



# IGNITE OUR COMMUNITY POWER!

February 29, 2020



**MORTON COLLEGE**  
3801 S. CENTRAL AVE.  
CICERO, IL 60804  
[WWW.MORTON.EDU](http://WWW.MORTON.EDU)

# WELCOME!

## WOMEN'S EMPOWHERMENT CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Welcome to Morton College's Women's EmpoHERment Conference! Thank you for your support and attendance. We strongly encourage you to network and make connections throughout the day with all of our conference attendees, speakers, and don't forget to check out the available resources. We are excited to welcome you and hope you enjoy all that we've created with you in mind.

While you are here, we want to encourage you to buy a WEC t-shirt to support our first ever, Morton College Panther Pantry. Your contributions are greatly appreciated.

The conference has an incredible speaker lineup and we're curious to learn which workshops you will attend. Enjoy the conference and don't forget to provide your feedback at the end of the day.

Tag Morton College with hashtag #MCWEC in all your posts. We want to see what you capture throughout the conference!

- Morton College Women's EmpowHERment Committee

*Ana Valdez, Blanca Jara, Gabriela Mata, Maria Anderson, Marisol Velazquez, Sara Helmus, and Wendy Vega-Huezo*



02.29.20  
#MCWEC

IGNITE OUR COMMUNITY POWER!

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

## **8:00 AM - 9:00 AM    REGISTRATION CHECK-IN**

JPAC Theatre Lobby

## **9:00 AM - 9:30 AM    WELCOME | JPAC THEATRE**

Sally Delgado, Emcee

Perla Santoyo, Emcee

Cristal Hernandez, Student Government Association President

Dr. Stan Fields, Morton College President

## **9:45 AM - 10:45 AM    WORKSHOP CYCLE I**

### **A Woman's Place in Interfaith Leadership | 177C**

Through discussion and interactive components, this presentation highlights the importance of being an interfaith leader, an individual who builds bridges and positively impacts their campus community by bringing people who orient around worldview together. This is no easy task, but a skillset we can craft and nurture. This session will provide the necessary resources to further develop your interfaith leadership skillsets and leave you feeling confident to take your place.

### **Census 2020: Count Me In! ;Hazte Contar! | 106C**

Participants will get a basic overview of Census 2020, what are some of the main concerns surrounding Census 2020, what resources are available and how to get involved. Counting every person and the data that comes from the Census is critical to our democracy – participating in the census is our right and responsibility. Let's get everyone counted!

### **Best Practices to a Successful Interview | 175C**

In this workshop you will learn the do's and don'ts to successful interviewing.

### **Healthy Eating for a Healthy Life: Overcoming Obstacles and Planning for Action | 275C**

Join us as we explore the components of a Healthy Diet and discover the impact certain types of foods have on our health. Discover strategies for overcoming the obstacles we all face and learn how to plan for success. "While knowledge is power, action is change!"

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

## 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM WORKSHOP CYCLE I (CONTINUED)

### **Making Money Moves | 178C**

Managing money for daily living is a huge challenge. Turn around and add the pressure of being a woman in today's society presents an even bigger challenge. Not to mention trying to find the time and money to go to school is stressful in itself. That's why it's important to ensure you make the right "Money Moves" on this journey to come out as debt-free as possible. This session will focus on different ways to finance your education so you can make informed decisions and complete your educational goals.

### **¡Mujer empoderada! (en español) | 278C**

*Mujer empoderada!! En esta charla compartiremos de una forma muy sencilla y concreta cómo lograr ser una mujer empoderada y algunas cualidades que son importantes de destacar. Por ejemplo: A Creer en ellas mismas! Hacer únicas en todo su esplendor. A creer en cada error o equivocación y no piensan que es el final de la vida! A mantener siempre esa actitud positiva. Y sobre todo a ser una mujer que ayuda a otras en su género y nunca piensa solo en ella.*

Empowered woman! In this talk we will share in a very simple and concrete way how to be an empowered woman and some qualities that are important to highlight. For example: To believe in themselves! Make unique in all its splendor. To believe in every error or mistake and do not think it is the end of life! To always maintain that positive attitude, and above all to be a woman who helps others in her gender and never thinks about her alone.

### **Navigating Professional Spaces as a Woman/Femme of Color | Student Union**

This workshop will focus on providing an open and brave space for women and femmes of color to explore how they navigate professional spaces. The moderator, Nydia María Stewart, will provide an overview and guiding questions. The space and time is intended to provide a rich, open dialogue that encourages sharing of personal successes, stumbling blocks, and ways forward. This is not a lecture! We are all in this together and deserve a space to empowHER each other to achieve in whatever professional spaces we enter.

