



NAAHR NEW JERSEY NEWSLETTER

Spring | Summer 2020



ARE YOU A CATALYST FOR CHANGE?!

All of us serve as leaders - whether it is through our people or through our contributions to the success of our organizations.. Dean Chad Maldonado of DeVry University shares some lessons on the realities of managing change. [p.3]



LEADING THROUGH COVID-19 & BEYOND

The pressures of leading through Covid-19 and identifying opportunities to support social justice are adding to the complexity and ambiguity of the business world. [p.3]



TWO DE-VINE ENTREPRENEURS

Kelly Brown and Maya Haynie are growing a "budding business" based on their mutual love of and respect for houseplants, and a commitment to making a match between lifestyle and plant love! [p.4-5]

FOUR LEADERS TAKE THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED TOWARD ENDING RACISM IN CORPORATE AMERICA

JULY 30, 2020

"We seem to have a new kind of power in organizations now to speak truth to questions around what we [as Black professionals] have experienced in the workplace - and how we want those experiences to change. What is the measurement of that power? And perhaps, more importantly, how do you know its limits? (i.e., How much truth can we tell?)"

Four leaders met to answer this and other straightforward questions around power, policy, progress and the state of racism in Corporate America.

[p.2]





Black Lives, Corporate America and Our Human Resources

Memorial Day 2020 descended into a day and date that will be remembered for reasons that are not connected with honoring fallen heroes of foreign wars past and present, but of witnessing the live video of a war on Blacks in this country being played out as a Black man was killed by a white police officer - not for the first time - but for the first time that the act sparked a national and **global** railing against its profound inhumanity.

How are we, as leaders, colleagues, HR professionals - and as humans - prepared to respond to this decry of injustice and inequity, both in its glaring and in its more subtle forms, where it continues to translate into unfair workplace practices for Black professionals?

On Thursday, July 30 four brilliant, outspoken leaders met for a virtual conversation which we entitled **"The Healing of Racism in Corporate America: A Straightforward Walk Along the Road Less Traveled."** The questions, unfiltered in their intent, were met with responses that were equally unfiltered in their truth. Below are captured session excerpts from those four leaders: Kamilah Mitchell-Thomas, Chief People Officer at Dow Jones.; Attorney James Lewis, V, Managing Partner at Pennington Law Group; Dr. Laura Quiros, Associate Professor at the Adelphi University School of Social Work; and Michael Fleming, MBA, sales leader and Immediate Past President, New Jersey Chapter of the National Black MBA Association. The entire 90-minute session, which was hosted by NAAHR New Jersey in partnership with IntuAction Coaching CEO (and NAAHR-NJ member) Michele Brown is available for viewing on our [website](#).



"This [work] is really about breaking apart/dismantling systems, and it's breaking them down to rebuild them. And often, that work is quiet; There's not a lot of fanfare - there's not a lot of visibility to the work that must be done...[it]takes time."

"We are all in positions of power and influence to do that work." ... "It really requires us to examine some very deep questions about how the organization is run, what is its fundamental purpose and what do we really believe in and value."

"The week of June 1st...I needed a moment to lay down that burden" ... "It's about having that safe place, and you often can't do it with your professional colleagues ... [It's] about having that person who will check you, but will hold you down"

~ **Kamilah Mitchell-Thomas**



"We have to have our own boundaries in terms of what we're going to accept and how we're going to respond."

"I am not taking off pieces of myself in order to arrive at certain spaces. I'm not going to apologize for any aspect of myself. I'm going to be true to the experience that I'm coming from...and to the shoulders that I stand on in this space."

"Organizations really need to be leaned on to have diversity trainings that make sense, and **implementing** some of the things they're telling [people] to do."

"If you don't call racism "racism," then it can get conflated into other things." ~ **James Lewis V., Esq.**



"...Curiosity is a skill that needs to be taught. It begs people to pause and unpack what they're trying to say."

Nurture the Black joy in your children, in your family, in your loved ones..."White folks, find ways to support your Black and Indigenous People of Color/colleagues and friends. Spend some time envisioning what an anti-racist organization/world/community looks like and then do your part on a sincere level to make that happen in any way you can. ...

"Change 'uncomfortable conversations' to 'critical conversations'." ~ **Dr. Laura Quiros**



"One of the biggest challenges is really being very deliberate and intentional to the degree that others will be inclined to take us more seriously and demonstrate more appreciation for what is the collective value that we all bring to the total culture of the workplace. We are a part of that workplace and should be recognized for the total value-add that we present."

"We don't help ourselves in terms of advancing our culture when we become too consumed with how comfortable other people are...to the extent that we start to soften or dilute our total presentation." ~ **Michael Fleming, MBA**

MARCH ON WASHINGTON



BE A CATALYST FOR CHANGE!



LEADING THROUGH COVID-19 AND BEYOND



AUGUST 28, 2020

Beneath the hats and behind the sunglasses and masks are NAAHR New Jersey's own VP of Member Recruitment & Benefits Denise Bailey and her uncle, Robert Hicks who traveled to Wash. DC on August 28 to join thousands of others (including other NAAHR leaders from throughout the country!) in commemorating the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Were you there this year? Send photos to info@naahrnj.org and we'll post under the Media tab on our website!

