



UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

CHANGE THE WORLD FROM HERE

It's about capacity, not ability: Minority CEOs

by

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this paper to my family and friends. More specifically my parents who always believed in me. Lastly, to my wife, Nephthali, and son Mateo. You are my reason why.

Abstract

For this capstone, I wanted to understand the dynamic of nonprofits when it comes to minorities in the nonprofit sector and their relationship to the CEO position. I wanted to figure out whether or not there was proper representation in the executive level of leadership. What I was able to gather was that there is not enough representation of minorities at the CEO level. The Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) shared research data that I have chosen to expound on in my capstone. The data shared different levels of leadership within nonprofits that found despite 55% of nonprofit CEOs believing it is very or extremely important for the senior leadership team to reflect the population the organization seeks to serve, only 23% believes their senior leadership teams actually reflect the population team they seek to serve very or extremely well.

Additionally, from the Grantee Perception Report (GPR) from the CEP, found that over the course of 10 years and 15,000 respondents that 75% of the Executive Director respondents identified as White. Through academic literature reviews and interviews one of the strongest ways to change this reality is at the governing board level. My recommendations are for nonprofits to ask the hard questions on why their boards do not reflect the demographics that they are seeking to serve and how they can change it.

Keywords: minorities, chief executive director, capacity, board, diversity, equity, and inclusion

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Section 1. Introduction

My topic for this capstone is the minority CEO within the nonprofit sector. The minority CEO is represented as persons who are gender and ethnically diverse. The purpose of this research was to figure out if there was proper representation of minorities at the executive level of leadership within the nonprofit sector. Research was gathered from peer reviewed articles, scholarly journals, nonprofit publications such as: The Chronicle of Philanthropy, Nonprofit Quarterly, and The Center for Effective Philanthropy. Additionally, five expert interviews were conducted with executive level leadership such as CEOs and Executive Directors of Nonprofits and consulting firms. The experts involved in the interviews work in the Bay Area, Southern California, and New York City. The interviewees were all minorities by ethnicity, gender, or both. The more research conducted, the greater I became aware of the disconnect that exist in the nonprofit sector between qualified and experienced minorities and the highest levels of executive leaders in nonprofits. This research shows that the nonprofit sector is a microcosm of the American story that reflect cultural and historical systemic racism that exist in this country.

In order to move forward as a sector that champions diversity, equity, and inclusion it is vital for our sector to address the same systemic inequalities that we righteously combat but exist in our organizations. If these inequities are not addressed than our sector stands in a pool of hypocrisy and must intentionally fight in order not to drown.

Expert Interviews: First Interview: On March 18th at 1:00 pm, I interviewed Billy Coleman. Billy is the CEO of a nonprofit called Today's Youth Matter (TYM), that focuses on changing the life trajectory of inner-city youth in the Bay Area through education, mentorship, and summer camps. During my interview with Billy, he mentioned that as a Black man in the executive level of a nonprofit he has to work twice as hard as his white counterparts because he will receive greater scrutiny for any mistake that he experiences during his time in leadership at the nonprofit. Ironically, Billy, finds himself having to educate donors and board members about the Black and Brown plight that inner city youth experience on a daily basis. He struggles with being able to move the nonprofit in the direction he knows will allow the nonprofit to make long

lasting impact in the lives of Black and Brown youth. Billy has had to strategize how to get his board to understand and follow his leadership. In Billy's experience he has had to strategically recruit new white male board members that have credibility in the eyes of his current board members. At first glance, I found this to be a little strange. Why was Billy recruiting more white men? Why not recruit minorities to be a part of the board? Well, Billy realized that his current board was comprised of older white men who wanted to see other white men in this level of leadership. Billy had to recruit people who shared in cultural similarities as his board but shared the same values as he did. One of Billy's recruit was a young, white male attorney who believed in moving the social and racial meter in nonprofit management.

As a Black CEO, Billy shared that in order to be credible he has to over compensate and hold himself at a higher standard of integrity. When I asked Billy, what is needed for leadership development for aspiring minority CEOs his response was that it's not in fact what you know but who you know. He had to learn how to utilize his network. He mentioned that before he had to learn how to utilize, he had to learn first how to create his network. As a young Black youth, being raised by his mother, he did not have access to any professional network and because of that he came to the realization that he had to make "cold calls" which he described as random phone calls to individuals at Marketing Firms and other organizations. Billy shared that unfortunately even to this day, that is the reality of many minorities. That young minorities do not often have the luxury of having a large network they could call upon. To conclude my interview, Billy shared that for minority people, who come from underserved, underprivileged, and underfunded communities, it is arduous to become a CEO but that doesn't mean it is impossible. Although the battle may be tough for minorities, they must have grit, perseverance, and tenacity when they receive rejection or experience failure because Billy is living proof that ethnically diverse CEOs do exist. (B. Coleman, Expert Interview, March 18, 2021)

Second Interview: It was Wednesday evening, March 30th, that I interviewed Dwyane Marsh, the CEO of Northern California Grantmakers (NCG), a large nonprofit located in San Francisco, California. Dwayne recently acquired this new title as he joined the NCG team in September 2020. Upon answering the phone Dwayne kindly mentioned that his nickname was "D." We began discussing his experience as a Black male CEO. He shared that even though he is a CEO, he is still a Black man. He stated that he still had to deal with trauma, anger due to injustices, and

risk. However, Dwayne Marsh, also known as D, opened up that he does not have to be quiet about those realities anymore. D shared that as a younger Black man he was surrounded by minority mentors who he is thankful for and who taught him how to navigate the professional world. To this day, D still has this network to help support him. D, shared that for minorities it is highly important to be able to articulate who you are professionally and that your best advertisement are your actions. He also shed light on one important skill that minorities need to ascertain which is how to learn from others. D shared that many minorities do not have professional minority examples in their general proximity, so learning how to be a stat expert and a solutionist in the professional world allows one to make impact and garner experience while developing key relationships. This is something that minorities must be intentional about. D states that if you want to become a CEO you must showcase that you already have the bandwidth to be one, which means learning from those who have already taking the steps in that direction.

