

ULI Health Leaders Network Cohort 7

Introductory Forum: Philadelphia



ULI Urban Land Institute **Building Healthy Places Initiative**

March 20 – 22, 2024

Forum Reference Book

Table of Contents

AGENDA.....	3
TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION.....	5
SUGGESTED PACKING.....	6
SPEAKERS & FACILITATORS.....	7
Wednesday, March 20 th	7
Thursday, March 21 st	12
Friday, March 22 nd	18
OVERVIEW OF FORUM NEIGHBORHOODS/AREAS.....	26
RECOMMENDED PRE-READING & RESOURCES.....	27
PHILADELPHIA RECOMMENDATIONS.....	28

AGENDA

All times listed in ET | Breakfast is provided at the hotel every morning starting at 6:30am | Italicized agenda activities indicate content portions.

Wednesday, March 20th

Time	Activity	Notes
8:30am	Meet in lobby of Fairfield Inn & Suites	Please be prompt. We'll be going over logistics and passing out SEPTA travel passes (valid until Monday, March 25 th at 2:00am)
8:45am	Travel to PHMC in West Philadelphia	4601 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19139 Modes: SEPTA and walking
9:45am	Forum Welcome & Agenda Overview	
10:15am	Defining Leadership in Health Leaders	
10:45am	<i>Social Equity Workshop</i>	15-minute break provided during this time
12:45pm	Lunch	
1:45pm	<i>Social Equity Workshop Continuation</i>	
3:30pm	Break	
3:45pm	<i>Tour of PHMC</i>	
4:30pm	<i>The Intersection of SDOH and HLN</i>	
5:30pm	Break	Make your way to Charley Dove on your own/in groups Recommended Route: Bus 21 (Columbus-Dock) at the corner of Chestnut St. & Farragut St. Take to Chestnut & 20th, then walk south. Alternatively, you can take the MFL line from 46 th Station to 30 th St. and transfer to the trolley- Drexel Station at 30th. Take the Green 10 line two stops to 19 th St and walk south.
6:30pm	Welcome Dinner at Charley Dove	276 S 20 th St, Philadelphia, PA 19103

Thursday, March 21st

Time	Activity	Notes
8:15am	Meet in lobby of Fairfield Inn & Suites	
8:30am	Travel to Fringe Bar	140 N Christopher Columbus Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19106 Modes: SEPTA and walking
9:15am	<i>A Slice of Philadelphia’s Built Environment History: The Toxic Trajectories of Philadelphia Public School Communities</i>	
10:15am	Break	
10:30am	<i>Transportation Transformations Presentation and Penn’s Landing Park Panel + Q&A</i>	
12:00pm	Personal Reflection Time	
12:10pm	Sharing of Small Groups	
12:15pm	Lunch	Explore adjacent Race Street and Cherry Street Piers and the I-95 Cap project to the south (currently under construction)
1:45pm	<i>Philly RiSE Accelerator Presentation + Q&A</i>	
3:15pm	Break	
3:30pm	<i>Small Group Exercise & Large Group Discussions</i>	
5:00pm onwards	Free Evening	
5:00 – 6:30pm	Optional: Public Art/Mural Walk	Walk back to the hotel with Beth and Emily while exploring several murals that help make Philadelphia the “Mural Capital of the World.”

Friday, March 22nd

Time	Activity	Notes
8:00am	Meet in lobby of Fairfield Inn & Suites	
8:15am	Travel to The Core – Esperanza Health Center in Kensington	3222 H Street Modes: SEPTA and walking
9:00am	<i>Kensington Partnerships Panel + Q&A</i>	
10:15am	Break	
10:30am	<i>Embedding Health & Equity into Design and Development with FIFTEEN and SHIFT Capital</i>	
11:00am	Lunch	
11:45am	Walk to J-Centrel	7-minute walk (0.3 miles / 0.5 km)
12:00pm	<i>Tour of J-Centrel</i>	
1:00pm	<i>Closing and Group Reflection</i>	
2:00pm	Programming Concludes	

TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION



7-Day SEPTA Passes

- ULI will provide 7-day SEPTA passes. These passes are valid for 7-days from 12:01am Monday to 2:00am the following Monday and are good for 56 rides.
- SEPTA provides public transportation into and within Philadelphia and includes train, subway, trolley, and bus lines and will be our primary mode of transport during forum days and between sites.
- Pro tip: download the SEPTA app for real time information on routes.

Getting to the Center City from the Airport

- The SEPTA train service between the Philadelphia International Airport (PHL) and Center City takes about 25-minutes and runs every 30-minutes on weekdays, operating between 4:13am to 11:03pm. The train ticket costs \$8 USD if you pay by cash/credit card on board and \$6.75 if you pay for a ticket by a kiosk. Learn more [here](#).

