrat & Chronicle "Woman to Watch" in October 2016, she has facilitated D&I workshops locally and nationally for groups of various sizes and she is a member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated.

Motto: There is no such thing as failure, only many different lessons in how NOT to do something.

Fun Fact: Was a professional dancer classically trained in ballet, tap, jazz, modern and capoeira.



Name: Calvin Gantt

Company: Monroe Community College

Title: Chief Diversity Officer

Dr. Calvin J. Gantt has over twenty years of higher education experience at both the 2-year and 4-year institutions. Dedicating his career to issues of diversity, equity and inclusion, he most recently served as Director of the Educational Opportunity Program at Binghamton University. Prior to that he was the Director for the Access Opportunity Program at SUNY Geneseo. Currently, he serves as the Chief Diversity Officer at Monroe Community College, where he oversees the Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness departments, which consists of DEI, Title IX and the PRISM Multicultural Center.

Dr. Gantt received BA from Binghamton University, and masters in Counselor Education from SUNY Brockport and an earned doctorate in Higher Education Leadership from the University of Rochester. In his free time, Dr. Gantt likes to travel, putter around in the garden and spend quality time with his three grandchildren.



Name: Bill Goodrich
Company: LeChase Construction
Title: CEO & Managing Partner

William (Bill) H. Goodrich began his construction career as an assistant project manager for John P. Bell & Son, Inc. prior to bringing his knowledge and experience to LeChase in 1985. Since that time, Bill has been an integral part of the LeChase team, serving in a variety of progressive roles throughout the span of his career. Bill was appointed vice president and partner in 1995, chief operating officer in 1997, president in 2002, CEO in 2007 and managing partner in 2008. Currently, as CEO and managing partner, Bill is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organization, defining the culture, promoting a safe and healthy work environment and driving customer engagement.

He also mentors and empowers the executive management team through the entire organization to always *do the right thing*. Bill's drive to elevate LeChase has led the firm in continuous adaptation to changing market conditions, increased revenue growth and driven organizational performance. He has overseen mergers and acquisitions as another way to strategically fortify the business.

Bill is actively involved with several affiliations both regionally and nationally, and is serving as the United Way of Greater Rochester campaign chair for 2021. He is a board member for the Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce, Greater Rochester Enterprise, CMAC Performing Arts Center, Hillside Children's Center and Lifetime Healthcare, and for many years supported Rochester Careers in Construction—a program that connects high school faculty and students with experts in the construction industry. He is an emeritus trustee of Keuka College and a former board member for Nazareth Academy School, Junior Achievement, Boy Scouts of America and Rochester Downtown Development Corporation. He is also a member of the Associated General Contractors of America.

Bill earned a B.S. degree in business from Roberts Wesleyan College and an A.A.S. degree in construction engineering technology from Alfred State, the State University of New York College of Technology, where he was also the recipient of a President's Medallion in 2010 and an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree in 2014. He completed the Harvard Business School's OPM program—an eMBA-style professional development program—in the spring of 2016.

Bill is a true champion of the core values that personify LeChase: safety, integrity, quality, customer care, diversity, family and community.



Name: Mitch Gruber
Company: Foodlink
Title: Chief Partnerships Officer

Mitch Gruber is a member of Rochester City Council, and the Chief Partnerships Officer at Foodlink, the regional food bank. He holds a PhD in history from the University of Rochester, where he studied the history of food retail in urban America. In all of his work, Mitch aims to build a more just and equitable food system.



Name: Vanessa J. Herman
Company: Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT)
Title: Vice President for Government and Community Relations

Vanessa J. Herman joined RIT in January 2021 as their second ever Vice President for Government and Community Relations. In this senior administrative role, Vanessa oversees the University's federal, state, and local government relations portfolio and is the primary point of contact for all public officials. Vanessa leads the planning and execution of multiple university events and functions including groundbreakings, dedications, United Way Campaign, and signature events such as Imagine RIT: Creativity and Innovation Festival and Brick City Homecoming and Family Weekend. She also serves as a member of the leadership team for the university's \$1 billion "blended campaign" Transforming RIT: The Campaign for Greatness. Vanessa also serves as the President of Millennium Strategies Consulting, a firm she founded in 1999 that provides government and external relations services to select nonprofits and political candidates.

From 2013-2020, Vanessa served as the Assistant Vice President for GCR at Pace University. Vanessa was a Faculty Advisor for Pace's Student Veterans of America NYC Chapter and taught Pace's unique University 101 for Veterans. Prior to joining Pace, Vanessa was Director of Government Relations at Applied DNA Sciences, a bio-tech start-up that utilized botanical DNA as an added security measure and criminal deterrent to help secure the U.S. military supply chain. Vanessa was the Assistant Director of Governmental Relations at Stony Brook University for more than twelve years, for eight years she served as the university's sole registered federal lobbyist where she was responsible for the creation and implementation of the university's robust federal legislative agenda. Her accomplishments include securing congressionally directed funding, influencing federal and state higher-education policy, and advocating for student aid.

Vanessa proudly served as a Press Secretary, Deputy Press Secretary, Executive Assistant, and Director of Community Relations for US Senator Alfonse M. D'Amato. In addition to these roles, Vanessa got her start in politics working in Senator D'Amato's Long Island Campaign Office. Vanessa has an M.A. in Literature a B.A. in Political Science, both from Stony Brook and an A.A.S. Degree in Criminal Justice from Suffolk County Community College. She and her husband, NY Army National Guard Master Sergeant (Ret.) Mike Donohue, reside in Long Island and Rochester.