When I asked Dwayne if he could give any advice to aspiring minorities seeking CEO position in a nonprofit, he mentioned it would be to have associates that you trust to have monthly conversations with. Also, he shared that you don't have to agree with leaders but you can learn to admire their leadership. Lastly, D shared that for any minority that is compelled to the CEO position they must they must have stamina for the race ahead of them and not lose their values. (D. Marsh, Expert Interview, March 30, 2021)

Third Interview: On Tuesday, May 10th I was fortunate to interview Aila Malik who is the Founder and Principal at Venture Leadership Consulting and Interim CEO at First Place for Youth. Aila is a first-generation Pakistani American who went to Stanford University where she studied law. She shared that she quickly learned that other people had privileged positions that she did not have. The privileges that she mentioned were a built-in network and connection to alumni. Aila stated that as she matriculated from her university to working in large firms, she noticed that she did not experience racism or sexism as much as she did agism. Currently, she believes it is an asset to be women and an ethnic minority. This is in part because of the racial reckoning movement that we as a society are currently navigating. However, Aila believes that nonprofits are not cultivating executive ready minorities. She believes that minorities are joining nonprofits at mid-management and the point of entry is not as high as their white counterparts

point of entry. Aila states that she is concerned that at the nonprofit sector acquiring a minority worker is just checking off a box.

When I asked Aila about what she thought about the structure of the nonprofit as a sector she stated that there are still structures of power and privileges that white males dominate. She specifically stated that this reality of a white male dominated structure of power and privilege is evident in philanthropy specifically in foundations, corporate giving, and individual giving. Philanthropy is what funds nonprofit causes and it is predominately ran by white people. This represents the financial equity divide in this country. I asked Aila why it was an issue of who funded what? Wasn't all money green? She mentioned when the power of funding is in the hands of white males, they get to decide who gets funding and how the funding is used. All of this leads to the "White Savior Complex." The idea of the White Savior Complex excludes minorities from being capable of helping themselves and being totally dependent on the white person to provide solutions. This also excludes more than qualified minorities from leading nonprofits at the executive level.

I asked Aila if she had any advice that she could share to conscious nonprofit seeking to make a change within their organization and she said that her advice to nonprofits would be to source and recruit from a diverse pool, to have a shared understanding of inclusivity, and to recognize their bias towards, hiring a certain "look" when thinking of a type of candidate. Aila's advice she shared would be to fight against any internal chatter, also known as, imposter syndrome. She shared that there are societal pressures that tell you that you are different and for that she says you need to confront that type of thinking head on and to know your value and capabilities. (A. Malik, Expert Interview, May 10, 2021)

Fourth Interview: I also interviewed Susan Brown on May 10th. Susan is a Black woman who is also the Executive Director at the Southern California office of First Place for Youth. She went from working as a banker to being accepted into a law school where she would fulfill the requirements of becoming an attorney. Susan then joined the Los Angeles Urban League where she worked with them for 10 years. While at the Los Angeles Urban League, she was able to develop and grow and gain exposure to the nonprofit sector. Susan shared that what got her to her professional career was experience and work and formal training through education. Although she said she had a plethora of experience, training, and education Susan states that she

experienced discrimination even as an Executive Director. She mentioned that she would feel harsh stares from white people who did not realize that she was the Executive Director while on their way to the same meeting. She called those stares “silent discrimination.”

I then asked Susan where else, has she felt some form of discrimination. Susan mentioned that she has seen discrimination in philanthropy within the nonprofit sector. To expound on this fact, she mentioned that there has been an uneven allocation of funds within the sector. She stated that she has seen minority nonprofits receive less than what they asked for while other nonprofits received what they asked for in abundance. After hearing this fact, I asked Susan what changes needed to be made within our sector. She said that in order for there to be a change there needs to be more emerging leader programs and executive fellowships that build up minorities and put them in the same trajectory of executive level leadership as their white counterparts. Also, governing boards need to be transparent and honest about American culture and history and how organizations are not detached from this history. In her final words she shared that if there is no seat at the table, then one must bring a chair and make their presence known so that their work will never be ignored. (S. Brown, Expert Interview, May 10, 2021)

Fifth Interview: My last interview was Dr. Danielle R. Moss whom I interviewed on May 12th. Dr. Moss is a Black women CEO, at the Oliver Scholars in New York City. She went from being a middle school History and English Teacher, to a program director, to an assistant Executive Director, to different CEO positions within the nonprofit sector, to finally working at Oliver Scholars. She shared that in her research the representation of people of color at the Executive level of leadership within nonprofits have gone down in recent years, from 16% to 8%. Dr Moss’s explanation of why this drop in people of color at the executive level could be summed up in one word, “racism.” She went on to explain a phrase that explains the current dynamics of the nonprofit sector. “Snowcapped mountains.” Snowcapped mountains mean that it is white at the top and Brown the rest of the way down.

