How to Create STE(A)M Community Alliance in the Urban Core

April Boyd-Noronha, Chief Solutions Architect, The STEM Broker LLC

This workshop is a call-to-action that examines five practical, yet strategic, ways to effectively sustain a STE(A)M Community Alliance. Participants will learn how to foster an open environment to embrace and understand the STE(A)M industry and its impact on those in the urban community. Members of the urban core will discover how their distinct role can positively impact their community — regardless of their level of awareness of STE(A)M.

Building an Inclusive Workplace

Elizabeth Reed, Special Projects Coordinator, Missouri Department of Transportation
Rebecca Brietzke, Intermediate Diversity and Inclusion Specialist, Missouri Department of Transportation

To create an inclusive workplace, it is important employees know where women fit in. Employees need to clearly understand that diversity is about more than race and gender, and that everyone has a place in the diversity conversation and a role in creating inclusion. This interactive workshop is designed to help employers and employees create an inclusive work environment by providing resources to capitalize on the dimensions of diversity present in the workplace.

You’re Not My Mama: Maintaining Sanity While Caring for a Parent with Dementia

Wanda Taylor, M.A., Director of Community Development, Crittenton Children’s Center

Wanda Taylor will share insights learned from her personal 12-year journey as a caregiver for her mother who is in the final stages of Alzheimer’s. The presentation will focus on the prevalence of the disease and the social, emotional and financial impact on women of color who are caregivers. The science of resiliency, practical tools for self-care and where to get help will also be covered.

The “Real” Housewives: Representations of Femininity and Feminine Identity in Reality Television Programming

Toya Like, Ph.D., Associate Professor, UMKC Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology

This workshop is designed to critically examine the role of this genre of media in depicting feminine identity. Participants will be able to identify themes/patterns in this media representation of femininity, analyze the extent to which these representations are grounded in reality and/or stereotype and develop strategies to combat negative depictions of women and girls in television programming.

Making Bank: Becoming Money-Smart

Kathryn Alexander, Financial Advisor, Merrill Lynch
Joell Dickerson, Business and Community Development Officer, Mazuma Credit Union
Kewana Regans, Financial Center Manager, UMB Bank
Keva Whitley, V.P. Regional Float Team Manager, UMB Bank
Moderated by Vanessa Vaughn-West, Community Relations Manager, City of Olathe

Whether it’s co-signing for a relative, applying for a home or car loan, paying off credit card bills, or deciding how much to contribute to retirement, being financially responsible can be overwhelming. How do we know if we are doing this right? This session provides insights on how to become financially astute women; offering concrete steps to debt reduction, saving for college funds, and leaving a legacy of financial responsibility. Learn about financial goal setting, monetary confidence and more.
Putting the Pieces Together: Connecting through Collaborations, Partnerships and Relationships

- Andrea Generaux, Executive Director, Livable Neighborhoods Taskforce, Unified Government of Kansas City, Kansas
- LaMonica Upton, Neighborhood Liaison, Livable Neighborhoods Taskforce, Unified Government of Kansas City, Kansas

This interactive session will spark creative thinking about collaborations, partnerships and relationships. Participants will discuss how the roots of building their reputation are connected to these principles, learn how to leverage their strengths and weaknesses with others and understand how these principles will make them more effective in being a successful leader.

Resilient KC: Thriving through Adversity

- Jasmin Williams, Project Coordinator, Resilient KC

In this workshop, participants will learn about Resilient KC, a nationally funded partnership between Trauma Matters KC and The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, collaborating in order to build a trauma-informed and resilient community. Attendees will also learn about national efforts to build resilience, how Kansas City is addressing trauma locally and how women of color can get involved and make an impact in the movement.

The “Token” Effect

- Ashley Hall, Ed.D., Teacher, North Kansas City School District

Participants will dive into the different aspects of being the only person at work who looks and/or thinks like them, exploring physiological, psychological and social effects of this phenomenon. Participants will engage in lively discussions and role-play scenarios to further explore this topic.

Our Communities, Our Health

- Kim Langrehr, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, UMKC Counseling Psychology
- Celia C. Ruiz, Bilingual Community Outreach Specialist, UnitedHealthcare
- Lynette Sparkman-Barnes, Psy.D., Associate Director, UMKC Counseling Center
- Moderated by Diondra Pittmon, Specialist II Security, Department of Energy, Honeywell

Communities of color frequently have to grapple with staggering health disparities. Whether women of color engage in health care as patients, clients or health care providers, we are constantly confronted with a system that does not meet our specific needs or simply feels exclusive. This panel seeks to address how women of color can advocate for themselves as patients and clients and advocate for all communities of color as health care professionals. Learn how to be an advocate and share mutual support in order to take better care of ourselves and our communities.

Kinky or Straight Hair: “It’s All Good”

- Sharmelle Winsett, Owner, Nature’s Design Hair

This workshop will explore the complicated topic of hair texture, skin color and the direct link to self-esteem and self-worth for women of color. This unique discussion, led by master hairstylist and salon owner Sharmelle Winsett, will aim to challenge modern day standards of beauty. This workshop will encourage participants to unite by setting new guidelines by which we judge one another and ourselves.
Side Hustle to Main Hustle

- Alisa J. Henley, PHR, M.A., Business Owner, Destiny Consulting LLC, Sunshine Organization LLC

Most side hustles start from a passion, project or idea that makes a person light up inside and speaks to their passion, which their full-time job may not fulfill. This workshop is for attendees who may be straddling the line between passion projects and entrepreneurship and who want to learn whether and how to make that side hustle their main hustle.

