Expanding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Tech Apprenticeships

Speaker Biographies

Nicole Brown has over 17 years of Technology experience and is the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Carter Enterprise Solutions, LLC (C-ents). C-ents is a cybersecurity firm certified by the Small Business Administration (SBA) as an 8(a) HUBZone Woman Owned Small Busines (WOSB). In 2018, C-ents was approved as the first Cybersecurity-Specific Apprenticeship in the State of Maryland. Nicole holds a Master's of Science Degree in Technology Management from the University of Maryland University College (UMUC) and holds multiple professional certifications to include recognitions as a Project Management Professional (PMP); Certified Information Security Manager (CISM); Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control (CRISC); Microsoft Certified Personal (MCP), Navy Validator and has been ranked as one of the top 25 Cybersecurity Professionals in the United States Department of Navy. She is also one of the first-ever Provisional Assessors certified by the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) Accreditation Body. Ms. Brown serves a Cybersecurity Industry Volunteer with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education (NICE) Apprenticeship Working Group; the United States (U.S.) Department of Labor (DoL) Office of Apprenticeship - Cyber Security Working Group, and EMPLOY Prince George's - Educational Partnership in IT Careers (EPIC) Business Advisory Council (BAC). Ms. Brown is definitely making a name for herself as a well-respected Cybersecurity Subject Matter Expert (SME) and represents less than 10% of African American women in the Cybersecurity industry.

Sierra Butcher is a network engineer in the Delaware Army National Guard and a Cyber Analyst working in Identity and Access Management for Fiserv. Ms. Butcher Graduated from Texas A&M University-San Antonio.

Diana Elliott is a principal research associate in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute. Her work focuses on families' financial security and economic mobility and the programs and policies that support them, including housing affordability, apprenticeships, and financial empowerment. Elliott was previously research manager of the Pew Charitable Trusts' work on financial security and economic mobility, where she was instrumental in fielding a major national survey on American family finances and published numerous reports and briefs about the state of financial well-being and economic mobility in the United States. Before joining Pew, Elliott was a family demographer in the fertility and family statistics branch in the Social, Economic, and Housing Statistics Division at the US Census Bureau. Elliott holds a PhD in sociology from the University of Maryland, College Park.

Daniel Kuehn is a senior research associate in the Urban Institute's Income and Benefits Policy Center. Kuehn has over a decade of experience conducting and managing research and evaluation on employment, education and training, apprenticeship, the science and engineering workforce, racial disparities, and the transition from school to work. He primarily conducts quantitative empirical work, with an emphasis on nonexperimental evaluation methods. Kuehn earned his PhD in economics from American University and his MPP from the George Washington University.

Girish Seshagiri, Director, Board of Directors, Ishpi Information Technologies, Inc (ISHPI) is a globally recognized thought-leader in software quality management, secure software development, software process improvement, and modern methods of managing knowledge work. Girish is an early adopter of the apprenticeship dual model. He is a co-founder of the Community Initiative Center of Excellence for Secure Software (CICESS) which received the 2018 Innovation in Cybersecurity Education Award given by the National Cyberwatch Center. Under Girish's leadership, ISHPI co-founded employer-led degree apprenticeships, partnering with community colleges in Illinois and Texas. Girish is currently focused on government/industry/academic collaboration partnering with Historically Black Colleges and Universities to design and launch IT and Cybersecurity degree apprenticeship cohorts. Girish is the immediate past co-chair of the NICE Apprenticeship Working Group. He is a member of the Governing Board of the Consortium for Information and Software Quality (CISQ). Girish has an MBA from Michigan State University.

Heather Terenzio is Chief Executive Officer and Founder of Techtonic.

Michael Ward Jr. is a social entrepreneur focusing on technology, business, and socioeconomic development. Originally from Miami, FL, Michael began his career at Oracle in enterprise sales, focusing on cloud and on-premise technology. During this time, Michael also led Oracle's Black employee resource group, African-American Business Leaders for Excellence (ABLE), which focused on the upward mobility of Oracle Black employees living in the United States, Canada, and Brazil. After Oracle, Michael transitioned to ADP where he learned the impact human capital management (HCM) has on a company's sustainability, culture, and productivity and handled operations for Primal7, an Austin based startup. Before starting his tech career, Michael earned a degree in political science and global studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is happily married, a Tar Heel and Miami Heat fan, loves to travel, and eat