



2025 State of Black Children Summit

February 13, 2025 | 10:00AM CT

Speaker Bios



Marvin Pierre, Co-Founder and Executive Director, 8 Million Stories

Marvin Pierre currently serves as the Co-Founder and Executive Director of Eight Million Stories in Houston, Texas.

Prior to taking on the role, Marvin was selected as a Bridge Fellow with The New Teacher Project, where he focused his fellowship on developing an alternative education program he called “Eight Million Stories”. His program became a reality and now aspires to upend the school-to-prison pipeline by supporting previously incarcerated youth as they re-enter school and - curbing unnecessary referrals from schools to the justice system in Houston.

Marvin has also served as the Assistant Principal at KIPP Polaris Academy for Boys, also in Houston, Texas. Prior to joining KIPP Polaris, he served as the Dean of Students at Excellence Boys Charter School in Brooklyn, NY. Before pursuing a career in educational leadership, Marvin worked in finance at Goldman, Sachs & Co.

Marvin, a native New Yorker, holds a B.A. in Economics from Trinity College in Hartford Connecticut, and a Master’s Degree in Education Administration and Supervision, from the University of Houston.

Marvin is a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., is an American Leadership Forum Fellow alumni and current board member and was selected into the inaugural class for Leadership ISD. Marvin was also recognized by the Houston Business Journal as a member of the 2022 40 Under 40 Class and was most recently named to the 2023 Black Changemakers Program, an award that highlights and trains the top 16 Black non-profit leaders.

Marvin currently serves on the Board of Trustees at Tabor Academy, a Board of Fellows member at his undergraduate alma mater, Trinity College (Hartford, CT) , a founding board member of Friends of the Children (Houston Chapter) and past board member of The American Leadership Forum.



Lekesha Attuquayefio (Barnett), DMin, Minister, Consultant, Author

Rev. Dr. Lekesha Barnett is servant-leader in the Body of Christ who ministers as a bold, relevant, energetic and theologically sound preacher and teacher who reveals the will of God for the Body of Christ and empowers believers to live it!

Called by God and gifted to serve in diverse contexts, Lekesha delivers truth with compassion while touching the heart and stimulating the mind. Experienced in international evangelism and missions, her personal motto is: "The world is my pulpit!" She is author of two books, *The Intensified Life* and *Word Infusion*.

With broad exposure and experience in congregational and para-church ministry, Lekesha consistently excels in leadership to become a confidant and adviser to many. Never overbearing and always striving for Christ-like character, she offers objective observations with an unwavering faith perspective. In the conference room and the pulpit she is gracious, catalytic, convincing and convicting with a humble manner. Her leadership style is contagiously edifying and intentionally compels others to live in radical obedience to God.

After successfully defending her dissertation entitled, "The Cross-Cultural Dance: Spiritual Formation Through the Synergy of Small-Groups and Cross-Cultural Ministry", she was conferred a Doctor of Ministry degree from Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University. Under the leadership of Ambassador Suzan Johnson Cook, was the first administrative assistant and Membership Director of the Global Black Women Chamber of Commerce. Lekesha is an effective consultant for leadership and strategic planning with proven results which have transformed ministries at Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church and beyond.

She currently serves as staff ministry leader of Young Adults and Prayer, as well as liaison for the Health & Wellness ministry at Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church in Houston, TX where Rev. Dr. Marcus D. Cosby is Senior Pastor. She also continues to lead HER Call Ministries, a (501c3) non-profit organization known as "the network for women in ministry" with recent expansion into the international online Facebook platform serving a group of 12,000 members.

She enjoys Latin dance, painting, travel and empowering others to enjoy adventures with God through her YouTube ministry at Intensified Life TV with Dr. Lekesha B. There are life lessons and personal videos with her husband, Re Attuquayefio, with whom she is still enjoying an extended honeymoon. On Friday, November 11, 2022 she and Re married and now enjoy a blessed life together as partners in dance and romance. Together they facilitate classes/workshops through their dance business, Agape Dance Trio.

Of all her accomplishments and goals the most important is impacting nations and generations of people to live an intensified life for the glory of God.



