

# Wright-Patterson PK Diversity & Inclusion Newsletter

Issue #5 (Q1)

## A Message From Our Executive Board

Looking back on our inaugural year, we are proud of the work we have done and the presence we made.

Throughout this last year, the Community Outreach sub-committee demonstrated agility in an uncertain environment! With an emphasis on seeking a diverse candidate pool, they worked closely with the WP Recruiting Team, to accomplish several virtual events including Information Sessions, Career Fairs, and collaborations with Professional Organizations! In 2021, the Community Outreach committee will remain focused on proactive outreach to more diverse groups, maintaining outreach events and seeking new opportunities!

The Mentoring sub-committee has already kicked off 2021 with a bang with the launch of the PK Mentorship Program in celebration of National Mentoring month! The goal of the program is to cultivate an open and inclusive environment, increase networking opportunities for members and encourage the natural formation of life-long mentor and mentee relationships.

However there is still so much more to do and impacts to make. The D&I council pledges continued and increased efforts to illustrate the importance of having a diverse and inclusive workplace. We are committed to helping foster a culture where every voice is welcome, heard, and respected.

The rescission of Executive Order 13950 brings renewed promise and excitement for the Training sub-committee. They can now forge ahead with offering training for leaders and the whole PK workforce. Training, lectures and seminars on workplace culture; racial and gender equality; equity in leadership and flexibility in the work place all designed to continue to educate and challenge us!

We are excited over what is in store in this next year!

Thank you to our PK Directors and leadership for their continued support and increased awareness on diversity and inclusion.



**Making people feel valued by honoring their differences!**

Thank you to all those who have joined our council, volunteered and contributed to a successful first year.

As always the D&I council welcomes your ideas, suggestions, or involvement! We look forward to another busy and productive year ahead, and wish our PK family a Happy 2021!

***“Diversity is the one thing we all have in common, let’s take the time to connect, embrace and celebrate!”***

\* Note: CY21 editions will be quarterly

### **Awareness Months:**

- National Mentoring Month
- Women’s History Month
- Black History Month
- Irish-American Heritage Month

### **Highlights:**

- First Female Vice President
- Georgia Senate
- First Black Chief of Staff
- First Female Chief Master Sergeant of the USAF
- First Black Defense Secretary

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## 2021 Historic Inauguration

On January 20, 2021, Kamala Harris made history as she was sworn in as the Vice President of the United States of America.

Her historic election to the office of the Vice President marked the first time the United States of America elected a Female Vice President, a Black Vice President, a South Asian Vice President and a HBCU (Howard University) Graduate Vice President.

Harris is the daughter of a Jamaican-born father, Donald Harris and an Indian-born mother, Shyamala Gopalan. Her parents immigrated to the United States to pursue doctorate degrees at the University of California at Berkeley. Harris attributes the following wisdom to her mother: "Kamala, you

may be the first to do many things, but make sure you're not the last." Following that advice, Kamala has spent her career breaking down barriers as a woman of color.

Tal Kopan reported for the San Francisco Chronicle: "She has been the first person like her to hold every office she has ever won.

She was the first woman and person of color to serve as San Francisco district attorney. She was the first woman and first Black person to be attorney general of California. She was the first Black senator from California."



Kamala Devi Harris  
First Female, First Black, First South Asian, First Historically Black College University Graduate Vice President

## Continued

After announcing Kamala Harris as his running mate, Joe Biden stated, "Little Black and brown girls, that so often feel overlooked and undervalued in their communities, but today... just maybe they're seeing themselves for the first time in a new way as the stuff of president and vice presidents." Time magazine named Joe Biden and Kamala Harris 2020's Person of the Year: "For changing the American story, for showing that the forces of empathy are

**"But while I may be the first woman in this office, I will not be the last, because every little girl watching tonight sees that this is a country of possibilities."**

greater than the furies of division, for sharing a vision of healing in a grieving world, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are TIME's 2020 Person of the Year."



## Rising Star: Poet Amanda Gorman

Amanda Gorman is the youngest inaugural poet in U.S. history. Her grace and words struck listeners as hopeful at a time when the country faced multiple crises. It was clear that they were watching a star in the making.

As a poet, author and activist, her work focuses on issues of oppression, feminism, race, and marginalization, as well as the African diaspora. Gorman was the first person to be named National Youth Poet Laureate in 2017.

Gorman will become another first in February. She has been asked to recite poem at Super Bowl LV; the first poet to do so.



The poet Amanda Gorman wowed Americans from coast to coast at President Biden's inauguration when she recited her poem "The Hill We Climb."

## How Georgia Made Senate History

The results of the 2021 Georgia Senate Runoff Election brought our country additional firsts as Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock were declared winners of the runoff election.