Dr. Moss shared that the nonprofit sector is a microcosm of the American story. The same characteristics of racism that exist in America is the same characteristic that exist in the nonprofit sector. She shared that there needs to be more racial equity through leadership fellowships, less incompetent white folks, and there no longer being a “certain type” of look when thinking of an executive director position. One example that she gave was the fact that one

day she went to work with her hair in its natural curly state and her white male colleague asked if she was angry simply because her hair was not in its usual pulled back bun state. Dr. Moss stated that this was the type of microaggression she as a Black women would experience. The reality is, that “certain looks” that some minorities have do not resonate with certain leaders. She shared that unfortunately, too many nonprofit boards hire for themselves and not for the communities that they serve. The boards view of the right candidate is very different than the populations that they serve and this often happens when the board is comprised of mostly white people. Dr. Moss also mentioned that there is a strong correlation between a white CEO and a majority white board.

When I asked Dr. Moss about the changes that need to be made within our sector Dr. Moss stated that there needs to be sponsorship and mentorship for minorities. The reason why it is important for minorities to have both a mentor and sponsor is because sometimes your mentor is not always the person who has the influence and power. One thought that greatly impacted me as I conducted the interview was when she said “white people should not give themselves the title of allies or feminism without talking to people of color and women first.” This was impactful to me because one must first consult with those who are being disenfranchised and asked the tough question of whether their actions have been supportive and helpful to their movement. To conclude the interview, Dr. Moss shared that when it comes to Jewish nonprofits the people who are on the leadership team are often Jewish. The same goes for Native American nonprofits and their executive board. She states that she doesn’t think that it’s too much to ask for that same reality to be true for Black and Brown leadership. The people representing and leading the nonprofit should be individuals who identifies the same as the demographic that they serve. (D. R. Moss, Expert Interview, May 12, 2021)

Section 2: Literature Review

In the first article titled *Scarce as Hen’s Teeth: Women CEOs in Large Nonprofit Organizations* Review journal Lee (2019) discusses the underlying issue behind the gender gap in nonprofit executive leadership. Lee (2019) links the representation of women on governing boards with the hiring of female CEOs. The findings show boards that had one-third to one-half female board members were more likely to have a women CEO and boards that had less female

representation were more likely to have a male CEO. This study uses information from the 2015 IRS Form 990 of 340 501(c)(3) human services organizations with a gross receipt of \$10 million or more. Form 990 of each organization was retrieved from GuideStar's database. Organizations that met the two standards constituted the sample for this journal. The two search criteria were “human services” type and “gross receipts greater than \$10 million.”

Lee (2019) argues that if there is one-third of women within the nonprofit than that nonprofit most likely will have a minority CEO. If there are more women on the board then they are more likely to have other women board members. The same is true for ethnic minorities. If the board is more ethnically diverse then there will be more ethnically diverse individuals on the board. The conclusion was that a nonprofit is more likely to hire a female CEO when women constitute a substantial minority of the governing board.

In my second article *Whiteness and Masculinity in Nonprofit Organizations: Law, Money, and Institutional Race and Gender* Heckler (2019) expounds on the silence and nervousness when it comes to addressing Masculinity and Whiteness in nonprofits. Heckler shares that the foundation of the nonprofit sector comes from white men and business practices. This has led to a mirroring of effect in which the nonprofit sector has mirrored the business sector. Heckler argues that this silence, nervousness, and blindness maintains Masculinity and Whiteness in the sector because it prevents the close study necessary to disrupt the benefits that are allocated to White men based on their race and gender. This particular journal did not have a data and methods section However, throughout the journal there are countless references made to support Heckler’s research. Heckler referenced studies, articles, journals, and other scholarly material.

This article sheds light on how the nonprofit sector is related to the for-profit sector. I found this study to be interesting because if the nonprofit sector has similar tendencies as the for-profit sector, then one will start to see an overlapping of issues in the nonprofit sector. Heckler shares that this is a discouraging reality because the nonprofit sector is supposed to uphold the values of DEI, and it feels as if this sector is being infiltrated with the mindset of a white-male-dominated culture. The nonprofit needs to address these issues head-on since this topic is often raised within the nonprofit sector. If there aren’t pathways for qualified professional minorities to get hired for

leadership positions then the hope is that the nonprofit sector would be willing to address these issues candidly and openly moving forward.

The third article *The Influence of Board Diversity, Board Diversity Policies and Practices, and Board Inclusion Behaviors on Nonprofit Governance Practices* Buse, Bernstein, Bilimoria (2014) discusses how the performance of a nonprofit board is impacted by the diversity of a board or lack thereof. They investigate board diversity policies, procedures, and inclusion. In this article they discover that board governance practices are directly influenced by the gender and racial diversity of the board. Additionally, they find that when boards have greater gender diversity, there is less of a negative impact of racial diversity on governance practices.

The method that Buse, Bernstein, Bilimoria (2014) uses in this journal is a survey that includes multiple-choice and open-ended questions to collect chief executive officer (CEO) and board member demographics, organizational characteristics, board structure, diversity and inclusion, board meeting practices, compliance with basic governance roles and responsibilities, and collaborative leadership practices. Additionally, this study is partnered with Boardsource and used throughout the research. Candidates are asked about topics such as strategic thinking, monitoring organizational performance, financial oversight, fundraising, and community outreach. Information is extracted from the responses of 1,456 chief executive officers from nonprofit organizations. Responses came from all 50 states in the U.S. and included a mix of nonprofit charities, foundations, and associations

In this fourth third article *An Action Guide for Nonprofit Board Diversity* Daily (2002) provides phases to accomplishing board diversity within Nonprofits.

- Phase 1 is to Consider the Pre-Existing and Contextual Conditions of the board.
- Phase 2 is to prepare the board for change.
- Phase 3 is planning change.

- Phase 4 is implementing change; and Phase 5 is to assess, adjust and stabilize change residue and celebrate accomplishments.

Each phase has an outline on how to accomplish each phase. Ultimately, Daily's action guide helps a nonprofit gain board diversity and achieve higher success and greater impact. This particular journal does not have a data and methods section. However, throughout the journal, there were many articles cited, and literature was used to support the work of this journal.

