URBAN DREAM INITIATIVE

CAREER PATHWAYS PROGRAM

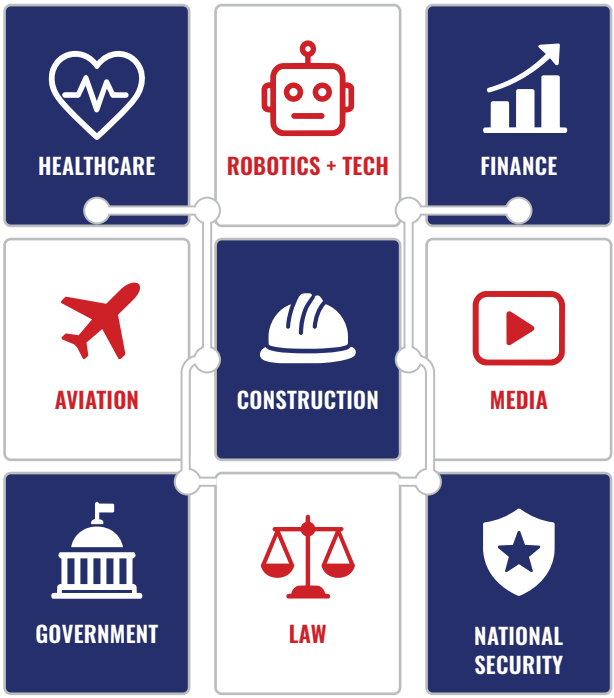
FIND YOUR PATH

One day. Real professionals. New possibilities.

TUESDAY
OCT
20
2026

10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Check-In Begins
At 9:30 AM



Martin Luther King High School
6100 Stenton Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19138

Open to Philadelphia students in grades 11-12

EXPLORE WHAT'S POSSIBLE

URBAN DREAM INITIATIVE

2026 CAREER PATHWAYS PROGRAM

Tuesday, October 20, 2026 | Martin Luther King High School
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

OFFICIAL PROGRAM AGENDA

Presenter Arrival, Check-In & Escort Assignments

Presentation of Colors
Martin Luther King High School JROTC Color Guard

National Anthem
Ashli Rice Allen | Featured Vocalist

Welcome & Opening Remarks
Keisha Q. Wilkins | Principal, Martin Luther King High School
Ebony N. Thomas, Esq. | Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Urban Dream Initiative

Musical Selection – "Rise Up"
Ashli Rice Allen | Featured Vocalist

Career Pathways Breakout Session I

Career Pathways Breakout Session II

Lunch

Career Pathways Breakout Session III

Career Pathways Breakout Session IV

Return to Auditorium

Career Pathways Leadership Panel & Student Q&A

2026 Career Pathways Program

Essay Competition Awards Presentation
Recognition of Four $250 Scholarship Recipients

Closing Remarks & Acknowledgments
Ebony N. Thomas, Esq. | Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Urban Dream Initiative

Building Dreams. Creating Opportunities.



Keisha Q. Wilkins

Martin Luther King High School Principal

Keisha Q. Wilkins is an educator, school leader, advocate, and community-centered change agent currently serving as Principal of Martin Luther King High School in the School District of Philadelphia. A proud Philadelphia native raised in Germantown, Wilkins has dedicated her career to advancing equity, belonging, and opportunity for students in historically underserved communities.

Over the course of her educational career, she has served as a gifted education teacher, Dean of Students, Instructional Coach, and school administrator. Under her leadership, Martin Luther King High School has experienced measurable growth in graduation outcomes, academic performance, school climate systems, and student engagement initiatives. She is recognized for her commitment to trauma-responsive leadership, culturally grounded school culture, and systems that prioritize both accountability and humanity.

Wilkins is widely respected for building sustainable structures that support students navigating community violence, poverty, housing instability, and other barriers that directly impact educational outcomes. Her leadership emphasizes operational coherence, restorative practices,

strategic partnerships, and the development of future leaders within schools.
In addition to her work in education, Wilkins is deeply engaged in civic and community leadership. She has served in numerous leadership roles, including Vice President of the West Chester University Black Alumni Chapter, Education and Research Chair for the Teamsters National Black Caucus, and former Board Director for The Cheyney Foundation. She is also anactive member of the National Council of Negro Women, Order of Eastern Star, and a Deaconess at Ezekiel Baptist Church.