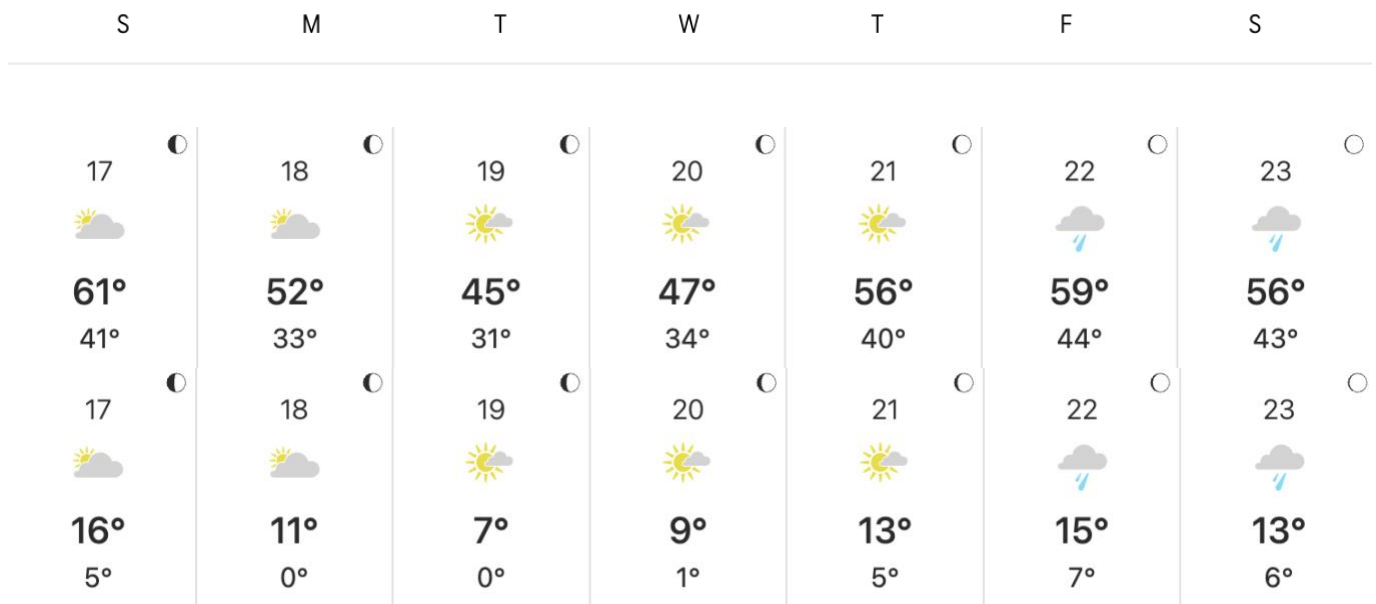
Public & Active Transportation Information

- [SEPTA website](#)
- [A Guide to SEPTA and Public Transport in Philly](#)
- [Indego Bike Share](#)
- Philadelphia is one of the most walkable cities in the U.S. Enjoy getting around via the shoelace express and take in all the beautiful sites, public art, parks, and squares that the city has to offer. Learn more [here](#).

SUGGESTED PACKING

Attire and packing tips: ULI follows a business casual dress code, and comfortable walking shoes recommended as we commute to the various venues. Closed-toed shoes are required for safety during Friday’s programming on March 22nd. Pack layers as Philadelphia transitions into Spring, and include an umbrella, raincoat, sunscreen, and hat to be prepared for any weather changes.

Additional considerations: While not mandatory, feel free to bring your laptop. Ensure you have your cell phone for contact purposes. Consider bringing a notebook and pen for notetaking and a reusable water bottle.



Philadelphia weather forecast as of March 12th | [Weather forecast link](#)

SPEAKERS & FACILITATORS

Wednesday, March 20th

Forum Welcome

Chloe Gurin-Sands

Program Officer

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Princeton, New Jersey

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Chloe Gurin-Sands joined the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) in 2023 as a program officer working to promote community health through more equitable community development. She is driven by the opportunity to help neighborhoods and regions create the physical and social conditions for health and wellbeing in ways that celebrate their experiences and cultures.

Prior to joining RWJF, Chloe was a senior manager at Metropolitan Planning Council in Chicago, where she led work to integrate health equity, racial equity, and environmental justice principles into municipal land use and planning practices. Her major projects included supporting Chicago’s citywide plan, co-creating a land acquisition prioritization tool that emphasized health and equity measures, providing technical assistance to a cohort of community-led riverfront revitalization projects, and researching the connections between health and residential segregation.

Throughout her postsecondary education, Chloe assisted with mixed-methods research on intergroup dialogue programs, where she honed her quantitative and qualitative data analysis skills. She was trained as a facilitator and instructor for intergroup dialogue courses, and educated undergraduate students and faculty on social identities, power, and privilege. Prior to graduate school, Chloe worked as a community engagement coordinator at the University of Michigan’s Spectrum Center, an on-campus LGBTQ+ student resource center.

Chloe holds a bachelor of arts from the University of Michigan, and a master of public health from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She lives in Chicago, where she enjoys walking in the forest preserves and attending cultural events with her family. She serves on the board of the Calumet Collaborative and is on the Civic Consulting Alliance’s Advisory Council.



Social Equity Workshop

Tiffany Young

Founder and CEO

Think Equity

Savannah, Georgia

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Ms. Young is the Founder and CEO of Think Equity, a consulting firm that works to advance Social Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) within organizations and systems. Through this work, she has supported state health departments, philanthropic organizations, and national membership associations in their efforts to integrate equity concepts into their internal organizational culture and their outward-facing programs, policies, and practices. She is a social reformer and passionate crusader for justice, whose mission is to elevate equity and promote health for all people, and she is known for her thought-provoking insights into the social issues that adversely impact the health of racial and ethnic minorities throughout the United States and beyond. She has a profound ability to captivate and connect audiences in efforts to bridge the racial and wealth gaps that have both defined and divided our nation. She works tirelessly to engage, educate, and empower this generation to incite the kind of social change that lifts equity and upholds social justice in all ways. Tiffany lives in Savannah, Georgia with her husband, five sons, and her 12-year-old Malti-poo named Riesling.



