

WASHINGTON  
**HEADS OF OFFICE**  
Leadership Council

**ANNUAL REPORT**

2020

# 2020

Greetings,

The Washington Heads of Office Leadership Council (WHOOLC) is pleased to release our 2020 Annual Report. The report captures how WHOOLC translates our mission into action to curate and deliver leadership development and networking opportunities that create, support, and advance diversity in the government affairs industry. Within, you will find highlights from last year including insights into our organizational growth, a recap of our well-curated programming and events, and brief updates on member success stories. We are proud of all that was accomplished in 2020 and invite you to read and share the report.

As we shift gears and move forward in 2021, we are excited to continue supporting this network and transforming the face of government affairs.

Regards,

**Molly Ryan, Brad Knox, Clifton J. Porter  
and Mariko Bennett**

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# Message From The Board

Greetings,

WHOOLC is moving full steam ahead in 2021, with a renewed vision and goals to elevate our organization and herald a new generation of leaders. While there is much to look forward to in the months ahead, it's important to reflect on where we've come from.

In 2020, WHOOLC pivoted quickly to successfully meet our mission in the midst of a very uncertain year. We hosted an excellent series of presentations on timely topics such as leading through crisis; offered a front-row seat to candid conversations with political, corporate, and cultural leaders; carved out more time for fellowship between members; and crafted a new and improved Leadership Boot Camp experience that bridged the gap between current and aspiring Heads of Office.

As we continue our work this year, we are in the process of working on programming that will bring additional value to our membership in building out their professional goals. The inauguration of the Biden administration will create a different landscape upon which government affairs leaders engage in their work, and WHOOLC is excited to connect you with the people, tools and resources, and experiences you need on your leadership journey.

## **Molly Ryan, President**

Head of Government Affairs, Otsuka

## **Clifton J. Porter II, Secretary**

Head of Government Affairs,  
American Health Care Association

## **Brad Knox, Chairman & Treasurer**

Senior Vice President and Counsel, Aflac

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# A LOOK BACK: 2020 MEETINGS

During 2020, WHOOLC was joined by more than 20 guest speakers who shared their expertise during various programs and events. Our members gained tools and resources for navigating a diverse range of focus areas, including leadership development and succession, executive and board recruiting, organizational management, compliance, corporate governance, and marketing and branding. Brief recaps of last year's events are available below.

## **February 20, 2020**

Our first fireside chat of the year featured an intimate conversation and book signing with Valerie Jarrett, the longest-serving White House adviser in the Obama administration and author of *Finding My Voice: My Journey to the West Wing and the Path Forward*. During the event,

Ms. Jarrett shared her personal story about how she found her voice, trusted her gut, and learned to embrace the uncomfortable and stay the course through moments of change. In describing her career path, she explained that it wasn't a straight line to success and that her journey included lots of swerves. Her advice to the crowd was to "enjoy the swerve." This event was outstanding and enjoyed by all.

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Join Us for  
Fireside Chat & Book Signing with

**Valerie Jarrett**  
Author of *Finding My Voice: My Journey to the West Wing and the Path Forward*  
*My Journey To The West Wing And The Path Forward*

**Toni Bush**  
Executive Vice President and Global Head of Government Affairs for News Corp

**Thursday, February 20, 2020**  
12:00PM - 2:00PM  
Address upon RSVP

RSVP: [info@washingtonheadsofoffice.org](mailto:info@washingtonheadsofoffice.org)



# “Just Us” Ava DuVernay’s Documentary, 13th

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Join us for dinner, meet and greet, screening of 13th and a post-show conversation with Ava DuVernay.



**Ava DuVernay**  
Emmy®, BAFTA, and Peabody Award-winning Director, Writer, Producer



**Jason Moran**  
Performing Live Music  
Kennedy Center  
Artistic Director for Jazz



**Eric Harland**  
Performing Live Music  
Grammy®-Nominated Drummer

**Monday, March 9, 2020**  
Event Schedule

John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts  
2700 F St NW, Washington, DC 20566

6pm-7pm	WHOO Dinner   RARE 1595 I St NW, Washington, DC 20006
7pm-8pm	Meet and Greet with Jason Moran & Eric Harland
8pm- 10:30pm	13th Screening Post-Show Conversation




**March 9, 2020**

During this jam-packed “Just Us” gathering, we enjoyed dinner, a pre-show reception, and a screening of director Ava DuVernay’s documentary 13th, which explores the intersection of race, justice, and mass incarceration in the United States. The event also featured live music by pianist and composer Jason Moran and jazz drummer Eric Harland, as well as a post-show conversation between Ava DuVernay and NPR’s Michel Martin, host of All Things Considered. The dinner was full of information gathering, sharing, and lots of laughter.