An accomplished endurance athlete and wellness advocate, Wilkins is an avid runner, powerlifter, and CrossFit enthusiast who has completed more than 100 races, including marathons and ultra-marathons. Her leadership philosophy is rooted in service, sustainability, truth, and collective empowerment.



Ashli Rice Allen

Featured Vocalist
National Anthem & Special Musical Selection

Her vocal ability has been described as world class by the Philadelphia Inquirer. Ashli Rice Allen was born and raised in the suburb of Philadelphia, PA. She performed in her first concert at the tender age of six at Mount Sinai Baptist Church in Lansdowne, PA.

She has been the official national anthem singer for the Major League Soccer team The Philadelphia Union for 11 seasons.

She is a professional actress having performed both in the US and the People's Republic of China where she was cast in the off Broadway tour of the musical "FAME. "

Notable Performances:

- Featured Commencement Singer for Cheyney University's Graduation (2023)
- Featured Performer at the Governor's Mansion by invitation of the PA Governor Josh Shapiro in Harrisburg
- Performed for the Philadelphia Eagles & Sixers (2026/2025)
- The Dell Music Center East (2025)
- FIFA Club World Cup (2025)

Ashli is a recording artist and her debut single, entitled "Woman" is available on all streaming platforms. Her lyrics empower women especially but it hits the heart of all who hears her music. She has been seen on FOX 29, PHL17 and heard on WDAS and Reach Gospel radio stations.

Ashli leads praise and worship at the Church of Christian Compassion in West Philadelphia.

As a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Ashli is no stranger to serving her community. She is often found singing and serving at the Chosen 300 ministries an organization that feeds the homeless in Philadelphia. Ashli is an HBCU graduate of Morgan State University and credits her many accomplishments to her start there and touring with Morgan's world renowned choir.

Her favorite verse is Jeremiah 29:11.



Russell A. Gallagher, Ed.D.

Chief of Education, Urban Dream Initiative

Lieutenant Colonel Russell A. Gallagher, Ed.D., United States Army (Retired), is a distinguished educator, military leader, and longtime advocate for Philadelphia students. A Philadelphia native and graduate of the city's public schools, Dr. Gallagher brings more than four decades of experience in education, military service, youth development, and leadership.
Following a distinguished Army career in aviation, cavalry, and intelligence, Dr. Gallagher retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1995. A Master Army Aviator, he accumulated more than 2,200 flight hours and received numerous military honors, including the Legion of Merit and four Meritorious Service Medals.

After retiring from active duty, Dr. Gallagher dedicated his career to education. He served as Senior Army Instructor at Roxborough High School, became the first Director of Junior ROTC for the School District of Philadelphia, and later served as Assistant Principal of West Philadelphia High School, Principal of 21st Century Cyber Charter School, and Founding Principal of ACT Academy Cyber Charter School. He also played an instrumental role in the creation of the Philadelphia Military Academy and later served as its Commandant.
Dr. Gallagher holds a Bachelor of Science from Pennsylvania State University, a Master of Arts from Central Michigan University, and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Phoenix.

As Chief of Education for the Urban Dream Initiative, Dr. Gallagher provides strategic leadership and educational oversight for UDI's youth programs. He helps shape initiatives focused on career exposure, leadership development, mentorship, educational partnerships, and long-term student success. His lifelong commitment to service and education reflects UDI's mission to expand opportunity for young people, particularly those from underserved communities.



ENERGY & UTILITIES

Kevin Walker

President & Chief Executive Officer
Duquesne Light Holdings, Inc.

Kevin Walker, President and CEO of Duquesne Light Holdings Inc. (DLH), is playing a leading role in the Pittsburgh region's clean energy transition. With more than 30 years of experience in various roles at multiple utilities across the country, Walker is strategically positioning DLH, which includes Duquesne Light Company (DLC) and The Efficiency Network, to serve as a trusted partner for all.

Prior to joining DLC as Chief Operating Officer in April 2020, Walker served various executive appointments, including Senior Vice President of Customer and Operations Services and Nuclear Decommissioning at Southern California Edison, and Chief Operating Officer positions at Iberdrola and American Electric Power.
Walker is a proud veteran of the U.S. Army. He holds a Bachelor's degree in civil engineering from West Point Academy and an MBA from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania.