Jon Ossoff became the first-ever Jewish senator elected by the state of Georgia. He is also the first Jewish Senator from the southern region of the United States to hold a seat since the 19th Century.

Finally, at the age of 33, he is the youngest Democratic senator since President Joe Biden. Raphael Warnock is the first Black senator from Georgia and only the 11th Black senator in United States history. Also significant about Raphael



Warnock is since 2005 he has served as the senior pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, Martin Luther King Jr.'s former congregation. Reverend Warnock plans to continue in his role as senior pastor while serving in the Senate.



## Woman on a Mission

Stacey Abrams is a political leader and voting rights activist from Georgia. She was the first black woman in the US that was a major party gubernatorial candidate. She created a non-profit organization called Fair Fight in 2018 after noticing how poorly managed the state's election was. Her intention in establishing Fair Fight is to ensure every American has a voice in the election system through creat-

ing voter protection teams in 20 battleground states and registering eligible voters to increase turn out. She worked relentlessly to form Fair Fight, which helped register and empower voters for the 2020 election.

While working on the voter-side, she was also working at the party level to encourage political leaders to look

at Georgia as part of their campaign strategies. If you are curious to learn more about Stacey Abrams, check out her book "Our Time is Now" or her Prime documentary, "All In: the Fight for Democracy."



Politician, Author, Lawyer, Activist and so much more.

## Diversity Starts at the Top

### United States Air Force —

On 6 August 2020, Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr. was sworn in as the Air Force's 22nd Chief of Staff, becoming the first Black military service chief in the 245 year history of the U.S. armed forces.

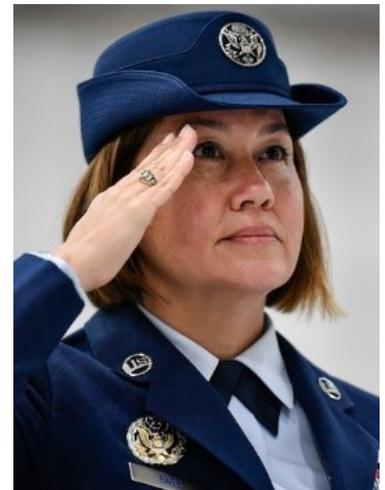
As Chief, he serves as the senior uniformed Air Force officer responsible for the organization, training and equipping of 689,000 active-duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian forces serving in the United States and overseas. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the general and other service chiefs function as military advisers to the Secretary of Defense, National Security Council and the President.



On 14 August 2020, Chief Master Sgt. JoAnne S. Bass formally took the reins as the Air Force's 19th Chief Master Sergeant, in the process becoming the first woman and the first person of Asian American descent to be elevated to the service's highest noncommissioned officer position.

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force JoAnne S. Bass represents the highest enlisted level of leadership, and as such, provides direction for the enlisted

force and represents their interests, as appropriate, to the American public and to those in all levels of government. She serves as the personal adviser to the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Air Force on all issues regarding the welfare, readiness, morale, and proper utilization and progress of more than 600,000 Total Force Airmen.



### Department of Defense —

On 22 January 2021, Lloyd Austin, a retired four-star Army general, was confirmed by the Senate, making him the first Black Defense Secretary in U.S. history. The Senate approved President Biden's nomination for Pentagon chief in a near-unanimous 93-2 vote.



## Celebrating Women in Flight

Every March we celebrate the achievements of Women around the world! One such celebration, is celebrated in 49 countries is known as Women of Aviation Worldwide Week sponsored by the Institute for Women of Aviation Worldwide (iWOAW).

This global aviation awareness week observed marks the anniversary of the world's first female pilot license (March 8, 1910). The week is a call to address gender imbalance in the air and space industry.

This year's theme is "Women with Wings Healing the World" in honor of Marie Marvingt, the world's first person to hold a flight paramedic license.

The iWOAW also sponsors the Pink Paper Plane Challenge and the Fly It Forward awards.

Their motto, "Remembering the Legacy, Celebrating the Achievements and Shaping the Future" is a call to action for women and girls everywhere!



Every year March is designated Women's History Month by Presidential proclamation.

## Dayton OH Black History

Did you know that Dayton, Ohio is filled with numerous people and places to honor during Black History Month? Here are 5 remarkable Dayton people with roots and ties to the Gem City:

1) Paul Laurence Dunbar became one of the first influential Black poets in American literature, and was internationally acclaimed for his poetry. In its entirety, Dunbar's literary body is regarded as an impressive representation of Black life in turn-of-the-century America. In 1936, his former home at 219 N. Summit St. in Dayton, became the first state memorial to honor an African-American.