PHMC Tour

Aunya Grimsley

Director of Community Engagement

PHMC

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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Aunya Grimsley has always had a heart for serving young people and their families. She began her journey as a servant leader at the young age of 14, where she was a youth counselor at a summer camp. It was there that she realized that she had the strength of connection. Aunya has her bachelor’s degree in psychology and her master’s degree in Administration of Human Services both from Wilmington University. She is currently pursuing her doctorate in Organizational Leadership at Stockton University. Aunya's career has included residential services for behaviorally challenged and adjudicated youth, child welfare case management, and prevention services. She currently serves as the Director of Community Engagement for PHMC. Aunya is a West Philadelphia native who believes the PHMC Public Health Campus on Cedar is an opportunity for her to mix her passion and purpose to serve the community that once served her and her family. During her leisure, Aunya dedicates her time to serving 156 youth groups from New England to the Carolinas as the Regional Youth Director for the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

About Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC): PHMC is a nonprofit public health institute that builds healthier communities through partnerships with government, foundations, businesses and community-based organizations. It fulfills its mission to improve the health of the community by providing outreach, health promotion, education, research, planning, technical assistance, and direct services. PHMC has served the Greater Philadelphia region since 1972 as a facilitator, developer, intermediary, manager, advocate, and innovator in the field of public health. With more than 2,500 employees, 350 programs, a network of subsidiary organizations, 70 locations, sites and close to 350,000 clients served annually, PHMC is one of the largest and most comprehensive public health organizations in the nation.

Jill Lavine

Founding Principal

FIFTEEN

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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At FIFTEEN, Jill combines her technical knowledge with her passion for advancing workflows, tools, and processes required to plan, design, construct, and operate high-performing, environmentally responsible, and healthy buildings. Jill leads our building performance analysis and sustainability efforts. With a strong belief in the importance of combining big ideas with thoughtful detailing at all scales, she leads the team in ensuring that the building systems are closely coordinated with the architecture, working hand-in-hand with engineers and project consultants so that every deliverable is of the highest quality. Her architectural and construction management experience includes corporate, research and development, and federal government sector clients.



About FIFTEEN: FIFTEEN is an Architecture and Design practice driven by the desire to affect positive change. Inspired by the power of great design, FIFTEEN sees itself as a catalyst for innovation and aims to redefine the dynamic between clients, communities, and designers. They are passionate about entrepreneurial, cross-practice solutions that improve our built environment, our communities, and our future.

Addressing Social Drivers of Health Advances Equity: The Intersection of SDOH and HLN

Jillian Annunziata Debold

New York State Medicaid Program Manager

New York State Department of Health

New York City, New York

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Jillian is a trained systems thinker and implementation scientist who operates with a public health equity lens. Jillian uses quality improvement methodologies to design, implement, and evaluate project life cycles and scale best practices that promote health, wellness, and quality of life. Jillian has worked in the non-for-profit sector in New York at the world's first food rescue and redistribution organization and separately integrating social care into primary/preventive care at the largest community health center network in the country. Jillian amplified her work on the social drivers of health at the national level in the public-private sector, as program manager at a boutique consulting firm supporting federal U.S. Department of Health and Human Service agencies and a nationwide public collaborative, the Gravity Project, in developing and implementing social determinant of health (SDOH) data standards. Jillian is a public servant, previously working at a County Health Department writing and implementing Complete Streets policy and currently in state government, designing and administering a groundbreaking Medicaid 1115 waiver program with comprehensive SDOH provisions. Jillian holds a Master's in Public Health (MPH) in Health Policy and Management and professional licenses and certifications in Project Management (PMP), change management, and Lean principles. Jillian is a ULI Health Leaders Network alumni (Cohort 5).



Thursday, March 21st

A Slice of Philadelphia’s Built Environment History: The Toxic Trajectories of Philadelphia Public School Communities

Akira Drake Rodriguez

Assistant Professor, Weitzman School of Design

University of Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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Akira Drake Rodriguez is an Assistant Professor at the University of Pennsylvania’s Weitzman School of Design. Her research examines the ways that disenfranchised groups re-appropriate their marginalized spaces in the city to gain access to and sustain urban political power. She is the author of *Diverging Space for Deviants: The Politics of Atlanta’s Public Housing*, which explores how the politics of public housing planning and race in Atlanta created a politics of resistance within its public housing developments. She is also the lead author of *A Green New Deal for K-12 Schools*, through her work with the climate + community project. She has received funding from the Spencer Foundation and the University of Pennsylvania’s Environmental Innovation Initiative and Projects for Progress funds to support her work around school facilities planning in Philadelphia public schools. Her next book manuscript examines the role of Black women community organizers in producing collective care in the built environment in the absence of capital and presence of harm over the 20th century.



Transportation Transformations Presentation & Penn’s Landing Park Panel and Q&A

Matt Norris

Senior Director, Healthy Places

Urban Land Institute

Washington, DC

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Matt Norris is senior director for the Randall Lewis Center for Sustainability in Real Estate at the Urban Land Institute, where he supports the organization’s Healthy Places program and other initiatives. Through the Healthy Places program, Matt advances efforts to leverage the power of ULI’s global networks to shape projects and places in ways that improve the health of people and communities. He is the primary or contributing author of nine major ULI publications, including [Reshaping the City: Zoning for a More Equitable, Resilient, and Sustainable Future](#), [Parking Policy Innovations in the United States](#), and [Successful Partnerships for Parks: Collaborative Approaches to Advance Equitable Access to Open Space](#). Matt has presented original research at 30+ national conferences, workshops, and webinars.

Matt previously worked at the Tri-State Transportation Campaign where he focused on improving access to safe, reliable, and equitable modes of transportation throughout southern New Jersey and the Greater Philadelphia area. Matt earned his Master’s in City and Regional Planning from Rutgers University-New Brunswick in 2010, where he focused on international development and comprehensive planning. Matt also holds a B.A. in Sociology from the University of Kansas.