HEALTHCARE & GOVERNMENT

Todd Hunter

Former Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs

President Trump appointed Mr. Todd Hunter the Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs on January 20, 2025. During President Trump's initial term, Mr. Hunter was the Deputy Executive Director within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection. In this capacity, he provided essential oversight for the Secretary's accountability priorities and conducted comprehensive final reviews of investigations. Additionally, Mr. Hunter was instrumental in advising VA leadership on coordination, direction, and assessment of whistleblower protections and senior leader accountability.

Before assuming the role of Acting Secretary, Mr. Hunter held the position of Executive Director for the Office of Mission Support where he is the principal advisor to the Under Secretary for Benefits and other senior officials within the Veterans Benefits Administration. His responsibilities encompass a variety of initiatives and activities aimed at enhancing the operations of the Veterans Benefits Administration, particularly in Administration, Acquisition, Facilities, Operations, Safety, Security, and Preparedness programs and policies.

Mr. Hunter has held several positions within the Department, including Acting Associate Executive Director for the Strategic Acquisition Center and Executive Director of the Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction (OALC). He has extensive knowledge of establishing the Business Operations Center within the OALC. His responsibilities encompassed the development of a comprehensive framework for accountability regarding OALC business processes, which included workforce management and planning, emergency preparedness, continuity of operations, management of the Supply Fund appropriated and reimbursable funds, and strategic financial oversight.

Mr. Hunter has an extensive career in the United States Army, serving 22 years. His assignments included two tours with the 3rd Infantry Regiment, known as The Old Guard, located at Fort Myer, Virginia, and a tour with the United States Army Personnel Command, The Third Infantry Division, First Calvary Division.

Mr. Hunter has been honored with the Legion of Merit Medal. He received the esteemed Bainbridge Award from the Association of the United States Army in recognition of his significant contributions to the Army and his dedication to community service. As a distinguished member of the Old Guard, Mr. Hunter actively participates in several nonprofit organizations, including the Association of the United States Army and the Army Historical Association.



BANKING, FINANCE & INSURANCE

Cam Henson

Senior Vice President, Citi

Cam Henson is an Atlanta, Georgia native whose journey has been shaped by leadership, service, brotherhood, and a commitment to creating opportunities for others.

Cam attended the United States Naval Academy, where he earned his degree while competing as a Division I football player. Following graduation, he served six years as a U.S. Naval Officer, holding leadership roles spanning operational readiness, contracting, logistics, and information warfare. His assignments included service aboard the USS George Washington and leadership at Naval Information Warfare Command New Orleans, where he helped lead operations through significant periods of disruption, including hurricane response.

Following his military service, Cam transitioned into financial services and today serves as a Senior Vice President at Citi, where he leads enterprise transformation and strategic initiatives within one of the world's largest financial institutions. His experience spans regulatory remediation, enterprise governance, and large scale program execution, with a focus on turning complex organizational priorities into measurable results.

That commitment to leadership and service extends well beyond his professional career. Cam serves as President of the Board of Pursuit of Brotherhood, a Tampa based organization dedicated to creating meaningful community and opportunity for Black men through mentorship, professional development, economic empowerment, leadership, and service. Through Pursuit of Brotherhood, Cam is passionate about creating spaces where Black men can build authentic relationships, expand their networks, support one another's growth, and invest in the next generation.

Cam is also a proud member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., where he continues his commitment to achievement, mentorship, service, and the development of young men.
Across each chapter of his life, from athletics and military service to corporate leadership and community impact, Cam has remained grounded in the belief that achievement carries a responsibility to serve and create opportunities for others. He was recently recognized as a Tampa Bay Business Journal 40 Under 40 honoree.



BANKING, FINANCE & INSURANCE

John Gilmore

Finance & Investment Management

John Gilmore is a finance and investment professional with experience across asset management, capital markets, and emerging financial technologies. He has built his career at the intersection of investing, technology, and financial markets, with experience spanning multiple markets and geographies. His work focuses on how investment capital, evolving technologies—including machine learning, digital assets, and tokenization—are reshaping investment management and the broader financial system.

He began his career in the US Army deploying to Iraq, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and several other international locations. While in Saudi Arabia, John developed a joint capabilities development program between the United States and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As the Forward Program Manager, under John's tenue, the program increased from zero to $1 billion in development value. Today the program is over $10 billion in asset value.