### **Self-Esteem 101: What My Mirror Sees; What The World Sees | 277C**

What my mirror sees; what the world sees is a workshop that will explore how self-esteem develops and the struggles young adults face today regarding how one views themselves in comparison to the pressure of what a strong self-esteem should look like in the media.

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

## 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM WORKSHOP CYCLE I (CONTINUED)

### **That #EntrepreneurLife: Creating a Successful Business on Your Terms | 105C**

This session will walk you through the journeys of how two entrepreneurs built very different businesses but have turned their passion and skills into their purpose. We will touch on tactics for Service-oriented businesses as well as Tech startups, how you can grow your business as a #sidehustle and when to make the leap to full time.

## 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM WORKSHOP CYCLE II

### **Best Practices to a Successful Interview | 175C**

In this workshop you will learn the do's and don'ts to successful interviewing.

### **Census 2020: Count Me In! ;Hazte Contar | 106C**

Participants will get a basic overview of Census 2020, what are some of the main concerns surrounding Census 2020, what resources are available and how to get involved. Counting every person and the data that comes from the Census is critical to our democracy – participating in the census is our right and responsibility. Let's get everyone counted!

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### **Leading Locally | 277C**

Boards and Commissions are city, county and state level leadership in which community members play a vital role in providing feedback to the local and statewide government. There exists a wide spectrum of Boards and Commissions that range from education and animal care to city zoning. Many of these opportunities do not require you to run a campaign and simply entail an application process. Joining a Board or Commission can be the first step toward an elected office and will provide you with the experience necessary to take the plunge! Your voice is invaluable, and your community needs to hear from you. Join us to learn how to find a Board or Commission that oversees issues you care more about and how to apply!

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

## 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM WORKSHOP CYCLE II (CONTINUED)

### **Making Money Moves | 178C**

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### **Pursuing a College Degree in STEM | Student Union**

This workshop is for women who are considering a degree in a STEM field and have questions about the process. A panel of students (including current and former Morton College students and staff) pursuing degrees in science, technology, engineering, and nursing will share their stories including how they chose their major, challenges they have overcome, opportunities that are available to them, and more.

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

## **11:00 AM - 12:00 PM    WORKSHOP CYCLE II (CONTINUED)**

### **TRANSforming Our Community, One VOICE at a Time | 177C**

This workshop is designed to introduce participants to the spectrum of Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, and Gender-Questioning identities and expressions. Learn more about Trans issues, Trans-inclusive vocabulary, and how to better support the Trans people in your life and community. Learn more about the VOICES project, one of the first all Trans and gender-nonconforming youth led program at Broadway Youth Center, a program of Howard Brown Health.

VOICES believes in practicing inclusion, diversity and equity while amplifying the opinions of all fem identified people of color. We are not a monolith, we come in all shapes, sizes and shades. It is with more reason that we want to see more stories, more images, and more conversations that center fem identified people of color who are queer, Trans, and/or disabled in today's society.

This workshop is open to all those who identify as Fem and for those who want to know how to be a better ally.

"I raise up my voice—not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard. ... We cannot all succeed when half of us are held back." -Malala Yousafzai

### **Your Financial Journey | 105C**

Latina women empowerment and financial planning.

## **12:00 PM - 1:30 PM    KEYNOTE SPEAKER LUNCHEON | GYMNASIUM**

Carla Castellanos, Emcee

Cristal Hernandez, Emcee

### **Dr. Patty Garcia, Keynote Speaker**

*Read more about Dr. Patty Garcia on her biography page!*

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

**1:45 PM - 2:45 PM**

## **WORKSHOP CYCLE III (CONTINUED)**

### **¡Empodérate! Unlocking the Latina Leadership Potential | 106C**

While women comprise more than half of the United States' population, they continue to be disproportionately underrepresented across all levels of public service. Even greater gaps in the pipeline exist for Latina women, who make up one in three of the total Latina/o elected official population. From city hall to the halls of Congress, it is important we recognize the need and value of having qualified women prepared to effectively lead and advocate with and for their communities. There is too much at stake for us to stand on the sidelines and instead we must get in the game to empower our communities towards greater civic, political, economic opportunities. This presentation will provide an overview of the basic campaign elements and highlight strategies to unlock the Latina leadership potential and gain a seat at the table.