LaMonica Love, Business and Estate Planning Attorney

When LaMonica Love sees something is missing in the industry, she creates it. LaMonica recognized there was a real-world need for minorities and women to have access to quality and affordable legal representation. She stepped in to fill that gap by founding The Love Law Group And Consulting Services, PLLC. The Love Law Group provides top-notch legal services and business solutions to over 1,800 clients including start-ups, small/medium sized businesses and Fortune 100 Companies. LaMonica is honored to share that 76% of the 1,800 clients served are minority-owned or women-led businesses. The Love Law Group also offers estate planning and probate services to assist clients in planning for and navigating some of life's very difficult transitions.

LaMonica has received many top honors including 2023 Florida A&M University's 40 Under 40 Distinguished Young Alumni, 2021 Houston Business Journal's 40 Under 40, 2021 Cumberland School of Law – Distinguished Young Alumna Award, 2019 Top 30 Influential Women in Houston, and 2019 National Bar Association Top 40 Lawyers Under 40. In 2021, she initiated and currently chairs the Annual Florida A&M University Houston Alumni Scholarship Brunch, which has awarded over 50 scholarships to students in the Houston area. She is also a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. LaMonica serves as a board member of Hope of Harvest and She is a CEO, two non-profits focused on entrepreneurship and business development in Southeast Houston. Most recently, she also served as President and chartering member of the Houston Metropolitan Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc. LaMonica balances her business along with her family which includes her partner, Michael, and two children Blake and Blaire, who are enrolled in Houston ISD schools. LaMonica is a proponent of public schools and believes that all children deserve a quality education.



Hope Pamplin, Ph.D., LPC-S- Therapist

Dr. Hope Pamplin is a dynamic educator and leader with over 20 years of experience in both K-12 and higher education. A native of Austin, Texas, Dr. Pamplin earned her undergraduate degree from McMurry University, followed by a master's degree in counseling and a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from Prairie View A&M University.

Dr. Pamplin is a Licensed Professional Counselor, certified teacher, school counselor, administrator, and trained mediator. Her work has always been guided by a deep commitment to supporting students, recognizing the vital connection between emotional and behavioral health and academic success.

Currently serving as the Director of Disability Services at the University of Houston-Downtown, she has played an instrumental role in advocating for accessibility and mental health resources for the university's 14,000-student population. Beyond her university work, Dr. Pamplin is the founder of the non-profit organization Windows of Hope, Houston, and she also owns a private behavioral health practice.

She is an accomplished author, having written several counseling manuals and a mental health processing journal. Dr. Pamplin's passion lies in creating meaningful change in the lives of the students, colleagues, and communities she serves.



Kevin Bryant, Managing Director, GoodCitizen

Kevin Bryant is a Managing Director at GoodCitizen, leading executive searches for foundations and nonprofits advancing education, climate and environmental action, and other justice-focused causes locally and globally. He provides strategic guidance through complex leadership transitions, helping organizations secure the right leaders to amplify their impact. His past clients include Mission Capital, E3 Alliance, Stryker Johnston Foundation, Airbnb.org, and B Lab US & Canada. Based in Austin, Texas, Kevin and his team support organizations across Central Texas and beyond



Antonie H. Rice, PhD, Associate Dean of Education and Student Affairs National School of Tropical Medicine

Antonie H. Rice, Ph.D., is the Associate Dean of Education and Student Affairs of the National School of Tropical Medicine, Director of the SMART program, Director of the Post-baccalaureate program in Biomedical Sciences and Health Equity, and an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine.

Dr. Antonie H. Rice is a native of Pine Bluff, Arkansas. He obtained his Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. He received both his Master of Science degree and Doctor of Philosophy degree in Pharmaceutical Chemistry from the University of Kansas.

Dr. Rice was previously Associate Dean of School of Arts and Sciences, as well as Department Chair of Chemistry and Physics at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB). While here Dr. Rice ascended through the ranks of Assistant Professor to Full Professor and Tenured. Dr. Rice was highly active in academic advising, student mentorship, research, and educational expansion in Science,

Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). He received research grant funding from NIH in drug delivery, anticancer and Alzheimer's disease research during his tenure at UAPB. He was also part of the STEM internal board on two NSF funded grants (HBCU-UP and Ark-LSAMP) as well as one Department of Education grant. During Dr. Rice's tenure he served the University community in several roles, such as the Faculty Athletic Representative, director of the STEM lecture series, director of the STEM Saturday Academy, Interim Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, NCATE departmental representative, EpSCOR representative for UAPB, served as advisor to several student organizations, and in numerous other capacities during his 13 year tenure at UAPB.