Douglas Robbins

AVP; Managing Principal, Buildings + Places, Philadelphia Metro

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Douglas Robbins, AICP/PP, is a senior urban designer and our Philadelphia office and city lead. With degrees in architecture and city planning, Doug looks for creative design solutions within large infrastructure projects. He has created a visualization practice in Philadelphia that pushes the boundaries of how projects are communicated to clients and the public. He also leads a cross-disciplinary group in the Philadelphia office to pursue innovative and transformative projects in the city. Doug has more than 15 years of experience incorporating context-sensitive and multi-modal solutions into a wide range of projects and environments.

Karen Thompson

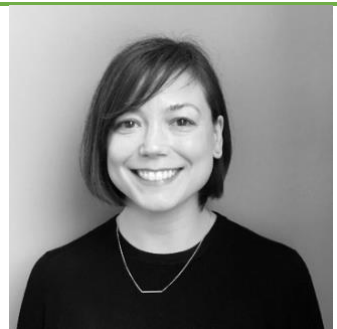
Director of Planning, Policy, and Engagement

Delaware River Waterfront Corporation

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Karen Thompson is Director of Planning, Policy, & Engagement for the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation where she focuses on these areas as part of the implementation of the Master Plan for the Central Delaware, a 25-year roadmap for the redevelopment of Philadelphia’s waterfront. She has managed a diverse portfolio of projects including transportation planning studies, streetscape design and construction, zoning, public space design, redevelopment, and archaeology. Her current projects include the conceptual design and Phase 1 implementation of Graffiti Pier Park and multiple project elements of the new Penn’s Landing Park, including a citywide engagement effort. In addition to her work at DRWC, Ms. Thompson has served as a lecturer for the Planning Workshop course at the University of Pennsylvania Weitzman School of Design and is currently active with ULI Philadelphia’s UrbanPlan and Women’s Leadership Initiative committees. She holds a B.A. in History from the University of Texas at Austin, a Master’s degree in City Planning with a certificate in Urban Design from the University of Pennsylvania, and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners.



About Penn’s Landing Park & the I-95 CAP: The I-95/CAP project is replacing and expanding the existing covered area over I-95 between Chestnut and Walnut streets with a larger cover that extends east over Christopher Columbus Boulevard at Penn’s Landing. The \$329 million partnership between PennDOT, the City of Philadelphia, and the Delaware River Waterfront Commission will improve pedestrian and multi-modal access between Center City and the popular Delaware River Waterfront. The South Street Pedestrian Bridge over I-95, which currently terminates on the east side of I-95, also will be extended over Columbus Boulevard with a new, signature structure: a “Tied-Arch” Bridge. The centerpiece of the CAP project will be an amenity-rich, pedestrian-friendly Park at Penn’s Landing that will be constructed on the expanded covered area over I-95 and Columbus Boulevard.

Philly RiSE Accelerator Presentation and Q&A

Anthony Bright

Managing Director
 Seamless Development
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
anthony@seamlesspros.com

Anthony Bright is one of three general managers of Seamless Pros Construction & Development in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He is a distinguished Real Estate developer renowned for his exceptional renovations of single and multi-family properties. His extensive knowledge of construction has enabled him to scale rapidly, having completed over 80 renovations for clients and personal investments.

As Anthony enters the realm of large-scale development, he hopes to make a seamless transition while having a positive social impact on his community. He is committed to providing affordable housing and opportunities for future generations with his project developments. His ultimate goal is to look upon an entire community he helped create with pride and tell his children that "I built that".



Jim Burnett

Chief Strategic Design Officer
 Black Squirrel
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
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A proven financial leader, Jim has worked in the financial services industry for over 30 years, beginning his career in banking. He then added real estate development and youth education to his expertise including becoming the leader of VestedIn, a community financial institution that as a CDFI developed the ParkWest Town Center, a 30 acre, 341,000 square foot, retail center in West Philadelphia for \$55,000,000. He then went on to create the only non-profit mortgage brokerage company and the first youth Individual Development Account program in the state of Pennsylvania.



Candis J. Pressley

Managing Partner

Trinity Property Advisors

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

cpresley@trinitypropertyadvisors.com

Candis Pressley has devoted her adult life to the real estate industry, beginning her career while in college by obtaining her real estate license at age 19 and swiftly progressing to earn her Broker’s license. With over 25 years of experience, she has sold over 300 homes and effectively managed portfolios encompassing more than three million square feet of Commercial Real Estate, contributing to a \$192 million dollar annual budget.

Her passion for real estate ownership ignited shortly after obtaining her license; at age 22, she acquired her first duplex. Presently, her portfolio comprises nine properties in the Philadelphia area. Her latest venture involves the acquisition and redevelopment of a 3,400 sq ft commercial building, now serving as her real estate business headquarters and a versatile event and work space.

Under Candis' leadership, Trinity Property Advisors has expanded its services, obtaining a General Contractor’s license and incorporating consulting and real estate development. Trinity is now recognized as a boutique Commercial and Residential Real Estate firm with MBE Certification and licenses in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and New York.

Active within the real estate community, Candis holds memberships in various organizations. She has served as President of the Philadelphia Metropolitan Board of Realtist and as Regional Vice President for the National Association of Real Estate Brokers, the nation’s oldest minority trade association. In 2017, she achieved the prestigious CCIM Designation [Certified Commercial Investment Member] from the CCIM Institute.

Having spent most of her adult life in the Philadelphia area, Candis is a graduate of Temple University, holding a Bachelor of Business Administration in Real Estate, and the University of Florida, where she earned a Master of Science in Commercial Real Estate in 2015.



Kevin Williams

CEO

Black Squirrel

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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A seasoned technology professional in the development and deployment of large-scale software and enterprise solutions for major corporations. Kevin leveraged this experience to develop support models to train and develop small-to-medium-sized businesses to be competitive, scalable, and sustainable, through enhancing their financial, technology, and sales capabilities for building successful companies.