# COVID-19 Pandemic

**April 16, 2020**

As the COVID-19 pandemic shut down the nation, WHOOLC wanted to provide a forum to discuss some of the challenges arising as a result of the global emergency. We pivoted to a virtual format and hosted a “Just Us” virtual meeting that allowed members to talk about how the pandemic and the lockdown were affecting them both personally and professionally. The event was a great opportunity for members to deepen their connections with one another and to exchange ideas for navigating the uncertainty of the moment.

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*“Just Us”*  
**Virtual Conversation**  
**Managing COVID-19**

Thursday, April 16, 2020  
11:00am-Noon



Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/841281334?pwd=Tk1xQVlka-k9HUjBsOGRVa0xQT2tLZz09>

Meeting ID: 841 281 334  
Password: 318681

Dial by your location

- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 929 436 2866 US (New York)
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
- +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
- +1 253 215 8782 US
- +1 301 715 8592 US

# Leading In Times of Challenge

**April 27, 2020**

In response to some of the concerns raised during the mid-April “Just Us” gathering, WHOOLC invited guest speaker Nate Allen, an executive coach and Partner at TribusAllen, to present on “Leading in Times of Challenge.” The presentation highlighted the three fights that leaders must master during challenging times: seeing and leading the self, building a high-trust team, and accomplishing the organizational mission. Mr. Allen provided critical insights into monitoring stress levels and recognizing the signs of burnout, offered tips for self-care, and reminded members of the importance of staying connected to their team during turbulent times.

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Join us for a discussion with Nate Allen on  
*Leading in Times of Challenge: Insights and Lessons Learned*

Monday, April 27, 2020  
12:00PM-1:30PM



*Nate Allen*

Nate has a PhD in Management & Technology in which he focused on Organizational and Leader Development from George Washington University's business school. He also has an MA in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and an MBA from University of Colorado. Nate's expertise and passion include leadership, leader and team development, executive coaching, organizational learning, innovation and strategy.

Nate completed Ranger, Airborne, and Pathfinder training, and served as an infantry officer in Army units throughout the US and in Somalia and two project-based trips to Iraq. Nate served as a Director in the Army's Office of Business Transformation in the Pentagon, and as a professor at the United States Military Academy at West Point where he taught leadership. He designed and taught executive-level Master's courses at National Defense University on subjects related to Leadership, Organizational Culture and Change, Decision Making and Strategy.

Nate coauthored two books, *Taking the Guidon*, and *CompanyCommand: Unleashing the Power of the Army Profession*. He was recognized among *Fast Company Magazine's* Top 50 Innovators Internationally in 2002 for work in connecting leaders laterally across the Army. This initiative was cited in *Harvard Business Review's* Breakthrough Ideas for 2006.

**Nate Allen**

Executive Coach and Partner at  
TribusAllen.

# Compensation & Knowing Your Worth.

**May 11, 2020**

Recognizing that part of leadership development is preparing members to leverage their leadership skills into increased compensation, WHOOLC invited TR Straub, Corporate Affairs Consultant at Russell Reynolds Associates, to present on “Compensation & Knowing Your Worth.” The presentation overviewed the evolving world of government affairs, deepened our understanding of the compensation landscape, and prepared members to clearly and effectively articulate their value while networking and negotiating with potential employers.

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Join us for a discussion with TR Straub on *Compensation*

Monday, May 11, 2020  
6:00PM-8:00PM



*T.R. Straub*

TR Straub co-leads the firm's Corporate Affairs Practice, based in Washington, D.C. With over a decade of search experience, he focuses on searches in government relations, corporate communications and public affairs. Recent work has included Chief Government Relations Officer, Chief Communications Officer, and Chief Marketing Officer roles for corporations, nonprofit organizations and higher education institutions.

Additionally, TR is a member of the firm's Social Justice Practice, serving progressive and impact-oriented organizations, primarily when advocacy is a core element of the organization's work. He is also a passionate supporter of diversity and inclusion, serving on the firm's internal Diversity & Inclusion Committee and counseling clients on DEI work.

TR joined Russell Reynolds Associates after seven years with another executive search firm, where he most recently was a Senior Vice President, leading corporate communications and government relations assignments out of both New York and Washington, D.C. Previously, TR worked with Teach for America, first as a Corps Member in the Baltimore City Public Schools, then as a Recruitment Director, organizing the strategy for college recruitment and awareness campaigns.