Dr. Rice joined the National School of Tropical Medicine in 2015. Dr. Rice is currently overseeing the expansion of the educational portfolio for the National School of Tropical Medicine, continuing to mentor students at every level, and supporting STEM education at every turn.



Jamie Freeny, DrPH, MPH, Director, Center for School Behavioral Health, Mental Health America of Greater Houston

Dr. Jamie Freeny is a public health practitioner who has experience in maternal health and child and adolescent mental health. She is the Director of the Center for School Behavioral Health at Mental Health America of Greater Houston and works collaboratively with school districts and child-serving organizations to implement data-driven equitable practices and policies that improve mental and behavioral health. She was awarded the Texas 2021 Child Advocate of the Year, is recognized as a child mental health expert, has testified at the Texas Capitol, interviewed by local and national news outlets, and presented at numerous conferences.



Morgan Tuck, M.A., LPC-S, NCC, Founder & Lead Therapist, Mawazo Counseling and Consulting

Morgan D. Tuck is a Southeast TX native who holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Sam Houston State and a Masters of Art Degree in Counseling from Prairie View A&M University. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor- Supervisor in the state of Texas and a National Board Certified Counselor. She has 20 years of professional work experience in Education and in Professional Counseling.

Morgan is the Owner of Mawazo Counseling & Consulting, LLC where she provides counseling, consulting, supervision, and training. She is also currently employed with Houston Community College as a Ability Services Counselor. Throughout her career, Morgan has served in a Counseling capacity at other multiple post secondary institutions, K-12 settings, behavioral health hospitals & clinics, and at non-profit agencies. Mrs. Tuck is an active member of the Texas Counselors Association, Texas Association for Counselor Educators & Supervisors, and Past President of the Texas College Counseling Association. She holds active memberships in a variety of civic organizations such as Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc, Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc and National Women of Achievement, Inc.

Mrs. Tuck is passionate about shifting mindsets, educating the community on mental health issues, disability services, and being an advocate for those who live with mental illness. Morgan is happily married to her husband of 13 years and resides in Houston.



Hazel Davis, Community Engagement Leader & Workforce Development Advocate

Hazel Davis is a dedicated community leader with 25 years of experience in community engagement, specializing in youth development, workforce training, and economic mobility for underserved populations. Her journey began with a decade of volunteer work, supporting programs for children in underserved communities. She then took on a leadership role at Urban Action, a community-based organization serving children in economically challenged apartment complexes across Dallas. Following this, Hazel spent four years at the Urban League, contributing to the Youth and Education Training Program, where she helped equip young people with essential skills for success. For six years, she played a pivotal role in a program supporting youth aging out of foster care, where she developed a robust workforce development initiative designed to create sustainable career pathways. Today, Hazel serves as the Executive Director of Inspiring Tomorrow's Leaders (ITL), a skills and credentialing program focused on high-demand occupations. Under her leadership, ITL is dedicated to economic mobility and creating opportunities for individuals in underserved communities to achieve financial stability and long-term career success. Hazel's passion for service, creating problem solving and strategic program development has impacted countless lives, and she remains committed



Trustee Erica Davis, Board Second Vice President, Harris County Department of Education

CHILDREN AT RISK 2025 Learning Event
Speaker Bios

Elected in 2020, Erica Davis serves as a Trustee on the Harris County Department of Education Board. Appointed by Honorable Constable Alan Rosen, she made history as the first African American woman to serve as civilian Chief of Staff for a law enforcement agency in Harris County—and potentially in the country—specifically with the Precinct One Constable's Office. In this role, she has demonstrated exceptional ability in strengthening relationships between governmental institutions and the communities they serve, with particular expertise in law enforcement community engagement.

Davis's academic credentials include a bachelor's degree from the University of Houston, master's degrees from both the University of Texas and Columbia University, and is currently pursuing a doctorate at the University of Pennsylvania. Her current research focuses on "Learning in the Political Ecosystem: A Case Study Approach to Self-Directed Learning of Language Among Local Elected Officials," reflecting her commitment to understanding and improving governance at the local level.

As a dedicated public servant, Davis leverages her diverse educational background and professional experience to implement innovative approaches to community engagement and institutional collaboration. She is happily married to a United States Airman David and the proud bonus mom to Elijah.