About Philly RiSE and Black Squirrel: Philly RiSE Powered by Black Squirrel leverages the talent of experienced, diverse developers to create a more equitable real estate ecosystem in Philadelphia. Through training, networking, and access to property and capital, Philly RiSE increases the number of homes built by diverse developers, contractors, and workforce.

Friday, March 22nd

Kensington Partnerships Panel and Q&A

Debra Ortiz-Vasquez

Director of Community Health and Wellness

Esperanza Health Center

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

debra.ortiz-vasquez@esperanzahealth.com

Debra Ortiz-Vasquez, J.D. is Director of Community Health and Wellness at Esperanza Health Center, where she has served since 2016. She has served in North Philadelphia since 1990 hailing from Chicago. She has a keen understanding of the complexities of community work and has expertise in program creation, development and community partnerships. Debra is convinced that partners “working at the top of their expertise” is necessary to overcoming community challenges and makes for a more robust service to community residents. Debra earned her Juris Doctor from John Marshall Law School in Chicago and has over 25 years of nonprofit management experience. She is married to her high school sweetheart for 33 years and has 2 adult daughters. When not working, Debra loves to see her daughters play ice hockey, dating her husband, and a sunny beach day.



Lianette Pappaterra

Community Health and Wellness Administrator

Esperanza Health Center

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

lianette.pappaterra@esperanzahealth.com

Lianette Pappaterra serves as the Community Health and Wellness Administrator at Esperanza Health Center, a faith-based FQHC in North Philadelphia. Together with her team, she oversees and teaches a variety of community health education and engagement programs, builds community partnerships, and creates spaces for people and community to flourish. As a bicultural, bilingual Latina, she is passionate about offering culturally appropriate, bilingual programs that meet the needs and context of the communities served. She got her MPH from St. Louis University and has worked at EHC for the last five years.



About Esperanza Health Center: Esperanza Health Center seeks to provide high-quality, affordable health care and is committed to community health and well-being. The Health Center provides holistic care, ensures that care is available and affordable to all, developing partnerships with patients to pursue total health, and working with church and local organizations to bring healing and wholeness to the North Philadelphia community.

Jackie Saez

Nourish Program Manager
 New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC)
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
jsaez@nkcdc.org

Jackie Saez is the Nourish Program Manager at New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC). Prior to NKCDC, she was the Program Manager of Sunday Suppers, a Philadelphia nonprofit focused on strengthening the health and wellbeing of families through the transformative power of family meals, nutrition education, wellness workshops and cooking classes. Jackie was born and raised in Kensington in a single parent household with her mom working multiple jobs. From a young age, Jackie took on many responsibilities including preparing meals with limited resources. While studying Public Health at Temple University, Jackie learned about the inextricable link between diet, nutrition education and food access, and health disparities in low-income places locally and globally. This knowledge catalyzed her decision to become a health educator focusing on centering the cultural traditions and lived experiences of herself and her community. Jackie has also worked with both youth and adults on parenting education, sexual and reproductive health, drug and alcohol prevention and nutritional education that focused on the prevention and management of chronic diseases.



About Nourish and NKCDC: New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC) advances social equity and economic empowerment by nurturing and creating opportunities for residents to live in, and actively shape, their neighborhoods of choice. NKCDC believes that accessing, preparing and eating nourishing meals should be accessible to people of all social and economic backgrounds. By providing the resources and skills that people need to create nourishing meals at home, individuals and families can eat healthier, feel healthier, gain greater confidence in their cooking abilities and achieve a greater sense of control over their health and wellbeing. The goal is to create good food habits with long-term health benefits.

Stella M. Tai

Manager of Stewardship Investing Impact and Analysis
 Everence
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
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Stella Tai is Manager of Stewardship Investing Impact and Analysis for Praxis Mutual Funds® and Everence Financial®, a leading provider of faith-based financial products in the United States. With more than 15 years of experience in small business lending and nonprofit development, Stella provides primary leadership and support for the promotion, integration and development of impact investing and community development finance solutions.



Stella guides the development of financial products that meet the needs of low-to-moderate income communities, helps promote the integration of faith and finances through Everence products and services and works to grow opportunities for impact investments. Stella also leads impact reporting efforts for Praxis Mutual Funds. Before Everence, Stella was the Assistant Vice President of Lending at FINANTA, a Community Development Financial Institution in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where she provided access to capital, small business training, technical assistance and credit building to credit-challenged small businesses – primarily minorities, women and borrowers with language barriers. Originally from Kenya, Stella holds a Masters of Economic Development from Eastern University and a Bachelor of Business and Marketing from the University of Nairobi, Kenya.

About Everence: Everence is a faith-based financial services company and federal credit union headquartered in Lancaster. Partnering with Esperanza, Everence put its first local retail branch at Kensington and Allegheny Avenues in Philadelphia to serve residents. The company provides banking and insurance services but also works with its members to align their faith or values with their finances.

Caz Tod-Pearson

Executive Director
 The Simple Way
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
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Caz has lived and worked in Kensington, Philadelphia for the past 16 years and is the director of The Simple Way, a small organization supporting neighbors as they build a neighborhood they can all be proud of. A native of New Zealand, and a trained elementary school teacher, she came to Philadelphia to participate in a one year volunteer program where she helped in a small school in South West Philadelphia. She went on to teach 5th grade at the school for another two years, then directed the volunteer service program for 14 years. In all her endeavors she works in urban environments at the intersection of faith and justice.



