

BIOS OF FACULTY

André Lynch is a dynamic and dedicated Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) consultant and coach, known for his work in fostering inclusive environments and driving positive organizational change. Mr. Lynch is a Doctoral Researcher at St. John Fisher University, within their Executive Leadership Program. He holds a Master of Education in Educational Leadership, emphasizing higher education, from St. Lawrence University.

Mr. Lynch has established the first DEIB professional organization in Berkshire County, "The Berkshire Equity Association" (BEA); and recently hosted for the second year "International Festival", which is the Northern Berkshire's first, and only, international festival. He comes to the Berkshires by way of higher education, where he last served as Associate Dean for Equity and Inclusion. Mr. Lynch has presented at numerous workshops and conferences, most recently at Massachusetts Association of Business Officers; United Against Hate; and Western Massachusetts premier conference concerning equity, entitled "Equity in the 413". Mr. Lynch has served as keynote for "Cultural Appreciation Week" at the North Adams Probation court; a 2024 "40 Under Forty" Award recipient; and is involved with many community-based organizations both regionally and nationally, including the Berkshire Black Economic Council, NAACP Berkshires, and the Blackshires Community Empowerment Organization.

Having accumulated over a decade of experience, Mr. Lynch's unique approach combines data with practical strategies. Mr. Lynch's coaching style is characterized by empathy, authenticity, and deep listening. His ability to blend a strong theoretical foundation, with real-world applicability, makes him a sought-after advisor in the field.

Michael Obasohan, M.Ed, Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) for the City of Pittsfield, will co-champion this effort. His expansive knowledge of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Racial Justice stems from his career in Higher Education and government agencies. His purpose is to provide space for opportunities and possibilities for research, dialogue, and collaboration for those who are committed to true social and institutional change. As the CDO, his expertise is utilized in many sectors, such as policy reform, community organizing, health, and digital equity at a local and state level. Michael has successfully designed and implemented result-oriented DEIB processes, professional developments, proposals, and dialogues for senior leaders, staff, and community stakeholders that encourage self-reflection, learning, awareness, and understanding, all while building community across differences. His hope is to inspire organizational growth and change as well as equitable outcomes for diverse communities.

Sharron Frazier-McClain, Director of Community Engagement & DEIA/Barrington Stage Co. serves at the liaison between the organization and the community. She spends a large amount of her time out in the community taking an assessment of who the organization is already serving and who they are not. Her focus is on intentional relationship building with the hope of creating multiple entry points into an organization that has been predominantly white for too many years. She believes that art is an effective community building tool, but more importantly, that people should have the ability to be the author and editor of their own stories.

Sharron has created and serves as Executive Producer of an initiative at BSC called Black Voices Matter - a platform for Local BIPOC Artists to be able to share their talent, network, and stories for the purpose of Celebration, Empowerment, and Education. It includes a digital platform where BIPOC artists are highlighted; an educational component where a series of virtual plays were produced to share the Black experience and address issues that Black people face on a daily basis; and Live Performance allowing BIPOC Artists to perform on a larger scale by utilizing the resources of a larger organization. Celebration of Black Voices Festival which is a week-long festival dedicated to BIPOC Performers sharing their gifts

and talents with the community. This week-long festival is filled with 7 events that are free to the community. All performers and participants are paid a stipend for their participation. Sharron believes that minorities should be the owners of their creativity and should be compensated for their time. In 2023, Sharron created Youth Voices Ensemble Performing Arts camp which is the first and only performing arts camp for BIPOC children in Berkshire County. This camp was created to offer professional mentorship, and the opportunity to create and perform original works. Youth Voices Ensemble prides itself in addressing accessibility, creating affinity spaces, and supporting the well-being of our participants with meals and stipends. The goal is to celebrate the legacy, creativity, and future of Black voices in our community.

With a strong passion for her community and uplifting those that look like her, Sharron serves as a member of the Board of Directors at the Christian Center in Pittsfield, MA. She also consults with Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation as a Grant Review Specialist with the intention of ensuring equity in Grant Application decisions. Sharron has consulted with several colleges teaching a course in Intentional Relation Building & Community Engagement in the Arts. Sharron also lends her talents in assisting Faculty on how to make their curriculum more inclusive and working with organizations on their EDI Strategic Plans.

Sharron is a wife and mother. She is also a Minister in Pittsfield, MA. Her love for God leads her in her daily engagements with community members but also when advocating for the underserved. Her love for her family motivates her to doing her part in making Pittsfield a better place for minorities as a whole. She intends to continue using art as the vehicle to connect people on all levels and creating a pipeline into the Arts and Culture Sector for those communities that are currently underrepresented.