- 2) Lt. Col. Charity Edna Earley commanded the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion in Europe during World War II. The all-black battalion of 855 women was tasked with delivering mail to Americans stationed in Europe. Their motto was, "No mail, no morale." Lt. Col. Earley was publicly recognized by President Clinton at the groundbreaking for the Women's Memorial in Washington D.C.
- 3) Dayton is home to Wilberforce University is the country's oldest private historically black university. Named in honor of William Wilberforce, an 18th-century abolitionist, the university was founded in 1856. Two years

- 4) Charles Young was the third African-American to graduate from the United States Military Academy at West Point. He went on to achieve the rank of colonel and serve as a military attache. In 1903 he was assigned to protect Sequoia and General Grant National Parks, becoming the first African-American superintendent of a national park.
- 5) Louise Troy became the only African-American teacher retained after schools were integrated in 1887. Much of her career was spent at Garfield School, where she retired in 1920. Among the students she taught during her career was Paul Laurence Dunbar. Troy helped found the Women's Christian Association in 1893 which later became the YWCA.

## Architect of the White House

James Hoban's life is a memorable Irish-American success story. Hoban came to America with high ambitions, and designed and erected many buildings; but what keeps his name alive today arises from one special commission - he was the architect of the White House. It is believed that Hoban's design appealed to American government officials because it was simple and conservative, rather than ornate, which

*The U.S. Congress proclaimed March as Irish-American Heritage Month in 1991.*

would have led many to view the White House as some sort of palace. When it came to inspiration, meanwhile, Hoban looked to his native country. Hoban based his White House design on Leinster House, a stone residence in Dublin. Hoban played a key role in not only the design but also the actual construction of the White House, which took about eight years. Hoban was widely

respected for his efficiency and problem-solving skills. So, when construction of the U.S Capitol got underway, Hoban was called in to oversee that project as well. He was also involved in the construction of the U.S. Treasury building as well as offices for the State Department, War Department and U.S. Navy.



## Upcoming Events

The Smithsonian Institute has multiple virtual events and series to educate and celebrate upcoming Heritage and History Months.

Join them online for vibrant performances, lectures, and family activities that celebrate our nation's rich cultural heritage and history!

[www.si.edu/events/heritagemonth](http://www.si.edu/events/heritagemonth)

**To volunteer, send an email  
to the council at:  
[wpafb.pk.diversity@us.af.mil](mailto:wpafb.pk.diversity@us.af.mil)**

### Mentorship...



Focused on the establishment of a diverse group of mentors that are trained and available to connect and guide under represented groups within PK, aiding in the inclusion and retention of our diverse talent.

### Community Outreach...



Focused on establishing relationships, collaborating, and re-engaging with organizations, colleges, universities, and other groups to attract, hire, and retain high-caliber contracting professionals.

## Importance of Mentoring

Mentorship plays an integral role in developing a strong commitment towards the diversity of any organization, and the dividends reaped from a diverse mentorship program can be highly beneficial to organizational health. Through effective mentoring, organizations can leverage the relaxed nature of informal relationships with a structured goal, creating an environment where participants of all experience levels and backgrounds feel empowered to engage and collaborate.

An active and energetic mentoring program can aid junior employees in building a sound career path, developing short-term and long-term goals, in addition to keeping leadership abreast of questions and concerns the broader workforce may have, and recognition of diverse talent. Providing a pathway for both the imparting and receiving of information promotes a true reciprocal relationship, and has proven to be vital to the retention of diverse talent in workforces across the country.

As the most inclusive organizations tend to be the most innovative and agile, we at Wright-Patterson are also dedicated to being a driving force on this front.

The Mentorship Committee of the D&I Council has worked hard to create a program that can appeal to the needs of our workforce to the maximum extent practicable. The purpose of the program is not only to provide all of our Contracting personnel the opportunity to be mentored but to also create a way to introduce people who may not have otherwise been acquainted. The goal is to provide the workforce with a structure that can help to build a truly meaningful mentoring relationship. In addition to the structure, we intend to provide regular resources on how to make the best out of the mentoring relationship.

Ultimately the success of this program will depend on the quality of its participation. We are looking for mentors and mentees who are excited about embarking on this unique opportunity, and who are invested in the development of our acquisition workforce at large.

If you are interested in being a mentor or mentee, or would like additional information, please send an email to: [wpafb.pk.diversity@us.af.mil](mailto:wpafb.pk.diversity@us.af.mil) and copy Ms. Kelli White at [kelli.white@us.af.mil](mailto:kelli.white@us.af.mil).

## Where to go for more info...

Women in Aviation week:

<https://womenofaviationweek.org/>

Black History Month:

<https://www.africanamericanhistorymonth.gov/>

Irish-American Heritage:

<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2020/irish-american-heritage.html>