About The Simple Way: Since 1995, The Simple Way has epitomized compassion and community, ignited by dozens of families experiencing homelessness moved into an abandoned Catholic church building in North Philadelphia. Evolving into an intentional village, they strive for inclusive neighborhoods where all can thrive. Guided by faith and values of love and justice, they engage in collaborative efforts and advocacy, envisioning a future where every neighbor finds security and opportunity.

Embedding Health & Equity into Design and Development

Ramune Bartuskaite

Associate; CEO & Founder

FIFTEEN; Spec Matters

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

ramune@xvadesign.com

Ramune Bartuskaite is the CEO and Founder of Spec Matters, an advocacy platform for healthier buildings and materials. She is a licensed architect and Associate at FIFTEEN Architecture + Design in Philadelphia—a practice driven by the desire to affect positive change. As a healthy building advocate who has developed an expertise in navigating the many resources and tools available for designing healthier environments, Ramune’s insights result in spaces that enhance the wellbeing of the diverse people and communities served by FIFTEEN.

Ramune is a Lithuanian immigrant and a first-generation graduate. She holds a Master of Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania, a Bachelor of Arts in Architecture with a Marketing Minor from Miami University, and a Certificate in Healthier Materials and Sustainable Building from Parsons School of Design. At Penn, she was awarded the Alpha Rho Chi Medal for leadership, willing service, and promise of professional merit and in 2019, she co-edited a book titled Women [Re]Build: Stories, Polemics, Futures. The book highlights female architects, designers, scholars, and educators who are pushing the boundaries of architecture and design.

Ramune has initiated and led many initiatives around equity in the industry, including serving as a ULI Women’s Leadership Initiative (WLI) Co-Chair and has been recognized as a 2024 ULI WLI Prologis Leader at the national ULI Spring Meeting. She currently sits on the board of a non-profit called Rise First which serves first-generation and low-income students and professionals, helping improve equity and access to education for underrepresented groups.

Ramune is a ULI Health Leaders alumni (Cohort 5).



About FIFTEEN: FIFTEEN is an Architecture and Design practice driven by the desire to affect positive change. Inspired by the power of great design, FIFTEEN sees itself as a catalyst for innovation and aims to redefine the dynamic between clients, communities, and designers. They are passionate about entrepreneurial, cross-practice solutions that improve our built environment, our communities, and our future.

Margo Geppert

Senior Development Manager

SHIFT Capital

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

margo@shiftcapital.us

Margo Geppert is a Senior Development Manager at SHIFT Capital, a social impact real estate development group based in Philadelphia who invests across asset classes to improve the quality of life and social determinants of health in neighborhoods across the country. During her six-year tenure on the team, Margo has supported development and commercial leasing – focusing on how both the physical building design, and the organizations that occupy them impact the surrounding neighborhood’s health and wellness.

She has a background in urban planning and public health. Her undergraduate thesis focused on how intentional commercial, or retail leasing can improve health outcomes. She began her career at the City of Columbus Department of Neighborhoods, supporting neighborhood plans for areas with the lowest health equity indexes. She then transitioned to real estate development to implement community-serving projects. She was selected as a Rising Star by the Philadelphia Business Journal in 2022 and led the application for ULI’s Wilard G. “Bill” Rouse III Awards for Excellence in 2019 for MaKen Studios.

Margo has supported a diverse set of mission-critical projects and organizations to help them secure studio and retail space, secure grant funding, and manage their development and construction. Some notable projects and leases include: J-centrel, 3200 Kensington, Sharswood Ridge, Hopeworks, CaPhe Roasters, Big Picture Philadelphia, Safe-Hub Philadelphia Youth Soccer, Greenline Capital, The Sunday LOVE Project, RAWtools Philadelphia, Kensington Soccer Club, and Cantina La Martina,

In addition to her full-time work on SHIFT’s Development and Leasing teams, Margo attends Georgetown’s Master’s in Real Estate Development. She is also on the Board of Friends of Harrowgate Park, is a 2023 ULI Etkins Scholar, and volunteered for the HACE Livability Academy.



About SHIFT: SHIFT is a real estate development firm on a mission to create inclusive, equitable communities that thrive. Through their Whole Neighborhood approach, SHIFT invests in places AND people to create opportunity and shared prosperity for all. They deploy integrated development strategies that connect the economic and social dots across sectors, partners, and neighborhoods.

J-Centrel Tour

Josh Harris

Construction Project Manager
 Kensington Corridor Trust
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
josh@kctphilly.org



Josh Harris is the construction project manager for the Kensington Corridor Trust. Josh is an innovative design build industry professional whose career spans sustainable building practices from passive house to adaptive reuse. He also has experience with visual arts fabricating for contemporary artists and exhibition projects for museums and cultural institutions. Josh is passionate about work that contributes to the economic, social, and environmental fabric of the city.

Josh was born and raised in New York City and moved to Philadelphia in 2007. Upon moving to Philadelphia, he briefly enjoyed work as a teaching artist with Mural Arts and was selected by the Philadelphia Museum as a teaching artist for several years while running his general contracting company.

As owner of his company, Design Art Build Co., for over ten years, Josh recently completed as Construction/Project Manager a 25-unit net positive solar apartment complex for Onion Flats called “the building of the future” by Inquirer staff writer Inga Saffron. Josh has focused his energy on the urban environment and how he can contribute to a healthier city.

Josh is currently an active Board Member for Taller Puertorriqueño where he recently chaired the spring fundraiser, El Fashion Show. He is always looking for ways to combine his diverse professional experience to become more civically engaged and improve the quality of life in cities. When not at work, he enjoys playing soccer and cooking with his young twins and Venezuelan wife.