*Crisis Leadership and  
Returning to the Workplace*

Monday, June 8, 2020  
6:00pm-7:00pm

Judy A. Smith is the founder and President of Smith & Company, a leading strategic advisory firm with offices in Washington D.C., Los Angeles, New York and London. Over the last 25 years, Ms. Smith has brought her unique combination of communication skills, media savvy, legal and political acumen to clients facing a wide array of issues and challenges throughout the United States and abroad.



*Judy A. Smith*

Ms. Smith honed her skills through her experiences with some of the most historic and sensational events of our time, including the Iran Contra investigation, the prosecution of former Washington D.C. Mayor Marion Barry, the 1991 Gulf War, the Los Angeles riots, the President Clinton scandal involving Monica Lewinsky, the congressional inquiry of Enron, the General Petraeus CIA scandal, the Sony Corporation hacking crisis, as well as the the United Nations Foundation and World Health Organization response to the SARS epidemic. Additionally, she is currently serving as a trusted advisor at the forefront of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Perhaps best known in media circles for her expertise as a crisis management advisor, Ms. Smith has served as a consultant for a host of high profile, celebrity and entertainment clients over the course of her career including, but not limited to, Angelina Jolie, Monica Lewinsky, Senator Craig from Idaho, Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr., actor Wesley Snipes and the family of Chandra Levy.

As a result of her wide ranging and ground breaking career, Shonda Rhimes, creator of ABC's hit television dramas Grey's Anatomy and Private Practice, developed a television drama about the world of crisis management inspired by Ms. Smith. The hit TV series entitled, Scandal, revolved around the life and work of a professional fixer. Ms. Smith served as Co-Executive Producer of the project and provided insight and technical expertise on crisis management issues.

Ms. Smith is the author of the book, Good Self, Bad Self, published by Free Press, an imprint of Simon & Schuster, Inc. She has received numerous communications and leadership awards and is active in community service.

## Crisis Leadership & Returning to the Workplace.

June 8, 2020

With lockdown restrictions gradually lifting and Congressional attention turning to corporate financial relief, WHOOLC members needed to gear up to advocate for their organization's needs. We invited Judy A. Smith, Founder and President of Smith & Company and the inspiration for Scandal's lead character Olivia Pope, to present on "Crisis Leadership & Returning to the Workplace." Members enjoyed the opportunity to learn from an expert strategic adviser about how to lead through crisis and stay focused on their mission.

## Political Climate: Majority Whip James E. Clyburn

July 7, 2020

During this gathering, Majority Whip James E. Clyburn joined WHOOLC to talk about the current political climate and upcoming election. It was an insightful discussion that provided our members with useful information that could inform their government affairs strategy and approach for the remainder of the year.



Tuesday, July 7, 2020  
12:00PM

*Special Guest*



*House Majority Whip  
James E. Clyburn*

Chairman of the House  
Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis

Click Here:



# Presidential Campaign: Congressman Cedric Richmond

**July 29, 2020**

During this gathering, Congressman Cedric Richmond, Co-Chair of the Biden Presidential Campaign, joined WHOOLC to talk about the Biden campaign platform, as well as COVID-19 economic relief efforts. Members enjoyed the opportunity to gather insight that could inform their government affairs strategy and approach for the remainder of the year.



Wednesday, July 29, 2020  
4:00PM - 5:00PM

*Special Guest*



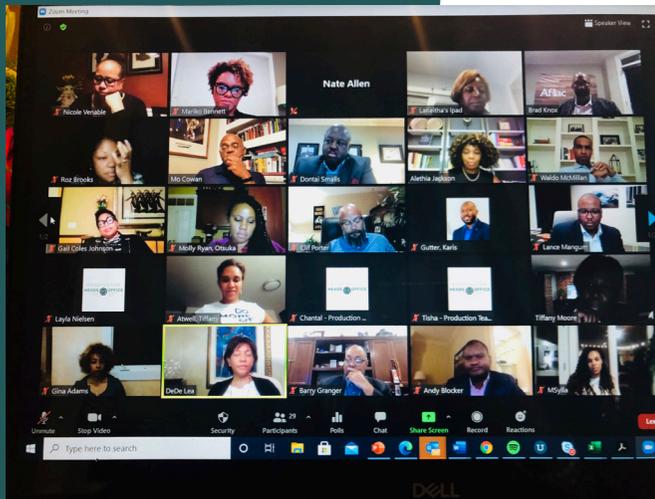
*Congressman  
Cedric Richmond*

Louisiana's 2nd Congressional District  
Board Chair, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation  
Co-Chair to Biden Presidential Campaign

# 2nd Annual Leadership Boot Camp

**October 2-3, 2020**

In alignment with the WHOOLC mission, WHOOLC's 2nd Annual Leadership Boot Camp featured career development workshops that inspired a strategic vision for members' leadership brand and professional growth plan; discussion forums that helped inform programmatic planning; and relationship-building opportunities that strengthened our members' networks and expanded partnership and collaboration opportunities. For the first time, the event featured separate tracks—one for WHOOLC members and another for aspiring Heads of Office—which allowed us to meet the unique needs of current members while providing growth opportunities for the next generation of government affairs leaders of color. The event delivered thoughtful conversations, enlightening experiences, and robust programming that helped the 19 participants envision the next phase of their career, strengthened their leadership skills, and connected them with peers and mentors who could support their journey.