Name: Michael Mendoza, MD, MPH, MS, FAAFP

Company: Monroe County

Title: Commissioner of Public Health

Dr. Michael Mendoza is the 9th Commissioner of Public Health for Monroe County. He is also appointed as Associate Professor at the University of Rochester in the Departments of Family Medicine, Public Health Sciences, and Nursing.

Dr. Mendoza joined the Health Department in 2016. As Commissioner of Public Health, Dr. Mendoza's vision is to improve population health by strengthening the collaboration between clinical medicine and public health in our community.

He has a particular focus in addressing the disparities in health and health care here in Monroe County. In this role he oversees the health department's \$61 million dollar budget and over 250 employees whose responsibilities span a diverse array of services designed to preserve and improve public health in Monroe County.

Prior to 2016, Dr. Mendoza served as Medical Director for Highland Family Medicine, one of the largest family medicine training practices in the country. During his seven years in this role, Dr. Mendoza oversaw the adoption of the Epic EMR, Meaningful Use, certification as a Level 3 Patient Centered Medical Home, and helped to lay the foundation for expanded team-based care, the current expansion of HFM, and the newly certified Nurse Practitioner residency program.

Board certified in family medicine, Dr. Mendoza continues to see patients as a primary care physician at Highland Family Medicine, and he continues to serve as a teaching physician on the inpatient service at Highland Hospital.

He received his medical degree from the University of Chicago, his Masters in Public Health from the University of Illinois, his Masters in Business Administration from the Simon Business School at the University of Rochester, and his undergraduate degree in environmental studies also from the University of Chicago. He completed his graduate medical training at the University of California-San Francisco, and served an additional year as Chief Resident at the San Francisco General Hospital.

He is an active member of the Rochester community, serving on the Boards of Directors of Willow Domestic Violence of Rochester, Common Ground Health, and the Rochester RHIO. In his spare time, Dr. Mendoza enjoys spending time with his wife, two children, and their two miniature golden doodles. His hobbies include running, cycling, and cooking.



Name: Orlando Ortiz
Company: The Gleason Works
Title: Manufacturing Manager

Orlando attended Edison Technical High School specializing in machine shop then attended Monroe Community College earning his Associate's Degree in Manufacturing Engineering and later attended the Rochester Institute of Technology achieving a Bachelor's Degree in Manufacturing Engineering and a Master's of Business Administration. Orlando currently works as a Manufacturing Manager at The Gleason Works in Rochester, NY.

While at RIT, Orlando joined Latino America Unida, Lambda Alpha Upsilon Fraternity, Inc. Through the involvement of Lambda Alpha Upsilon, in 2005 he joined the Puerto Rican Festival board. He has served on the board of the Puerto Rican Festival for the past 16 years and the last 11 years as President. In addition, Orlando's current board involvement include RIT's Alumni Association, Foodlink, PathStone, and current chair at The Housing Council at Pathstone. Orlando was named Hispanic Businessperson of the year by the Rochester Hispanic Business Association and a 40 under 40 recipient and RIT Minett professor in 2020.

Motto: Obstacles are the frightful things you see when you take your eyes off the goal – Henry Ford

Fun Fact: I enjoy traveling to tropical locations and hanging out by the beach!



Name: Jai Ramachandran
Company: Brighton Securities
Title: CEO

Jai has served as Brighton Securities' Chief Executive Officer and as a member of our board of directors since August 2014. Jai has held a variety of leadership roles at leading financial services firms and operating companies. Throughout his career, Jai has been dedicated to growing businesses through a variety of client and business development strategies, which focus on building value for clients, employees and shareholders alike.

Prior to Brighton Securities, Jai was a Director within the Investment Banking Team at Oppenheimer & Co. executing a variety of financial transactions including buy and sell-side M&A advisory roles, private and public equity and debt capital raises, and general corporate advisory assignments. Prior to Oppenheimer, Jai worked for the Bank Street Group, a boutique investment bank focused on the TMT sector based in Stamford, CT. Jai began his career as one of the earliest employees of American Fiber Systems, a start-up telecom company based in Rochester, NY that built fiber optic networks in a variety of metropolitan markets throughout the US.

Jai holds an MBA in Finance from the William E. Simon School of Business at the University of Rochester, and a BS in Information Technology from the Golisano School of Computing Sciences at the Rochester Institute of Technology. Jai serves on the board for the Small Business Council of Rochester, the Friends of World of Inquiry School, and is an active member of the Rochester Rotary.



Name: Jaime Saunders

Company: United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes

Title: President & CEO

Jaime Saunders is the President and CEO of United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes which partners with businesses and individuals to raise more than \$30M annually to support a network of human service providers and community initiatives in the 6-country region. United Way was on the front lines of the COVID response and vaccine roll out, while ensuring basic needs are met, improve educational supports and help people successfully

find and retain work. Jaime leads 100 talented team members who work every day to mobilize the power of a caring community to address our region's most pressing challenges.

Prior to joining United Way, Jaime served as the President and CEO of Willow Domestic Violence Center, Chief Operating Officer at Foodlink regional food bank, and Associate Director at Center for Governmental Research. She holds a Master of Arts in Public Administration from Maxwell School of Public Citizenship at Syracuse University and degrees in Business and Sociology from Whittier College in California and is completing a certificate in Public Leadership from the Harvard Kennedy School.