About Kensington Corridor Trust: The Kensington Corridor Trust (KCT) fosters the equitable economic revitalization of a commercial corridor and its surrounding neighborhood through local partnerships, strategic programming, and an innovative approach to moving real estate assets out of the speculative private market. Leveraging patient, flexible capital, and a long-term trust vehicle, the KCT de-commodifies real estate assets and transitions them to neighborhood control. This pioneering model of neighborhood ownership, governance, and local economic development has the potential to keep control within the neighborhood and ensure long-term affordability. The KCT introduces neighborhood-based property control for long-term, equitable revitalization of a key commercial corridor.

Lawrence Burden

Senior Director, Career Readiness

Hopeworks

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As the Sr. Director of Career Programming, Lawrence leads a team of dedicated professionals who design and deliver innovative and impactful programs that prepare young people for the future of work. With over 4 years of experience in youth development, Lawrence is passionate about empowering and mentoring youth, especially those who face barriers and challenges in accessing education and employment opportunities. He has developed and implemented a comprehensive career readiness curriculum that covers essential skills, such as life coaching, professional development, and public speaking. He has also facilitated the participation of Hopeworks Camden in the Future of Work Accelerator, a statewide initiative that supports worker-centric solutions and innovations. Through these efforts, he has enabled hundreds of youth to achieve their personal and professional goals and to contribute to the social and economic development of their communities.

About Hopeworks: Hopeworks is a social enterprise that uses technology, healing, and entrepreneurship to transform lives; on average, over 99% of young adults (aged 17-26) entering Hopeworks are unemployed, making less than \$400 annually. Young adults completing the Hopeworks program make, on average, over \$43,000 annually, with an almost 90% 12-month retention rate in their jobs. Hopeworks’ unique trauma-informed approach, combined with high-demand, high wage technical training and paid work experience helps young people not only get the job, but keep it, transforming their lives and the lives of their families.

Alex Robles

Co-Founder

Voyage Investments

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Alex co-leads Voyage Investments’ overall operations and acquisition strategy. He is responsible for the assemblage of vacant / under-utilized properties and collaborates with local market participants and stakeholders to execute projects. He has over 12 years of experience in hospitality, underwriting, marketing, and real estate investment. As part of SHIFT Capital’s Developer-in-Residence program, he manages the company’s largest Philadelphia projects with a total development cost over \$100M. Prior to his investment career, Alex spent seven years working in operations at HEI Hotels & Resorts, a private hotel real estate investment firm. In his time with HEI, he spearheaded sales & marketing efforts for hotels within brands such as Le Meridien and Westin prior to leading the business travel strategy for a 17-hotel cluster.

Alex serves as Board Chair of the Kensington Corridor Trust, a community land trust in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia, and Treasurer of Norris Square Community Alliance, a non-profit serving the early-education, affordable housing, and workforce training needs of a majority-Latino neighborhood. Alex is a proud North Philadelphia native with Dominican immigrant roots.

Alex received his Master of Business Administration from the Wharton School and his Bachelors of Science from Penn State University’s School of Hospitality Management. He is married to his college sweetheart, Lee Anne, and has twin sons, Lorenzo and Christian.

Juan Saenz

Co-Founder

Voyage Investments

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Juan co-leads Voyage Investment’s acquisition and capital markets strategy. He is experienced in asset management and community development finance, specifically in underwriting, financial analysis, and commercial lending. His life and work experiences drive him towards creating positive investments in underserved communities.

As part of SHIFT Capital’s Developer-in-Residence program, Juan is responsible for overseeing SHIFT’s Neighborhood Fund (\$200 MM AUM) in an asset management role. The SHIFT Neighborhood Fund is a 2 million square-foot portfolio of mixed-use (commercial and residential) and industrial assets. He also supports SHIFT’s Catalyst Fund (\$350 MM AUM) in the underwriting of new acquisition opportunities for the company’s national expansion in markets outside the greater Philadelphia area.

Prior to this, he worked for Kroll Bond Rating Agency’s (KBRA) commercial mortgage-backed securities (CMBS) department in an underwriting capacity, providing credit ratings for newly issued CMBS and CRE CLO transactions. He also worked for KBRA’s analytics team, underwriting distressed CRE loans and providing surveillance for a portfolio totaling \$2 billion in transactions.

Juan holds a Master’s in Real Estate from NYU University and a BA in Finance from Penn State University.



About SHIFT’s Developer-in-Residence program: This program trains and cultivates emerging developers by integrating individuals or small teams with SHIFT’s team in a supportive learning environment. Rising developers access SHIFT’s proven real estate tools and cross-collaborate with their team members through experiential, on-the-project, and peer-to-peer learning.

OVERVIEW OF FORUM NEIGHBORHOODS/AREAS

Organized by day | Note: These are mere snapshots of the history of these neighborhoods. We encourage you to explore the links and other resources to learn more.

Day 1: West Philadelphia

West Philadelphia, spanning nearly fifteen square miles from the Schuylkill River to Delaware County, experienced a dynamic evolution from verdant suburban neighborhoods attracting new residents in the early twentieth century to becoming a predominantly African American area facing racial discrimination in lending and employment practices. Despite its challenges, the neighborhood fostered a vibrant Black political and cultural scene and witnessed a resurgence in higher education and medical clusters in the twenty-first century. West Philadelphia's growth was fueled by industrial expansion, transportation developments like the Lancaster Pike and the Schuylkill Permanent Bridge, and the arrival of the University of Pennsylvania in 1872. However, discriminatory practices and postwar economic shifts led to racial segregation and decline in certain areas, exacerbated by the expansion of Penn's campus and the devastation caused by a drug epidemic in the 1980s. Yet, community-led initiatives and investments from anchor institutions like Penn are catalyzing renewal and reinvestment in some neighborhoods, signaling potential for a more equitable future.