After the Army, John led a Quant Team of PhDs, data engineers and developers building models at Vanguard. Vanguard is the second largest investment firm in the world. Next John was the first employee at a new investment manager Academy. After building the trading platform, the investment banking broker dealer counter party network, and raised capital from investors, John was the lead Portfolio Manager. Assets grew from $1 million to $1.3 Billion in 3 years.

Currently John is at BlackRock, the world's largest investment firm. He is an investment strategist for some of BlackRock's largest investors, including governments, Corporations, Foundations, Endowments and Healthcare Institutions. His remit is across all investment asset classes, including public stocks, bonds, Private equity, credit, commodities, crypto, infrastructure, and real estate.

John has a multidisciplinary educational background in finance, quantitative analysis, engineering, and technology that informs his perspective on the future of investing and the evolution of global capital markets. John holds an Masters in Business Administration focusing on finance and investments from The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. John also holds a Masters of Engineering and Management from MIT. A Fellow at MIT, John researched quantitative investing, specifically risk measures in investment decision making. John did his Bachelor's degree in Systems Engineering at the United States Military Academy at West Point.



BANKING, FINANCE & INSURANCE

Tonya Davies

Chief Operating Officer
Professional Risk Management Services

Tonya Davies is Chief Operating Officer of Professional Risk Management Services, the medical professional liability unit of FAIRCO. She leads strategic and operational initiatives that support financial performance, business growth, and organizational effectiveness across underwriting, claims, risk management, marketing, and office operations.

Ms. Davies brings extensive experience in medical professional liability insurance and reinsurance underwriting. Prior to PRMS, she was a Senior Vice President at TransRe, where she managed a treaty portfolio of companies specializing in medical professional liability, following earlier underwriting roles at AIG and Zurich in New York City.

Ms. Davies earned a B.B.A. in Risk Management and Insurance from the University of Georgia. She holds the Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter (CPCU) and Associate in Reinsurance (ARe) designations and is licensed as a property and casualty insurance producer. In 2022, Business Insurance Magazine named Ms. Davies a Women to Watch honoree.

FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT & NATIONAL SECURITY

Tanya Jeter

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Philadelphia

Amanda Costales

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)



LEGAL

Ebony Wortham

Executive Assistant United States Attorney

Ebony Wortham is a dedicated public servant with a notable career in law, government, and community engagement. She currently serves as the Executive Assistant United States Attorney in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, where she leads strategic partnerships between law enforcement and communities to enhance public safety and well-being.

Previously, Ms. Wortham was a Senior Managing Consultant at PFM's Center for Justice and Safety Finance, where she advised government agencies on strategies to enhance public safety and optimize criminal justice system resources. Before that, she spent over fifteen years as an Assistant District Attorney in Philadelphia, managing thousands of cases across juvenile, misdemeanor, and felony divisions while working closely with social services and law enforcement to promote public safety and well-being.

Beyond her professional roles, Ms. Wortham is deeply committed to the arts, civic engagement and mentorship. She serves on the boards of and volunteers with organizations such as the Quintessence Theater Group, the Rotary Club of Chestnut Hill, Youth Action, Teenshop, Inc., and the Boys & Girls Club of Philadelphia.

A Philadelphia native, Ms. Wortham is a graduate of Central High School and holds degrees from Temple University, Delaware Law School, the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, and the University of Pennsylvania's Fels Institute of Government, where she served as President of the Women of Fels. She is an active member of the Forum of Executive Women, the Barristers' Association of Philadelphia, and The Links, Incorporated.



Robert Livermore

Assistant United States Attorney

Rob is an Assistant United States Attorney in Philadelphia. Rob has been a federal prosecutor since 2001 and has prosecuted a wide variety of criminal cases including organized crime, white collar crime, and violent crime. Prior to joining the U.S. Attorney's Office, Rob worked as a federal prosecutor in the Department of Justice's Organized Crime and Racketeering Section where he investigated transnational organized crime cases. Rob also worked as a state prosecutor in Portsmouth, Virginia from 2000-01. He graduated from George Washington University with a B.A. in history in 1995 and a J.D. in 1998.



