



In this time of profound and necessary social change, business success is about more than the bottom line. Leaders must be prepared both to navigate emergent crises and drive long-term, sustained movement toward greater equity within their organizations and throughout our region.

The DEI Collaborative transforms employer organizations in Minnesota to be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive by facilitating deep learning with senior leaders. Our six-part cohort experience supports leaders in exploring their personal identities and culture lenses; sharing successes and challenges with a group of peer leaders; and identifying best practices for closing opportunity gaps.

Program Features

- Small, professionally-facilitated cohorts of peer leaders
- Close-knit network of peers with a shared commitment to action
- Confidential environment for critical conversations about the challenges leaders face as they drive change
- Deep exploration of the identities and cultural lenses that inform effective leadership for equity
- Real-time support as crises and decision points emerge
- Best practices for closing employment opportunity gaps
- One-on-one coaching
- Sliding tuition scale to enable leaders from all sectors and sizes of organizations to participate

2022 Upcoming Cohort

A second cohort is planned to start in September.

Sessions are held from 7:30-9:30 a.m.

Meeting dates:

- September 20
- October 12
- November 15
- December 13
- January 17
- February 21

“The DEI cohort was an extremely meaningful learning and development experience for me. I came away with many insights, and my leadership approach has evolved as a result of these learnings. And critically, I came away with a broad network of friends who are working through similar issues. This was a very valuable investment of time for me personally. It is also a program that I am very proud our community supports.”

Tim Welsh, Vice Chair,
Consumer and Business Banking, US Bank

► WHY?

The success of any organization is directly linked to the health of its culture and whether it provides the tools that allow its employees to perform well. As business leaders, it all trickles down from YOU. Your ability to lead with the kind of knowledge, understanding and empathy provided through the DEI Collaborative will help you navigate through these changing times and help you get ahead of the game.

- Expand your workforce pool of candidates by recruiting outside of the status quo
- Create space for fresh and innovative new ideas from people with different life experiences
- Increase retention

For more information: www.stpaulchamber.com/dei-collaborative

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Facilitator: Anika Ward



For over 20 years, Anika has worked to improve outcomes for youth and families through partnerships that leverage the power of community voice, vision and leadership. The founder of the Sankofa Leadership Network, she has spent her career working to advance initiatives in education, cultural art & science, workforce development, community health and wellbeing.

Her work has impacted community groups, nonprofits, museums, state and local government, and healthcare organizations across the region. Prior to founding the Sankofa Leadership Network, Anika served as the senior

director of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota Center for Prevention; worked at the State of Minnesota to attract, support and retain leaders of color in executive positions; and led the Kitty Andersen Youth Science Center at the Science Museum of Minnesota, where she helped to build career pathways to increase engagement for women and people of color.

A daughter of the historic Rondo neighborhood of St. Paul, Anika's work and approach reflect her value of community leadership and representation. Anika enthusiastically works to engage often untapped community assets and perspectives. She works to engage elders, youth, and cultural leaders in systems redesign. Recognizing the wealth of power and resources that already belongs to the community, she aims to be a conduit, supporting communities and institutions to bring their powers together for good.

A strategic thinker, Anika works to appreciate and understand the systems she works with. She brings both a systems-based and relationship-based approach to her work. She leads initiatives that work to transform systems to eliminate disparities and advance equity.

Anika spends her free time making and enjoying music, arts and sports activities with her husband, four children, puppy, and a large extended family. She holds an M.A. degree in Human Services, and a B.A. in Human Resource Management from Concordia University –Saint Paul. In 2016, she was named one of "40 under 40" by the Minneapolis/Saint Paul Business Journal.

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