Summarized from: [“West Philadelphia”](#) (The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia)

Day 2: Delaware River Waterfront and I-95 construction

The Delaware River waterfront, anchored by Penn's Landing, is undergoing a profound revitalization, marking a significant chapter in its history. Guided by the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC), current endeavors aim to rejuvenate this area, emphasizing urban connectivity and community involvement. This transformation is accompanied by a recognition of the historical ramifications and legacies of I-95 construction, which fragmented communities and largely displaced African Americans and immigrant populations. Efforts to address these legacies and celebrate the area's rich cultural heritage reflect a dedication to fostering inclusive and dynamic spaces along the Delaware River waterfront while fostering greater access between the city's residents and its waterfront.

Summarized from: [Philadelphia: Delaware Expressway](#) (Segregation by Design); [“Penn's Landing”](#) (The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia)

Day 3: Kensington

Kensington's history, from its origins as a bustling industrial hub to its present-day challenges, reflects a story of community strength. The original Kensington is now more commonly called Fishtown because shad fishing became the dominant industry in the 18th and 19th centuries. Kensington flourished into a vibrant textile manufacturing center post-Civil War, drawing immigrants seeking opportunity. Despite tensions and upheavals, the neighborhood welcomed diverse populations, contributing to its rich cultural tapestry. While economic shifts and urban development posed challenges, Kensington remains a beacon of hope, with community-based organizations and initiatives striving to uplift residents. Today, Kensington stands as one of Philadelphia's most diverse neighborhoods. It is also one of the city's poorest neighborhoods, regularly posting the highest numbers for violent crime and the lowest for education, employment, and positive health outcomes.

Summarized from: [“Kensington History”](#) (NKCDC)

RECOMMENDED PRE-READING & RESOURCES

Organized by session | Please prioritize items marked with an asterisk.

General

[Segregation by Design: Philadelphia](#)

[Close to Home: The Health of Philadelphia's Neighborhoods](#), City of Philadelphia Department of Public Health & Drexel University Urban Health Collaborative (2019)

Social Equity Workshop

[Social Identity Self-Assessment*](#)

PHMC Tour

[ULI Philadelphia 2023 Awards for Excellence: Small Scale Category Finalist – PHMC at 4601 Market Street](#)

A Slice of Philadelphia's Built Environment History

["The Racialized History of Philadelphia's Toxic Public Schools,"](#) The Metropole (2022)

Transportation Transformations & Penn's Landing Park

[Transportation Transformations: How Highway Conversions Can Pave the Way for More Inclusive and Resilient Places](#), ULI (2023)

[The Park at Penn's Landing](#) (website)

[Master Plan for the Central Delaware](#), Delaware River Waterfront Corporation

["How I-95 broke Philly's waterfront \(and what the city is doing to fix it\),"](#) Curbed Philadelphia (2017)

Philly RiSE Accelerator

["Access to Capital: Solutions for Black Developers to Overcome Funding Challenges,"](#) Urban Land Online (2024)

["Development For Good: Black Squirrel Collective,"](#) The Philadelphia Citizen (2023)

Kensington Partnerships Panel

[Kensington Planning Process: History, Context, Voices](#), New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC) and Impact Services (2023)

[NKCDC: Nourish program](#) (website)

["Unlocking Opportunity for Female Entrepreneurs Through Non-Traditional Financing,"](#) Green Money (2024)

["Pew Awards \\$4 Million to Esperanza Health Center to Expand Affordable, Comprehensive Care in Underserved Neighborhoods,"](#) Pew (2023)

[Esperanza Health Center – Master Plan: Campus Nexus](#), Volunteers of the Community Design Collaborative (2023)

Embedding Health & Equity and J-Centrel Tour

[SHIFT Capital Impact Reports](#)

[SHIFT Developer-in-Residence](#)

["This Apartment Building Gives You a Break on the Rent for Volunteering,"](#) Philadelphia Magazine (2021)

PHILADELPHIA RECOMMENDATIONS

Please note this is a non-exhaustive list. We recommend reaching out to your fellow Health Leaders who've visited before, local contacts, and doing your own research.

<p>Museums</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnes Foundation • Philadelphia Museum of Art • Rodin Museum • The Mütter Museum 	<p>Points of Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Terminal Market • Historic South 9th Street Italian Market • Independence Hall • National Constitution Center • The Liberty Bell • Rocky Statue and the Rocky Steps • Mural Arts Self-Guided Tour
<p>Parks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dilworth Park • Washington Square Park • Rittenhouse Square Park • Kelly Drive • East Fairmount Park • Fairmount Park • Rail Park • Waterfront Piers & Parks: Cherry Street Pier, Race Street Pier, Spruce Street Harbor Park, and Blue Cross RiverRink 	<p>Food and Drink</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Food options near the hotel</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Effie's (Greek), Barbuzzo (Mediterranean), Kanella (Mediterranean), Vedge (Vegan), Monk's Café (Belgian), Bleu Sushi (Japanese), Bud and Marilyn's (American) • <i>Center City East</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Talula's Garden (American) • <i>Center City West</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Love (American), Qu Japan Bistro & Bar (Japanese), Harp & Crown (New American), Almaz Café (Ethiopian) • <i>Chinatown</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Terakawa Ramen (Japanese), Dim Sum Garden, Nan Zhou Hand Drawn Noodle House, Su Xing House • <i>Fishtown</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pizzeria Beddia, Suraya Restaurant (Lebanese), Weckerly's Ice Cream • <i>Little Italy</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ South Philly Barbacoa (Mexican), Pat's King of Steaks (Philly Cheesesteak), Geno's Steaks (Philly Cheesesteak) • <i>Old City</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bok Chon (Korean), Philly Style Bagels Old City, Old City Coffee