Daily is clear on making sure that this article is an action guide. This article points to how difficult it is to diversify a nonprofit board and why it is so hard to diversify that board. This action guide is great but I want to dive a bit deeper in understanding the root cause for the lack of diversity. Could it be the effects of systemic racism? Prejudices and preconceived biases? What has led to there being a need for an action guide to take a step-by-step approach for something so simple as diversity? I think the first place to begin when searching for these answers is to look first at the history of this country.

In this fifth article *Stratification, Communication Tactics, And Black Women: Navigating The Social Domain Of Nonprofit Organizations* Adesaogun, Flottemesch, and DeVries (2015) researches to understand the experiences of Black women working in the nonprofit field. In this article they mention that nonprofits that are devoted to serving communities in need are overwhelmingly led by white non-Hispanic individuals even though the staff of the organization is made up of professional diverse staff. The authors discuss that there is race stratification within the nonprofit sector when it comes to leadership and decision-making levels versus front-line workers and entry-level positions.

They continue to discuss strategic tactics that Black women in nonprofits, utilize such as the phrasing of words. Saying "it has been my experience" because your experience cannot be argued down. Also, instead of saying, "You need to", say, "Have you thought about it", because it will allow people to have choices. Participants of this study also cites education as being a strategic tactic as well as being proactive and self-aware. Self-awareness is defined as paying attention to what was going on around them, both verbal and non-verbal cues. Participants

mention the importance of mentorship as well as allying with people at higher levels. Each tactic fell into one of eight key areas:

- **Be Present:** Volunteer for opportunities that will allow you access to the people and situations needed to advance your status in the organization.
- **Be Aware:** Invest in proactive safety measures at all times.
- **Seek Mentorship and Consult:** Widen your boundaries and seek out individuals who may be willing to invest in your personal growth.
- **Consider Your Path:** Be open to mobility. Consider whether your organization is in line with your own goals and ethics.
- **Be Proactive:** Stay aware. Observe the patterns of communication between nonprofit leadership professionals. Capitalize on your ability to predict organizational communication trends.
- **Adapt Your Communication:** Identify how to make your communication more palatable to different segments of your audience.
- **Invest in Education:** Seek out additional training to boost your repertoire of skills. Additionally, educate those around you.
- **Commit to Difficult Decisions:** Be aware of the trends for Black women in the nonprofit field. Decide if and when it is time to leave.

The methods used in this study are qualitative research methods. Subjects are selected informally for this study through mutual nonprofit professional contacts and randomly at professional training and workshops. The research is conducted using observation, surveys, and semi-structured interviews. The study involved 30 Black women working in the nonprofit field.

As a minority man, I can identify with some of the issues that this article touches on. Learning more about the gender gap in pay and how women are perceived is upsetting. I may not have the same privileges as others but I also don't have the same disadvantages as women specifically Black women. Although our experiences are different, I would like to think that as a society we are changing these unfortunate normality's that women and minorities in general experience.

In this sixth article *The Funding Gap Between Black and White Led Organizations Is Clear and Alarming* Wade (2020) talks about the philanthropic efforts and the organizations that receive funding from them. There was a study done with 140 nonprofits and the results showed that on average white lead groups had a 24% larger budget than people of color-led organizations. Additionally, Black women lead organizations had smaller budgets than White women and Black men lead organizations. Another significant find that Wade discusses in the article is in the category of unrestricted net assets (donations used at the discretion of the organization). Unrestricted net assets of Black-led groups were 76% smaller than white-led groups. There could be many reasons that these findings were concluded. There is less trust in Black-led organizations and the network, connections to philanthropy that Black people have are less than White people.

Wade argues that the internal biases that donors have towards Black people affect how much someone plans and chooses to give. The thinking that there is incompetence with Black-led organizations impacts those factors. Additionally, platforms such as “Give Blck” are created since there is a great need to connect donors to Black nonprofits because it currently is lacking.

In this article Wade introduces another issue that Black people face, which is funding. Not only are Black people disproportionately misrepresented in leadership but even when they are in leadership, they still have greater obstacles than their White counterparts. It also produces a cycle that is difficult to break, which is to be known as unsustainable and ineffective in comparison to other organizations. It is quite difficult to be as sustainable and effective as White led organizations when your unrestricted net assets are 76% smaller in comparison. Even in this regard, Black-led organizations are playing catch up since they are significantly starting from behind.

In the seventh article titled *Nonprofit Leaders of Color Speak Out About Struggles and Triumphs* Wallace (2019) shares the experience of Nonprofit leaders of color in different states of the US. Her findings ranged from grant makers still not trusting Black leaders with money to a Jamaican immigrant woman now vice president for talent and human resources at the Ford foundation realizing that skin color is a factor in the US. Wallace shares that even a Hispanic woman who is currently the CEO of the Institute for Nonprofit practice did not know how to

leverage a network which led to missed opportunities and privileges that other people took advantage of to rise in their career. Wallace shares that code words, such as “Oakland” when someone asked if your nonprofit is in Oakland they are asserting that your nonprofit is an African American led organization as opposed to a San Francisco nonprofit having a different meaning altogether. The article can be summed up by saying that many people talk about racial equity but not many are integrating it into work or changing how they operate.

I believe that this article is an eye-opener for anyone. The people in this article are CEOs, Vice Presidents, work at nonprofits and foundations. To read about their experiences and the realities that they still currently live in makes me think about what needs to happen for there to change across the entire sector. Is it time? Is it more education around diversity, equity, and inclusion? Is it boards becoming more diverse? I am not sure exactly what needs to happen but I know that things cannot remain the same.