AUGUST 26, 2020

Former GE CEO Jack Welch said "Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others." DeVry University Dean Chad Maldonado described the challenges with leading yourself and others through the transitional phases of the kind of significant change we are facing now - and will continue to face far into the future. Click [here](#) to access a detailed reference guide. (look for the 'CHANGE' graphic)

JULY 11, 2020

Meryl Rosenthal, Founder and CEO of Flexpaths, a workplace solutions company and Audrey Lloyd, Executive Coach and CEO of AD Lloyd Leadership Consulting facilitated an interactive workshop that encouraged attendees to rethink workforce strategies, address organizational realities and identify the key priorities for building a smart, healthy, engaged work culture. Additional [resources](#) are available on our NAAHR-NJ website.



TWO BEST FRIENDS START THEIR OWN HIGH GROWTH BUSINESS

NAAAHR NEW JERSEY SMALL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

As part of our commitment to supporting small businesses in the State of New Jersey, we will continue to share stories from business owners who, like us, exist to support the "human resources" that continue to make us "Jersey Strong!"

This edition's featured company, deVINE Plantery, is the brainchild of two friends who have taken their love of plants to the "niche level!" Here's what co-founders Maya Haynie and Kelly Brown had to say to our interviewer:

Q: How did the two of you meet?

A: We met in second grade and have been best friends ever since.

Q: What made you decide to start your own business?

A: We've always had an interest in plants, but since being home in Maplewood, we realized that there weren't many plant stores that specialized in houseplants. We wanted to create a space where people could learn about houseplants and enjoy growing them with us.

Q: Why plants? -- What's so great about having them in your home?

A: Plants have always been a type of therapy for us. Caring for them and watching them grow is not only rewarding but also gives us a sense of accomplishment. Even when your plants die, you always learn something from the experience to apply to next time. That's part of the reason why we love caring for them so much, it's a constant learning experience.

Q: How did the current pandemic play a part in your business launch?

A: Originally the business idea came from Kelly's little sister, Davina, when they were out on one of their quarantine walks and blossomed from there. So we would say that the pandemic had a pretty big part to play in our business.

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Plants have always been a type of therapy for us. Caring for them and watching them grow is not only rewarding but also gives us a sense of accomplishment.



Maya Haynie

Kelly Brown

Q: What do you want your customers to feel when they buy one of your plants?

A: We want our customers to feel confident in their choice in plants especially if they are new to plant care. We want to make sure that they feel joy when getting plants from us.

Q: How have you developed and maintained your customer base so far?

A: At the beginning a lot of our customer base was in Brooklyn because we attended an amazing pop-up market that really established our presence there. Since then, we've had amazing community support and a lot of the people that shop with us find us on Instagram or through word of mouth.

Q: What are some common questions you get from your customers?

A: Our most common question comes from those new to the world of plants. Most of our customers come to us with "Which plants are best for me not to kill?" as they are fearful of getting a plant and not knowing how to take care of it. Another question we get quite often is how often do specific plants need to be watered and what kind of light they require.

Q: What's deVINE's business slogan?

A: Our slogan is "turning plant care into a lifestyle," which to us means that we want to provide our customers with the proper tools and knowledge for bringing plant care into their lifestyle.

Q: What makes deVINE Plantery so divine? I.e., what do you offer that larger plant stores do not?

A: At deVINE, we aim to provide our customers with a service that many larger plant stores do not. We want to be able to interact with our customers and not only sell them a plant and hope they come back, but to be there with them on their plant care journey giving them the tools and nurturing they need to care for their new plant babies.



Q: Finally, this is a version of a question that I ask everyone: If you were standing in the checkout line at your favorite grocery market, and you overheard one of your customers talking with someone about your business and services, what would you want them to be saying?

A: If we ever get the opportunity to overhear a customer talking about our business, we would want them to say how much they love their plants and how our knowledge of plants and customer service was amazing and helpful.

Website: www.devineplantery.com

Instagram: [@devine.plantery](https://www.instagram.com/devine.plantery)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/devineplantery

"We want to make sure that they feel joy when getting plants from us."





HONORING THREE BLACK WARRIORS

Rest now.



GOD'S SOLDIER MARCHES HOME

Reverend C.T. Vivian | 07-20-24 - 07-17-20

"Leadership is found in the action to defeat that which would defeat you... You are made by the struggles you choose."

--Rev. C.T. Vivian

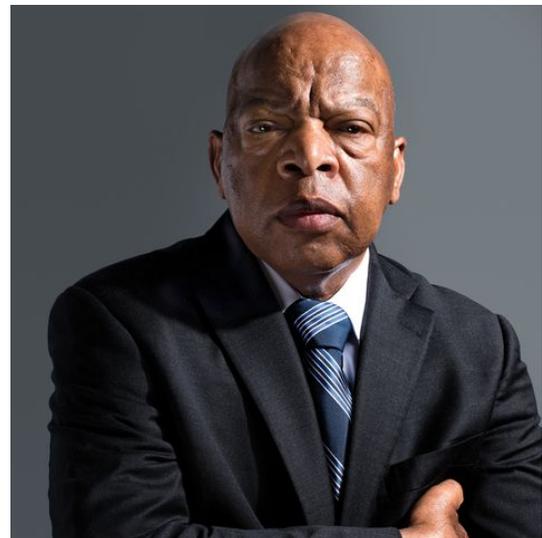


A FORCE HAS LEFT US.

Rep. John Lewis | 02-21-40 - 07-17-20

"We must say: 'Wake up America! Wake up!' For we cannot stop, and we will not and cannot be patient."

--Rep. John Lewis



REST IN POWER, BLACK PANTHER.

Chadwick Boseman | 11-29-76 - 08-28-20

"Purpose is the essential element of you. It is the reason you are on the planet at this particular time in history. Your very existence is wrapped up in the things you are here to fulfill."

--Chadwick Boseman