Sean Singer

Vanguard

Sean Singer is a strategy and technology leader focused on the impact of artificial intelligence across financial services and other industries. He is currently a Senior Consultant on Vanguard's Strategic Market Development team, where he focuses on growth opportunities driven by AI and emerging technologies. Previously, Sean served as Senior Director for AI Strategy at Comcast and spent more than five years at Boston Consulting Group advising organizations on strategy, technology, and growth.

Sean holds an MBA from MIT Sloan School of Management, a Masters from Indiana University Bloomington, and a Bachelors in History from Yale University. He brings a multidisciplinary perspective to helping organizations understand and capitalize on the opportunities created by AI.



Steve Handy

Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory

Steve Handy is a Network Systems Engineer at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (JHU APL) specializing in networking, communications, cybersecurity, and network analysis. His work focuses on developing obfuscated communications channels that can operate in complex operating environments subject to digital monitoring. His research furthers both the understanding of monitored network environments and development of technologies that improve the resilience, security, and operational effectiveness of networked systems

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His technical interests include network architecture, traffic analysis, network modeling and emulation, software-defined and virtualized networking, and communications in challenging or highly monitored environments. He applies a combination of systems engineering, experimentation, data analysis, and software development to investigate emerging networking technologies and translate research concepts into practical capabilities.

Steve was recognized by U.S. Black Engineer & Information Technology magazine with the 2017 Black Engineer of the Year Special Recognition Award. He remains committed to mentoring the next generation of engineers, helping them develop both technical expertise and leadership skills while preparing them to navigate the complex technical and ethical challenges that accompany rapid advances in research and innovation.



HEALTHCARE & MEDICAL SERVICES

MAJ Deja S. Nicolas

Healthcare Administration & Military Medicine

Major (MAJ) Deja S. Nicolas is a native of Queens, NY. She entered military service as a Signal Support Systems Specialist in August of 2007, at the age of 17. MAJ Nicolas served in a multitude of duty positions at Fort Bragg, North Carolina and attained the rank of Staff Sergeant. MAJ Nicolas was selected to commission via the Commanding General HIP Pocket Green to Gold Scholarship. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Fayetteville State University in 2016. She was also commissioned into active duty as a Medical Service Corps officer, graduating as a distinguished military graduate of Campbell University's Army ROTC Program.

MAJ Nicolas previously served as the Commander of the 393rd Medical Logistics Company. Her prior assignments include Executive Officer of the 147th Medical Detachment Veterinary Service (MDVS) at Fort Dix, NJ. Department of the Army Secretariat Board Recorder, Aide-de-Camp to the Commanding General of Regional Health Command-Europe, Executive Officer (XO) of the 8th Forward Surgical Team at Fort Shafter Flats, Hawaii. In addition to her role as the XO, she served as an operating room circulator, assisting in numerous damage resuscitative surgical procedures. MAJ Nicolas also served as an Evacuation Platoon Leader for the 75th Medical Company Area Support (MCAS) at Camp Carroll, South Korea. MAJ Nicolas is a graduate of the AMEDD Captain's Career Course, AMEDD Junior Leadership Course, Health Service HR Manager (70F) Course, AMEDD Executive Skills Couse, Army Trauma Training Course, Health Services Materiel (70K) Course, Unit Supply Course, AMEDD Basic Officer Leadership Course, Air Assault School, Advanced Leader Common Core Course, Jumpmaster School, Warrior Leader Course, and Airborne School.

MAJ Nicolas' military awards include: Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal (4 OLC), Army Achievement Medal (3 OLC), Army Good Conduct Medal (2nd Award), Armed Forces Service Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal (2 Combat Stars), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, Non-Commissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (3rd Award), NATO Medal, and Meritorious Unit Citation. Additionally, she has earned the Parachutist Badge, Senior Parachutist Badge, and Air Assault Badge.

MAJ Nicolas served in the United States Army Reserve from 2021 to 2026 to further her career as a Healthcare Executive. She also had an accomplished career in Oncology Sales at Johnson and Johnson Pharmaceuticals and served as the Practice Administrator of UltraCare Anesthesia. She is pursuing a Master of Business Administration and Master of Healthcare Administration at the University of Scranton.