In the eighth article *Diversity on Hold: In the past year, seven of the top 100 charities hired new CEOs — six were white* Theis and Parks (2020) put things into perspective. While the authors of this article do not share that the public sector is slightly ahead of the curve in comparison to the private sector, it they share that the percentage is not by much. They share that in the public sector from 2019 to 2020, 7 of 100 top charities hired new CEOs and six were white. Additionally, Theis and Parks share that 9 in 10 leaders at large nonprofits (ranked by how much they raise in private gifts) are white and predominantly white men. In this article the authors also share that only 11 of 100 America’s favorite charities are ran by non-white men.

It shows that if the nonprofit sector was supposed to lead the way in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the highest levels of leadership, then the sector is falling short. While I understand that the work done by the nonprofit sector is much needed and there is great work being done, I can help but wonder why this hypocrisy exists and at the level that it does. I could understand how diversity issues would not be completely solved however I also would think that this sector would have a better grip on Diversity.

In my ninth article *Failure is Not an Option: How Nonprofit Boards Can Support Leaders of Color* Fernandez, Kapila, and Romans (2020) discusses some of the same challenges that people of color face at the CEO, ED, and C-suite leader's positions. There are racial inequities in philanthropic dollars and difficulties to access small business loans for people of color-led nonprofits. People of color are not allowed to "fail forward" due to overt and implicit bias to "get it right." They carry the pressure to be successful for other people of color and pave the way for leaders to come. The authors share how the nonprofit board can support leaders of color. Fernandez, Kapila, and Romans share to assess your leadership context, build in and support a professional and relationship development plan, create a container for risk-taking, and partner on racial equity.

I appreciated this article because it helped provide solutions. For me to read about the issues and challenges that people of color face, especially at this level of leadership feels overwhelming. To have something that boards can put into practice sounds good. The only challenge I imagine would surface is the willingness of boards to take the advice. I hope that more boards are willing to support their current or future people of color leaders.

The tenth article Black Women in Nonprofits Matter by Lee (2020) is important and definitely needed in today's nonprofit climate. Lee presents the issues that exist in the nonprofit sector when it comes to Black women at the executive level. Lee also brings solutions. She shares 10 ways to demonstrate decisive action to reckon with this issue of inequity at higher levels of leadership. She says:

1. Boards need to engage in equity and inclusion work
2. Eliminate "give/get" on boards
3. Check your search for talent firm
4. Stop posting jobs that aren't truly available
5. Black women leaders don't need to be validated by white men
6. Don't undermine Black women's leadership
7. Pay Black women
8. Black women need sponsors
9. Fund Black women

10. Reckon with racism

I truly loved this piece article because I love how the Dr. Danielle Moss Lee is CEO of Oliver Scholars, a Black woman, gave us readers tangible solutions to the issues that are faced in our sector. I truly loved how she differentiated between a mentor, ally and a sponsor. I think that is huge in changing the narrative and experience of people of color aspiring for Executive level leadership. Additionally, I loved the part of not undermining Black women's leadership by backing and supporting the Black woman CEO. I think if these points were heeded to and applied there would be some positive change for equity among people of color leaders.

The eleventh and final article *Reflecting on Leadership Diversity in Today's Nonprofit Sector* Buteau (2019) discusses similar challenges that exist in the nonprofit sector when it comes to leadership diversity. Buteau shares that even though many nonprofits believe in diversity and that leadership should reflect who they serve, a smaller group of nonprofits actually do. She also brings up the issue with funding and the "wait-and-see" approach to funding that people of color face when they accept CEO positions. Women who work for large nonprofits shared that they knew their organization favors males over equally qualified females for senior leadership positions. Buteau focuses her analysis on U.S. executive directors only, and the 15,000 respondents in their dataset. The end result showed that 75% of executive directors identify as white.

It takes a lot of effort to want to fight an uphill battle. This article points out the setbacks that many CEOs of color have to endure as they lead. Already the work is difficult and the compensation is not as much as the private sector. This leads me to think about the reason someone would want to endure these setbacks in the nonprofit sector. At least in the private sector, you could be compensated more for your troubles. The way I see it is this type of work has to be your passion or else you won't last in pursuing your aspiration of becoming a CEO.

Section 3: Methods and Approaches

I conducted five expert interviews that ranged from CEOs and Executive Directors of nonprofits and consulting firms. The experts involved in the interviews were from the Bay Area, Southern California, and New York City. The interviewees were all minority by ethnicity, gender or both. In order to contact each of my interviewees I used LinkedIn, email, personal referrals, and personal contact. For two of the interviews, I used the zoom platform to conduct the interview and for the other three I used the calling by phone method.

When looking for the participants to conduct my interview I began my search by looking for minority executive directors in the nonprofit sector. To find the participants I looked through the website The Chronicles of Philanthropy where I was able to find a plethora of articles that talked about nonprofit minorities and their experiences. When I came across minority leaders and where they were executive leaders, I was able to find their contact information and email them.

