

Cocktails and Conversation

Tuesday, January 26, 2016

Hosted by **waller**

Biographies

Moderator



Dr. Patrick McCarthy, Ph.D., J.D.

Industrial/Organizational Psychology, Middle Tennessee State University

Dr. McCarthy is a Professor and Director of the Industrial/Organizational Program at MTSU. He received his Ph.D. in I/O Psychology from George Mason University and his J.D. from the Nashville School of Law. He is a licensed attorney and a member of the American Bar Association's Labor and Employment Law Division.

Dr. McCarthy has over 25 years of HR consulting experience with a wide range of over 50 organizations, such as Proctor and Gamble, State Farm Insurance, United Way, Gaylord Entertainment, Nissan, and the U.S. Department of Defense. He has previously served as Director of MTSU's Center for Organizational and Human Resource Effectiveness ([COHRE](#)). Besides his consulting experience, Dr. McCarthy has also served on the Leadership Development Executive Board for the Tennessee State Collaborative on Reforming Education.

Panelists



Jacky Akbari

Council on Workforce Innovation and the National Organization for Workforce Diversity

Jacky is a nationally recognized, award-winning leader in economic and workforce development. She is Founding President of the Council on Workforce Innovation and Founding Board Chair of the National Organization for Workforce Diversity. Jacky was named one of "Nashville's Most Powerful Women" by the Nashville Post, a "Woman of Influence" by the Nashville Business Journal, and selected for the prestigious "Impact Award" by the Nashville Chamber of Commerce recognizing her leadership impact with young professionals. A graduate of Leadership Nashville and Leadership Middle Tennessee, Jacky serves on the following community boards: Habitat for Humanity, Leadership Middle Tennessee, the Ronald McDonald House, the Center for Nonprofit Management, and serves as



Board Chair of the Women in the Workforce Forum and Awards.

Jacky is a former Chair of Salute to Excellence, co-chair of the Athena Awards and co-chair of CABLE's Power of Inclusion. She chaired the Frist Foundation's *Innovation in Action* award selection panel for several years. She is board chair of Music City Honors at the Nashville Parthenon, a prestigious recognition of impactful Nashville leaders. Jacky is also Executive Producer of "NashView" event and media production company as well as Employer Services Director at NCAC / MT WIB.

She is co-founder and board chair for the Middle Tennessee Diversity Forum, a collaboration that builds and recognizes best practices of employers seeking to advance diversity in the workplace.

An active member of the Middle Tennessee community, she is involved in Downtown Kiwanis. Jacky has also launched several initiatives in the Middle Tennessee community to advance the interests of young professionals. Les Femmes Du Monde is a professional organization of young professional women with a mission to network and build business alliances with YPs seeking to advance in their careers and in the community. Jacky was also instrumental in the development of a young professionals men's organization, The Greenwood Pact.

Jacki is a graduate of The Ohio State University, attended Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. A Memphis native, she and her husband Manuch have two sons. Alex is a third year student at Meharry Medical College and Austin is a senior at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.



Michael McDaniel

Community Foundation Middle Tennessee

Michael joined the staff of the Community Foundation in March 2000. Currently serving as Nonprofit Liaison, he represents The Foundation in the 43 counties of Middle Tennessee it serves. He assists non-profit organizations in their philanthropic and charitable goals as well as assists in their infrastructure and endowment building. Prior to The Foundation, he served as the Director of Community Arts Development for the Tennessee Arts Commission, and State Arts Agency where he developed and sustained partnerships with other state agencies and nonprofit organizations. He has served as a panelist and consultant for local, regional, and out of state organizations, and served as a board member of the Tennessee Festival Events Association. Michael is a graduate of Leadership Donelson Hermitage, class of 2006.



Pam Sheffer

Just Us at Oasis Center

Pam serves as Oasis Center's first positive youth development specialist exclusively focusing on the needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) teens in Middle Tennessee. She built the infrastructure for the "Just Us" program in 2010-11, collaborated with LGBT youth to develop the programming that is currently delivered, and partnered with Oasis Center to secure funding to launch the program and sustain its operation.

For the first three years of operation, Pam personally developed and delivered programming for LGBTQI high school students on a weekly basis, as well as created strategic alliances with community allies to help serve the needs of LGBT young people in Middle TN and beyond. Pam was also increasingly called on to serve as a resource to youth serving agencies, school based counselors and educators who needed assistance in effectively serving LGBT youth. As a result, individual consultation and design and delivery of professional development workshops became a regular part of Pam's work.

After working solo for three years, Pam hired a program specialist in August 2014, who assumed all direct to youth programming. This addition allowed Pam to respond to the still growing demand for the delivery of professional development services as well as engage in policy work to create systemic changes which positively impact the lives of LGBTQI youth.

As of November 2015, Pam has trained over 6,500 professionals, via 105 training engagements, who serve youth within the scope of their daily work, including but not limited to Metro Nashville Public Schools, Department of Children's Services, Child Protective Services, Metro Nashville Police Department, and the Juvenile Court of Davidson County.

In her spare time, Pam served as the community organizer and project director of a grassroots initiative to create "street free" safer sleeping options for homeless youth 18-24 years of age within Nashville, TN. "Launch Pad", a volunteer based and community-organized initiative, opened its doors in November 2014. During its first winter season Launch Pad served 64 unique individuals and provided over 483 beds to Nashville's most vulnerable youth.



Jeffrey Webster

Nissan North America

Jeffrey Webster is director of Diversity and Inclusion for Nissan North America. Webster joined Nissan in 1985 as a production technician at the company's vehicle assembly plant in Smyrna, Tenn. In 1989, he transitioned to the Human Resources team as an employee relations representative. He was later promoted to employee relations section manager and served in that role in several different production areas. In May 2001, Webster transferred to the Canton plant to serve as department manager for employee relations, training, organizational development and communications. He was promoted to his current position in March 2006.

Before joining Nissan, Webster worked for the National Baptist Publishing Board. He earned a bachelor of business administration degree from Middle Tennessee State University and a two-year degree from Columbia State Community College.

Webster, a national board member of the Nissan Foundation, also currently serves on the board of the Madison County Foundation, Jobs for Mississippi Graduates, Mississippi Center for Justice, YWCA and National Urban League of Nashville. He is a member of the Society of Human Resources Management. In 1998 and 1999, he received the "Black Achiever of the Year" award in honor of his accomplishments as a minority professional. In June 2007, he was named one of "The 70 Most Influential Men" in *African Americans On Wheels* magazine.