Know Your Rights: Employment and Housing

- Greta Willis, Civil Rights Investigator, Human Relations Department, Civil Rights Division, City Hall, KCMO
- Natoyia Wilson, Civil Rights Investigator, Human Relations Department, Civil Rights Division, City Hall, KCMO

Civil rights investigators from the City of Kansas City Human Relations Department in the Civil Rights Division will address Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Fair Housing Laws under Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968. The goal of this informative session is to educate attendees of their rights in the workplace and housing through addressing Employment and Fair Housing Laws in addition to other protected categories outlined in the City of Kansas City Chapter 38 Code of Ordinance.

Represent Your Cupcake

- Shawna Edgerson, M.P.H., Prevention Specialist, Kansas City Care Clinic

“Represent Your Cupcake” is a workshop for women focused on sex-positivity and HIV/AIDS awareness from the female perspective. This curriculum allows an exciting and judgement-free environment to provide general HIV/AIDS information in relation to women of color; hands-on demonstrations; assertive communication skills to initiate safe-sex practices; awareness about pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP); and other tools to confidently represent one’s own “cupcake.”

The Role of Women of Color in Spirituality

- Shavern Browne, M.A., Doctoral Candidate, UMKC Counseling Psychology
- Kharissa Forte, Founder, The Devout Life, Media Personality
- Sofia Khan, M.D., Internist, Shawnee Mission Medical Center, Founder of Muslim Youth of North America, KC Chapter
- Tamilia Reed, Ph.D., Staff Psychologist & Outreach Coordinator, UMKC Counseling Services
- Moderated by Diane Burkholder, Owner, The DB Approach

Women who represent various beliefs — specifically Christianity, Islam and Paganism — are joined together in this panel to elevate participants’ awareness of spiritual diversity in our city and the need to understand, respect and advocate for each other. Participants will learn commonalities across these perspectives, how religious discrimination presents itself and strategies to personally and professionally support fellow women of various beliefs.

Celebrating Our Failure

- Kori Carew, Director of Strategic Diversity Initiatives, Shook, Hardy & Bacon L.L.P.

What do we do when we fail? How do we handle it? Do we dust ourselves off and keep going or hang our heads and give up? Studies show that girls stop doing certain things (e.g. STEM) for fear of failure. Studies have also shown that women do not apply for jobs unless they meet 100 percent of the qualifications, whereas men apply if they meet 60% of the qualifications. We as women tend to seek perfectionism, but failure is a part of life and can be used to our benefit. By not celebrating our failures and leveraging them to our benefit, we deny ourselves living to our full potential. This presentation will focus on facing failure head on, choosing courage and taking chances, and making the most of our resilience and grit!
Learn to Run a Business in One Hour
• Elaine Hamilton, President and Executive Producer, VISION 5
There are psychological, emotional and cultural truths about running a business that no one talks openly about. These factors are a detriment to our success as business women, generally, and women of color, specifically. Participants will learn what “business” is, (not what they think it is) and its five crucial parts. They will learn what they should be doing as the business owner and will receive practical resources and recommendations.

Overcoming Discrimination in the Workplace
• Salama Gallimore, Director of Investigations, Deputy Title IX Coordinator, University of Missouri
In this workshop, participants will be able to identify, acknowledge and discuss the existence of discrimination in the workplace and how inequity impacts professional women of color. Additionally, attendees will learn strategies to call out bias and discrimination in the work environment, and discover methods of coping as well as skills and strategies which may be helpful in building resilience and thriving in professional environments that lack diversity.

Transformation through Meditation: Medication for Your Heart and Soul
• Mukta Sharma, M.D., M.P.H., FAAP, Pediatric Hematology/Oncology, Children’s Mercy
Women will walk away from this workshop with an air of Zen, oozing peace and positive energy from their pores. Meditation involves relaxation (the cessation of unnecessary effort) and also mindfulness to help the stress-sufferer to recognize unhelpful patterns of thought that can give rise to the stress response while also actively cultivating positive mental states such as compassion, patience and energy. Learn mindfulness strategies to better cope with life’s inevitable stresses.

We Are Each Other’s Harvest: Re-conceptualizing the Village for Modern Women of Color
• Lisa Greenhill, Blogger, AdoptiveBlackMom.com, Co-host, “Add the Water and Stir” podcast
• Maleika Robinson, Co-host, “Add the Water and Stir” podcast, Managing Director, Emmarie Media LLC
Today’s villages are not based solely on physical proximity; technology allows us to augment physical villages with virtual ones. Led by two adoptive mothers who met online and created their own village, this session will focus on the need to restore the role of the village in the modern lives of women of color, and how to get the support you need, physically and virtually, to live your best life.

Racism and Feminism: Using Strength to Persist
• Stephanie Hernandez Rivera, Doctoral Student in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, University of Missouri
Women of color hold two visible identities, therefore creating a distinctive experience for them throughout their lives and specifically in educational settings. With two visibly marginalized identities, women of color are often invisible in issues of injustice and inequity. The purpose of this session will be to examine the ways women of color-focused spaces and initiatives can support women of color’s development in educational settings.