AVIATION

Todd Kishpaugh

First Officer, American Airlines

Todd has served in the aviation industry for over 30 years in both military and commercial operations. He is currently a First Officer with American Airlines. Todd began his career as pilot at the US Army Flight School in Enterprise, AL graduating as a rotary wing pilot in 1997. Following 3 years as a CH-47D pilot, Todd completed the Army's Fixed Wing qualification course. He would serve in multiple fixed and unmanned aircraft assignments for the next 17 years flying multiple versions of the RC-12 aircraft. Todd served as the Deputy Brigade Commander for Task Force ODIN in Afghanistan as his last assignment. In this role, he supervised over 50 aircraft flying 90,000 hours a year.

After 20 years, Todd retired from the Army and began his commercial flight career. He has served as a Captain on multiple fixed wing aircraft operating under FAA Part 125 and Part 135 regulations before joining American Airlines.

Todd holds multiple type ratings including the BV-234, BE-300, DHC-8 and CL-604. He has a Bachelors of Science Degree from the United States Military Academy and a Masters of Arts from the University of Gdansk (Poland).



CONSTRUCTION,
ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING

Charlotte DiGiorgio

Penn Medicine

Charlotte DiGiorgio is a project manager and registered architect with over 16 years of experience in the architecture, engineering, and construction industry. A graduate of Drexel University's 2+4 BArch program, Charlotte worked her way from intern to project architect at an architecture/engineering firm specializing in the design of healthcare buildings, and earned her architect license in the state of PA. In 2024, she made the transition to project management and now serves as an owner's representative for Penn Medicine Real Estate, Design, and Construction. She currently leads an integrated project delivery team at Penn Presbyterian Medical Center and manages a portfolio of numerous renovation projects. Charlotte enjoys the technical and operational complexities of healthcare buildings and working with a multi-disciplinary team of designers, builders, and healthcare professionals to bring them to life. She considers herself a lifelong learner and believes every person has something to teach us.



CONSTRUCTION,
ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING

Dionna Tunstall-Gray

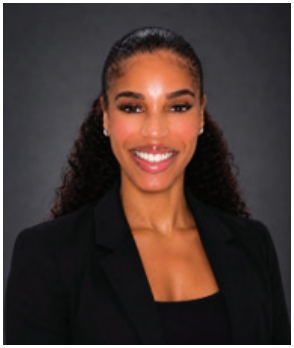
Penn Medicine

Dionna Tunstall-Gray is a Project Controls Manager with a diverse background in civil engineering, transportation, construction, and project management. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of the District of Columbia and began her career as a transportation design engineer and project manager, working in the transportation industry for six years. During this time, she also completed a Master of Business Administration (MBA) with a concentration in Project Management.

Dionna later served as a Construction Project Manager, overseeing transportation projects throughout Maryland. She then joined the Maryland Department of Transportation Secretary's Office, where she worked as a Project Manager, applying her technical expertise and leadership skills to support statewide transportation initiatives.

After relocating to New Jersey with her family, Dionna joined Penn Medicine as a Project Controls Manager. In this role, she combines her engineering background with her business and project management expertise to support project teams by managing budgets and schedules, developing process improvements, and implementing new methodologies that help project managers work more efficiently and effectively.

Dionna is passionate about innovation, process development, and finding creative solutions. She is especially committed to helping young people explore career opportunities, particularly in engineering and related fields. Through mentorship and community engagement, she enjoys encouraging students to pursue their interests, build confidence in their abilities, and discover the many paths available in STEM careers.



Shanoui Y. Gunn

Chief Operating Officer

Shanoui Y. Gunn serves as Chief Operating Officer of the Urban Dream Initiative, where she helps lead organizational operations, program execution, strategic planning, and process improvement in support of UDI's mission.

Ms. Gunn is also a Chief Warrant Officer Two in the United States Army and currently serves as the Program Manager for Civilian Personnel Management within the Office of The Judge Advocate General at the Pentagon. Throughout her career, she has supported complex legal and personnel operations while working closely with senior leaders, attorneys, civilian professionals, and external organizations to improve systems, strengthen processes, and enhance organizational effectiveness.

Ms. Gunn entered the United States Army in 2017 and has served in assignments throughout the United States and overseas, including the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command at Fort Detrick, Maryland; Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu, Hawaii; U.S. Army Pacific at Fort Shafter, Hawaii; and the 71st Ordnance Group (EOD) at Fort Carson, Colorado. She has also deployed to Afghanistan and Kuwait in support of military operations. A native of Kingston, Jamaica, Ms. Gunn later immigrated to East Orange, New Jersey. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from Norwich University and a Master's degree in Criminal Justice from American Military University. She also holds Lean Six Sigma Green Belt and Black Belt certifications and a certification in Project Management.