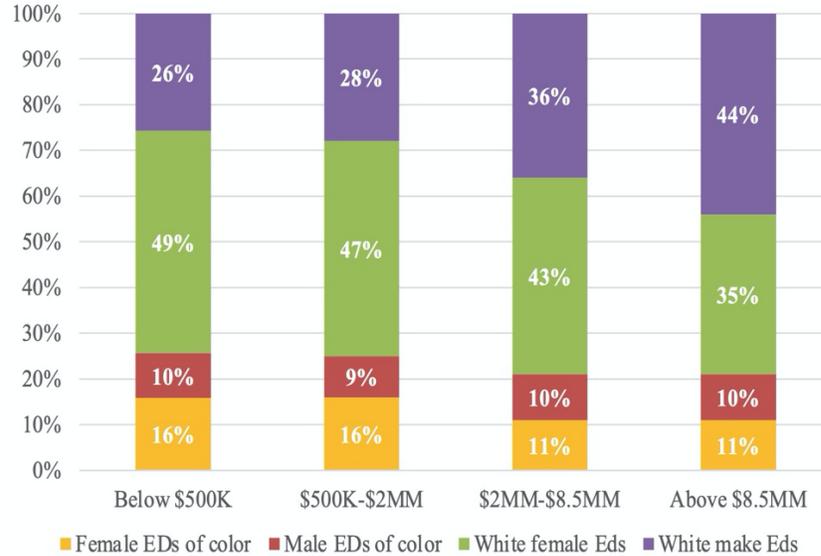
For the Literature Review I used EBSCO to find all of my peer review articles and academic journals. I used EBSCO because this platform gives us free access to find all of the data relevant to my research. I also used industry related publication websites to validate my findings.

After conducting all of my academic research and compiling my findings for this capstone and having personal interviews with individuals in this sector I stand with where the research has taken me and the realities that minority Executive Leaders have faced. The truth is that nonprofits has struggled and is still struggling with providing capacity for minorities to lead. The people that I have interviewed have a strong pedigree of education and experience yet they admit that they have experienced challenges either within the organization, foundations, corporations, and individuals. The reasons for these challenges are simply because the way they look.

My standpoint is that the nonprofit sector should find these discriminations towards minority leaders to be unacceptable. There needs to be more pressure and accountability put on the boards and philanthropy. There needs to be this same accountability internally and externally towards all of those who have bought into this poor standard of leadership. With a shift in culture together philanthropy and the boards will start to create the capacity for minority leaders who are more than qualified to lead without prejudices or barriers.

Section 4. Data Analysis

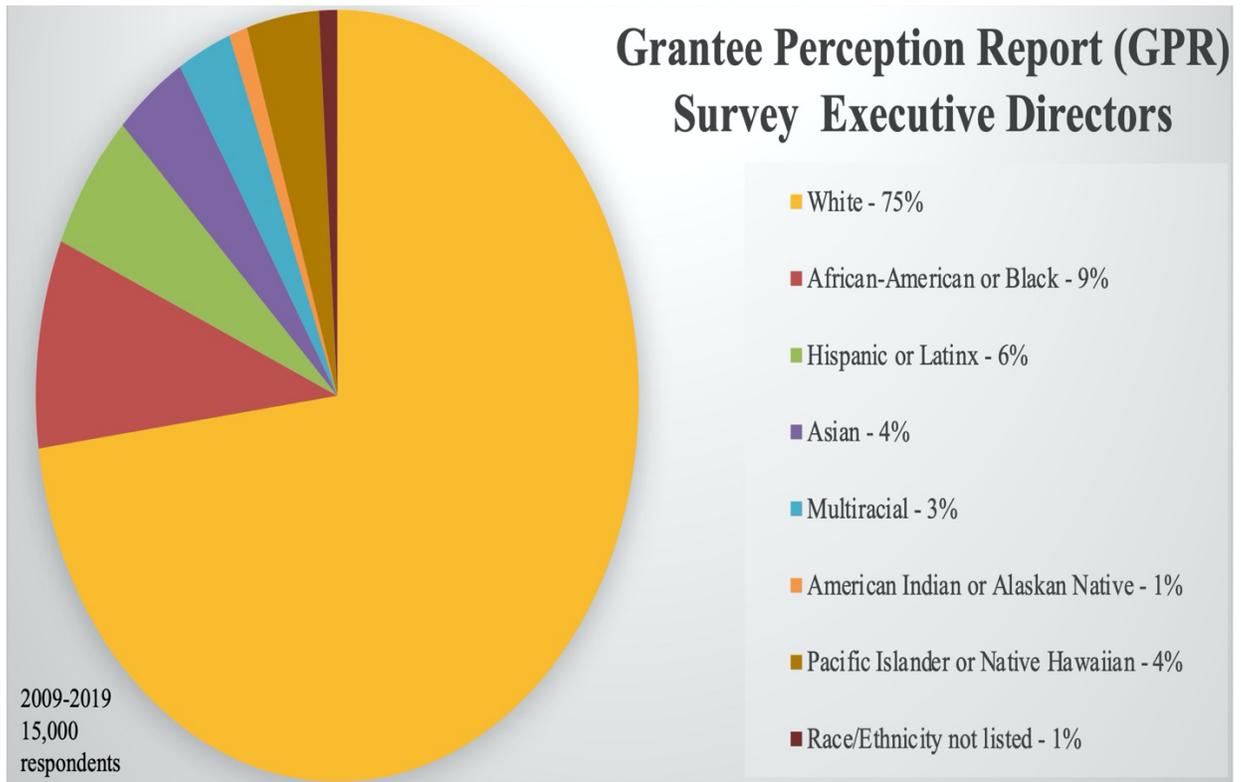
Table 1: Executive Directors by Quartile Budget



Data from “Reflecting on Leadership Diversity in Today’s Nonprofit Sector” by E. Buteau, 2019

This graph is a depiction of when budgets get bigger there are more white male leadership at the executive director position. The graph also shows that White female executive directors are more likely trusted as an executive director when the quarterly budget is below 500k as opposed to it being higher than 500k. For female executive directors of color there is a decrease of representation as the quartile budget increases. Whereas for male executive directors of color their representation stays steady but it is still smaller than their white male counterparts.