# Fireside Chat

**November 16, 2020**

In our final meeting of the year, WHOOLC hosted a fireside chat on establishing a legacy of leadership. During the conversation, special guest Dr. Michelle McMurry-Heath, President & CEO of Biotechnology Innovation Organization, described her journey to the C-suite and shared insights into the tools that helped her advance in her career, the importance of risk-taking, and the power of envisioning the legacy you want to leave.



*Monday, November 16, 2020*  
*6:30pm*

*Special Guest*



*Dr. Michelle McMurry-Heath*  
President & CEO  
Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO)

Click Here For Michelle's Bio:  
<https://www.bio.org/biography/dr-michelle-mcmurry-heath>



## WHOOLC IN ACTION: SUCCESS STORIES

### Expanding Our Network

Since launching WHOOLC in 2018, our membership has increased 60 percent. Members work across a range of industries – including agriculture, asset management, energy, healthcare and pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, mass media, and shipping and logistics – and manage more than \$867 billion in secured funding. The organization's growth is a testament to both the sustained diversification of the government affairs industry and WHOOLC's commitment to creating leadership development opportunities that help launch professionals of color in the industry to the next level.

## Success Stories

WHOOLC exists to curate and deliver leadership development and networking opportunities that create, support, and advance diversity in the government affairs industry. WHOOLC aims to help our current members and aspiring Heads of Office level up and take the next step in their career, and we're pleased to highlight three exciting accomplishments achieved in 2020:

- WHOOLC Board member Clifton (Clif) Porter II, Senior Vice President of Government Relations at the American Health Care Association (AHCA) and the National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL), was [appointed](#) to the Sabra Health Care REIT, Inc. Board of Directors.
- Laricke Blanchard, who participated in our 2019 Leadership Bootcamp, is now officially a Washington Head of Office, serving as the Vice President of Federal Government Relations at USAA. Mr. Blanchard [thanked WHOOLC](#) for the organization's continued commitment to career advancement and leadership development.
- Marie Sylla-Dixon, another participant in our 2019 Leadership Bootcamp, was [appointed](#) to serve as the Chief Diversity Officer at Raytheon. Ms. Dixon is familiar with being a Head of Office—she previously served as Vice President of Federal Government and External Affairs at T-Mobile—and is excited for the opportunity to lead the diversity, equity and inclusion strategy at Raytheon.
- WHOOLC member Tamar Thompson, Vice President, US Government Affairs and Policy for Alexion Pharmaceuticals, Inc. and Chair of the Board of Alexion's Charitable Foundation, was [appointed](#) to the Avidity Biosciences Board of Directors.

# Members

Below is a list of WHOOLC's members; click their names to connect via LinkedIn!

## WHOOLC Board

- [Molly Ryan](#), Otsuka (President)
- [Brad Knox](#), AFLAC (Board Chairman and Treasurer)
- [Clif Porter](#), AHCA (Secretary)

## WHOOLC Members

- [Alane Dent](#), ACLI
- [Alethia Jackson](#), Walgreens
- [Andy Blocker](#), Invesco, Ltd
- [Antoinette Bush](#), Newscorp
- [Dede Lea](#), ViacomCBS
- [Fred Humphries](#), Microsoft
- [Gina Adams](#), Fedex Corporation
- [Jake Jones](#), Daimler
- [Joyce Rogers](#), Advocate Aurora Health
- [Khary Cauthen](#), Cheniere
- [Lauren Scott](#), Global Atlantic Financial Company
- [Manan Shah](#), Leo Pharma
- [Marcus Reese](#), Unibail Rodamco-Westfield Property
- [Mo Cowan](#), General Electric
- [Nichole Francis-Reynolds](#), Interstate Natural Gas Association of America (INGAA)
- [Roslyn Brooks](#), PwC
- [Saat Alety](#), Allstate
- [Stephanie Dyson](#), BioGen
- [Tamar Thompson](#), Alexion
- [Tiffany Atwell](#), Corteva Agriscience
- [Tiffany Moore](#), Consumer Technology Association