



**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Leadership Center Launches DMV Diversity & Inclusion Institute**

**Arlington, VA** - LCE announced it will launch the Washington region's first community leadership program focused on diversity and inclusion, sponsored by Nestlé .

The [DMV Diversity & Inclusion Institute](#) is a leadership development and community building program encompassing five workshop days spread over a five-month period, designed to build productive dialogue about and across differences and similarities.

"Inclusion is an important contemporary topic in leadership," said Karen Coltrane, LCE president and CEO. "And we knew we wanted to help established leaders maximize the benefits of diverse environments. So, we are excited to bring a proven program to the region that will give leaders across the spectrum of corporate, small business, nonprofits and all levels of government more tools and experiences to build better teams and have better outcomes. And we are truly thrilled to have one of the top corporate pioneers in the diversity and inclusion field, Juan Johnson, as our program facilitator."

Johnson, an accountant by training and one of The Coca Cola Company's youngest VPs and head of investor relations, was tapped by the CEO in the early 2000's to steer the corporation through the largest class action employment suit in history. Since retiring from The Coca Cola Company, Johnson has led Diversity Leadership in Action, an Atlanta-based diversity and inclusion consultancy, from which he developed and has implemented an award-winning leadership program curriculum focused on diversity, inclusion and equity.

"The research is clear that diverse organizations have a performance advantage," said Johnson. "But many leaders are unsure of how to capture that advantage. This program gives participants a broader lens on the issues and best practices of working with different generations, genders, races, socio-economic backgrounds, sexual orientations, political views, physical and mental capabilities – across the full range of diversity dimensions."

The interactive program uses case studies, scenario analyses and group experiences to facilitate deeper understanding of the topic as well as relationship building among the participants. Graduates will become DMV Diversity & Inclusion Fellows and will continue to have involvement with future classes and programming.

“As a graduate of a Leadership Center for Excellence program myself, I was excited to see the organization engage on such an important topic,” said David Barkley, chair of LCE’s Board of Regents and Business Initiatives Director for Freddie Mac. “We believe leaders are lifelong learners and this program will offer a new path for growth for many established leaders. Plus, it fits perfectly with the Center’s nonprofit mission to expand leadership capacity by combining an award-winning curriculum, experienced national facilitator, a corporate sponsor in Nestlé recognized for its commitment to inclusion, and area leaders eager to create more inclusive environments. Our region will be better as a result.”

“We were excited but not surprised that Nestlé saw the value in partnering with the Leadership Center to launch this program,” said Coltrane. “Given the company’s recognized leadership in diversity and inclusion, we hoped that helping us create a growing pool of leaders across the region who are better able to lead across multiple diversity dimensions would be a benefit to our community.” Nestlé was recently ranked among Glassdoor’s Top 20 Best Corporations for Diversity and Inclusion.

The program’s initial pilot cohort is being recruited now. If successful, the program will become a regular offering of the Leadership Center for Excellence. Established leaders interested in participating in the pilot cohort are encouraged to contact Karen Coltrane, LCE president and CEO, at [kcoltrane@leadercenter.org](mailto:kcoltrane@leadercenter.org) or by calling 703-528-2522.

Read about the DMV Diversity & Inclusion Institute and apply online at [www.leadercenter.org/diversity](http://www.leadercenter.org/diversity).

#### **About Leadership Center for Excellence**

The mission of Leadership Center for Excellence is to enlighten, inspire and connect leaders through community building and leadership development. For more information, visit [leadercenter.org](http://leadercenter.org) or call 703-528-2522.