Figure 1: Cross-Sector and Fourth Sector Value Trajectories



This pie chart represents the Grantee Perception Report survey of executive directors over the course of 10 years with 15,000 respondents. From the survey we can deduce that white people are the great majority of executive directors (75%). Meanwhile all of the minorities who responded to the survey combined make up $\frac{1}{4}$ of executive directors at nonprofits.

Table 2: Population Reflection, Organizational Leadership



This bar graph shows us nonprofit CEOs opinions in regards to how important it is for nonprofits to reflect the populations that they serve. It also shows us their reflection on how well they actually reflect the populations they serve. There are also three levels of leadership represented on this bar graph, full staff, Board of Directors, and senior leadership. This bar graph shows us that while all levels of leadership believe it is very or extremely important to have representation of the populations they serve within their nonprofits, they admittedly report that they are falling short in representing the populations that they serve.

Section 5: Implications and Recommendations

The implications of my finding show that there is a strong correlation between network access and achieving a higher echelon of leadership such as the CEO or Executive Director position. Additionally, this information showcased in the paper directs our attention to the reality of unequal funding in the realm of philanthropy. Majority of Black-led nonprofits do not receive sufficient funds to effectively execute their work. A key takeaway for creating capacity for minority leaders to lead at executive levels is that mentorship needs to become sponsorship. Mentorship and sponsorship are often seen as synonymous or used interchangeable, but in reality, their impact is markedly different. When a mentor provides mentorship to an aspiring young person, they are giving advice, tips on life, and techniques for success. Whereas sponsorship creates opportunities for one to lead. The last implication is that unfortunately, the nonprofit sector is not detached from the American story of White Supremacy and masculinity. This truth of American history needs to be addressed head on and resolved in order for there to be true diversity, equity, and inclusion for incoming minority CEOs.

My recommendation for the nonprofit sector to creating capacity for minority CEOs to lead are the following: Sponsorship, Partnership, and Advocacy. As mentioned in my implications, sponsorship is greatly important because it creates opportunities for one to lead. Mentorship and allyship need to become sponsorship for minorities. Those who have the power, privilege and network must utilize these opportunities in order to create openings for minorities to become executive leaders that otherwise would not be available to them. My second recommendation is partnership. Some specifics in regard to practical partnerships involves changing policies and procedures within a nonprofit to garner equitable opportunities for minorities to achieve greater success. Governing boards within a nonprofit must make room for minorities to make mistakes, experience growth, and ask for help. Nonprofit organizations must trust, support, and follow the leadership of minority CEOs without second guessing or undermining their leadership. My last recommendation for the nonprofit sector creating capacity for nonprofit CEOs is advocacy. If within the nonprofit sector there are an individual that have all of the power, then it is their duty and responsibility to inform other staff members and board members about the important structural changes that need to happen within the sector to make sure that minorities have the capacity to lead. Those who have that power, privilege, connection

and network must address foundations that they are connected with about the significance of funding of minority CEOs and their nonprofits. Lastly, they must continue to speak up and challenge organizational cultures and practices that do not align with the mission of achieving diversity, equity, and inclusion. A simple question that can be asked is, “Why has there not been minority CEOs within their organization?” and the final question can be “How can we, as an organization start to reflect the population that we serve?” This is my recommendation for capacity building of minority leadership within the nonprofit sector.

Section 6: Conclusion

To conclude, this report shows that there is still a lack of minority representation at the executive level of leadership within the nonprofit sector. The reason for this truth is because the nonprofit sector is non detached from the American narrative of White Supremacy and masculinity. The privileges that non people of color have are the privileges that their fore fathers had since the conception of this country. They are born with generational wealth that brings along connection, network, power, traditions, and values that they have amassed in droves that they will eventually pass along to their children and great grandchildren. With this understanding of history for minority leaders to reach the same level of leadership, those same white individuals must use the privileges that they have inherited for the benefit of minorities.

Since the passing of George Floyd there has been a racial reckoning where nonprofits and foundations have been forced to deal with the disparities that exist within the nonprofit sector. There have been an uptick of foundations giving more to minority nonprofits and elevating to these levels of executive leadership. The underlining question that will be answered only with time is whether or not this is a moment in time or a movement of permanent change. After conducting interviews with prominent minority CEOs, the hope is that this moment of racial reckoning will be one that transcends racism and ushers in a new movement. A movement where individuals who are minority leaders with ability and skill will now lead in spaces that were once predominately white but now saturated with color and diversity.

Moving forward, if I could find more data surrounding this topic in peer's reviews, academic journals, and scholarly reviews on the topic of nonprofits that have created prominent capacity for there to be minority executive leaders, I believe it would add greater substance and tools for other nonprofits seeking to advance their diversity, equity, and inclusion culture. In doing more research and with time I would like to help create an action guide to help nonprofits achieve board diversity. This guide would be very beneficial in pushing the diversity, equity, and inclusion needle towards the right direction thus creating more capacity for well-equipped minorities to lead in executive level positions.

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Appendix A: An action Guide for Nonprofit Board Diversity

This appendix consists of An action Guide for Nonprofit Board Diversity. It will take you step by step teaching you how to facilitate diversity at the board level. Phase One: Considering Pre-Existing and Contextual Conditions. Phase Two: Preparing the Board for Change. Phase Three: Planning Change. Key tasks to be completed during planning include: (1) defining and analyzing the problem or opportunity, (2) setting goals, and (3) developing an action plan to implement change, including an evaluation plan. Phase Four: Implementing Change. Phase Five: Assessing, Adjusting and Stabilizing Change Residue and Celebrating Accomplishments. Have key intended outcomes been achieved? Have other outcomes (positive or negative) become apparent? What have participants learned? What remains to be done? What next steps are identified? What needs to be done to stabilize the gains secured during the change episode? At key evaluation points, participants should formally recognize and celebrate the gains achieved by the change effort. Celebration provides a wonderful opportunity to identify and reinforce improved conditions, strong leadership and enhanced group capacity.