Beyond her professional responsibilities, Ms. Gunn is passionate about mentorship, service, and creating opportunities for others. She believes leadership is measured not simply by position or rank, but by the positive impact a leader has on people and organizations.
As Chief Operating Officer, Ms. Gunn brings her experience in program management, organizational improvement, strategic execution, and leadership to help strengthen UDI's operations and expand its ability to create meaningful opportunities for students, families, and communities.



Ebony N. Thomas

Founder & Chief Executive Officer

Ebony Nicole Thomas is a Major in the United States Army Judge Advocate General's Corps and currently serves as the Deputy Staff Judge Advocate at Fort Detrick, Maryland. She is an experienced military attorney and leader whose career has included service in command, litigation, military justice, administrative law, operational law, and federal practice.

Prior to her current assignment, Ms. Thomas served as the Command Judge Advocate for the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. She also previously served as Deputy Legal Advisor for the Army's People First Task Force at the Pentagon and in a number of legal positions throughout the Army, including Army prosecutor, military justice advisor, legal assistance attorney, operational law attorney, and administrative law attorney.

Most recently, Ms. Thomas completed an assignment as a Special Assistant United States Attorney in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in June 2026, where she represented the United States in federal litigation. Her service as a SAUSA added federal courtroom and litigation experience to an already broad military legal career.

Ms. Thomas is a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Her mother and grandmother, both educators, instilled in her at an early age the importance of education, discipline, service, and creating opportunities for others. After high school, she attended the United States Military Academy Preparatory School before earning an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

She graduated from West Point in 2010 with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Management with a focus in Civil Engineering and commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Adjutant General's Corps. In 2011, she deployed to Iraq for 11 months in support of Operation New Dawn.
Ms. Thomas later attended William & Mary Law School through the Army's Funded Legal Education Program and earned her Juris Doctor in 2017. Following law school, she transitioned into the Judge Advocate General's Corps. She later earned an LL.M. in Military Law from The Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School in Charlottesville, Virginia. She is licensed to practice law in Pennsylvania and is admitted to practice before the Supreme Court of the United States.

Throughout her career, Ms. Thomas has remained committed to leadership, service, and creating opportunities for others. That same commitment led her to establish Urban Dream Initiative, where she continues to invest in the communities and young people who remind her of where she started.
For Ms. Thomas, Urban Dream Initiative is deeply personal. It is a reflection of the values instilled in her by her mother and grandmother and of her belief that exposure, access, and opportunity can change the course of a life

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THANK YOU CANNOT BE SAID ENOUGH!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dr. Keisha Wilkins, MLK Principal

UDI Team (Mr. Russell Gallagher, Mr. John Gilmore, Ms. Shanoui Gunn, Mrs. Shay Armans, Mrs. Domeca Newsome, Mrs. Litrena Gordon Staton, Ms. Elyse Fiore Pierre, Mr. Jim Robinette, Mr. Thomas Lloyd & Mrs. Veronica Loyd)

Mr. Tolu Onasanya & Dr. Natosha S. Onasanya

Ms. Ashli Rice Allen, National Anthem Singer

Ms. Shannon Campbell, AVP Capital Project, Penn Medicine

Mr. Shawn Clark, Director Workforce Development Programs & Partnerships, Penn Medicine

Mr. Christopher Molaro, CEO, NeuroFlow

Mr. Ken Wong, President of CIG Asia Ltd.

Mr. Eric Wilson, Workforce Transformation Leader, Deloitte

Ms. Ebony Wortham, Executive Assistant United States Attorney

Ms. Donna Byron, Executive Vice President, Human Resources, TransRe

Ms. Janel Moore-Almond

Mr. Dwayne Haley, Hands of Woodstock

MLK Faculty, Staff & JROTC

LTC Mary E. McKiernan and SFC Adams

Mr. Maurice Sims

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2026 CAREER PATHWAYS LEADERSHIP PANELISTS

Special appreciation to our distinguished presenters and panelists for sharing their expertise, experiences, and insights with the next generation of leaders.

URBANDREAM

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Opportunity changes everything.

Urban Dream Initiative transforms communities impacted by urban decay into hubs of opportunity through access, resources, and community-led action.

urbandreaminitiative.org

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