Author's Bio

Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" This profound, yet simple question has foreshadowed the story of my life. As I look at where I've been, and how far I have come, I realize that the way I live my life now is by always finding ways to be of service to others.

My childhood years were lived in the Decoto District of Union City, California. As I matriculated from primary school to secondary school, my family and I spent my adolescent years in Hayward, CA. I am the fourth son of proud Mexican parents who emigrated from Mexico with few possessions and a fervent hope for the potential of their future in this country. Being the youngest, I was able to live vicariously—only for a short while—through the lives of my brothers. Unfortunately, this meant, growing up male in a community riddled with violence and overt criminal activity almost guaranteed involvement in gang culture.

Due to poverty and lack of full education, my parents settled our family into an area predominated by minority groups, whom also established themselves into these communities because of social, legal, and economic pressures. It is almost like taking your family to the beach with the understanding that the trip will not be enjoyable. At just about any beach, the rule of thumb is that one will make contact with eroded silica, or sand. The sand will get between your toes, in your hair or even in the meal you were so delightfully looking forward to. When one lives in the ghetto, there is no escaping the truisms of gang culture and its inevitable role in the neighborhood. By the time I left elementary school I began to behave in a manner that was derivative of my neighborhood. I had learned about gangster rap, how to fight with a closed fist, who the rival gangs were, what color, letter, and number I was supposed to wear to represent our neighborhood, how to play street craps, what a gun looked like, the smell of marijuana and the taste of alcohol. By the time I entered into my 6th grade year of school I was fully immersed into this gang culture.

Now it might be easier to understand that as an adolescent I did not have many aspirations. Being complacent and underperforming in school was not an important topic for debate with my parents. As long as I did not join a gang, commit crimes, stayed away from drugs and had a job, things were congenial at home. It was as if there was this unspoken convention between my parents and I, that as long as I didn't cause catastrophic distress, I would be

considered their good child. My family and I eventually had to move to a different city, and I despised having to relocate. It would take me some years to realize, but as I look back, what seemed like a vicissitude was truly God guiding the trajectory of my life. Moving did not change everything, but it allowed me to part ways with my old neighborhood and all the blatant criminal activity that was the norm. Playing football and being known as the “cool guy,” started to become my new identity throughout high school. I was not the perfect teenager, but I was also not the worst. I was around individuals who sold drugs and in the car with friends who drove without a license while under the influence of alcohol (more often than I would like to admit) but I also respected the adults in my life and went to church with my parents every weekend. It was during my senior year of high school where my most pivotal experience occurred. It was Mother’s Day morning when two of my close friends were murdered, Rafael Avila and Carlos Buenrostro. The heart ache and trauma of losing two of my close friends to gun violence changed my perspective and eventually it changed my life.

Around the age of 21, I started to ask myself questions: Could things have turned out differently? Did my brothers have to end up in juvenile detention facilities and spend time in county jail? Did our house have to be raided by police? Did my friends have to die? What could have been done to change this narrative? After dwelling on the past and what could have or should have been, I started thinking about the present. I was no longer a child, nor an adolescent, however, there were still children and adolescents in neighborhoods like my own, that continued to succumb to the pitfalls that carpet their environment. This reality dug itself deep into the crevasses of my mind. There were other young people who had not yet made it out of these run-down neighborhoods, whose stories were and still are being written by their severe realities. Deep down, I knew that growing up, if I was equipped with the proper tools, I would have tried to change the reality my family and friends lived. I understood that I could not change the past and now had to focus on the present and what is to come.

Reflecting on my life experiences forced me to become more conscious about the lives of others. I began to hone in on this passion during my undergraduate years at Pacific Union College (PUC). This passion of helping marginalized young people comes from a place of having needed that same help but never truly receiving it. My life would have taken a different course had I had a mentor growing up. If I had people intentionally pouring wisdom and guidance into my life, I would have valued education more. My purpose is to now be that mentor

and advocate for other young people. My life story will inspire and set these young people up for a prosperous and a better life than the one they are currently living.

I have come to realize that the power of presence is undoubtedly impactful. Whether that is the presence of a father in the home, the presence of a mentor in a young person's life, or the presence of a friend during difficult times. It is essential to note that what matters is our presence and its impact to future generations. This ideology is what fuels the fire of my ambition. I have worked for the last five years in the Bay Area with churches and communities in the cities of Vallejo, Richmond, Oakland, and other areas like Stockton and Sacramento. With the help of parents and so many caring and involved community members, my team and I have been able to create positive and uplifting environments for the youth. As a byproduct of our hard work, new communities have been formed, new friendships have been established, and new cultures have been recognized. Additionally, I have accepted to work with Today's Youth Matter (TYM) a non-profit, that solely focuses on children and youth from high-risk urban communities. TYM offer services that help transform the lives of children through year-round programming and mentoring relationships, while also guiding students through a "transformational journey" to instill resilience and fulfill their God given potential.

Now how does this motivate me to pursue my master's degree in Non-Profit Administration and become a mentor for others some may ask. Through this journey, recognizing and understanding limitations is a humbling yet exciting process. It is humbling and electrifying to realize that there are things that one cannot accomplish that other are better at, and that there are skills that have not developed in us just yet. Coming to these realizations can be unfavorable to a person's self-esteem or it can be pure motivation. I have chosen the latter. How a person chooses to approach their inadequacies matters more than being inadequate in small areas of their lives. With this understanding, I am constantly motivated to pursue higher education, to learn new skills, and acquire knowledge that will better prepare me to be an agent of change for urban communities and generations to come.