### **Leading Locally | 277C**

Boards and Commissions are city, county and state level leadership in which community members play a vital role in providing feedback to the local and statewide government. There exists a wide spectrum of Boards and Commissions that range from education and animal care to city zoning. Many of these opportunities do not require you to run a campaign and simply entail an application process. Joining a Board or Commission can be the first step toward an elected office and will provide you with the experience necessary to take the plunge! Your voice is invaluable, and your community needs to hear from you. Join us to learn how to find a Board or Commission that oversees issues you care more about and how to apply!

### **Me, Myself, and My Next | 105C**

Okay, I realize I have some weak areas. I recognize they are affecting my progress, my relationships, and myself. I own that I have some work to do. Now the question is - what do I do next? Relationship Expert, Love McPherson, and her daughter, Image Consultant, Tiffany McPherson, are here to tell you the truth about the process and walk you through it. Let's do the work together!

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

**1:45 PM - 2:45 PM**

## **WORKSHOP CYCLE III (CONTINUED)**

### **TRANSforming Our Community, One VOICE at a Time | 177C**

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# ESTÉE LAUDER



**GINA CENTENO**  
**LEAD MAKEUP ARTIST**

ESTÉE LAUDER

bloomingdale's

**TOUCH-UPS | 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM**  
**MASTER CLASS | 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM**

Let Estée Lauder's Expert Team featuring Gina Centeno, Lead Makeup Artist, teach you pro tips to achieve the hottest looks of the season!

Estée Lauder invites you to an exciting Pro Artist Event. This 20 minute Beauty Lesson is focused on helping you achieve your most beautiful complexion customized to your unique needs and wishes. Come join the fun, we promise you will leave feeling fabulous!

Want more? Estée Lauder – Bloomingdales at 900 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL, invites you to join them on a Makeup Date on March 21 and on May 9 for their Fiesta de las Madres.



@estee\_beauties\_macysardenfair

02.29.20  
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# KEYNOTE SPEAKER



**DR. PATTY GARCIA**

Dr. Patty Garcia serves as District Director for U.S. Congressman Jesús “Chuy” García where she develops and implements the strategy and services for the district. She serves and represents the member, oversees personnel, and maintains federal, state, and local relationships. Previously, she was the Vice President of Programs and Operations for the Latino Center for Leadership Development (LCLD), where she implemented the organization’s vision by training individuals to seek policy-making roles, developing policy and philanthropic partnerships, as well as maintaining U.S. Mexico-relationships. Prior to that, she was Deputy Director of Constituency services with NALEO Educational Fund, where she managed and carried-out national, state, and local relations and efforts with cross-jurisdictional and bipartisan elected and appointed officials, philanthropic partners, and stakeholders across 14 states. Her career with NALEO Educational Fund began as Data and Campaigns Manager, where she

implemented over 30 data-driven civic engagement projects to increase voter education and participation efforts across 8 states. Her expertise ranges around core governance skills, education policies from birth to postsecondary education and the workforce, civic engagement, leadership development as well as other issues impacting the success and development of the Latino community. She earned a doctoral degree in Educational Policy Studies with a concentration in Latina/o Studies from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2011.

## **Session:**

### **Empoderate! Unlocking the Latina Leadership Potential**

*Workshop Cycle III | 1:45 PM - 2:45 PM | Room 106C*

*While women comprise more than half of the United States’ population, they continue to be disproportionately underrepresented across all levels of public service. Even greater gaps in the pipeline exist for Latina women, who make up one in three of the total Latina/o elected official population. From city hall to the halls of Congress, it is important we recognize the need and value of having qualified women prepared to effectively lead and advocate with and for their communities. There is too much at stake for us to stand on the sidelines and instead we must get in the game to empower our communities towards greater civic, political, economic opportunities. This presentation will provide an overview of the basic campaign elements and highlight strategies to unlock the Latina leadership potential and gain a seat at the table.*



@drapattyg



@DoctoraPattyG



garciaepg@gmail.com

# FEATURED SPEAKERS



**ALEXIS F. ABARCA**  
**FEATURED SPEAKER**

 [alvarado0531@yahoo.com](mailto:alvarado0531@yahoo.com)

HIV Prevention Coordinator at Howard Brown Health for the VOICES project; a program of BYC

Graduate of Northeastern Illinois University with a bachelor's degree in Women & Gender studies and 2 minors in LGBTQ history and Sociology

While in college I was involved in various student organizations such as The Feminist Collective, Pride Alliance, and Theta Pi Sigma gender all-inclusive Greek organization.

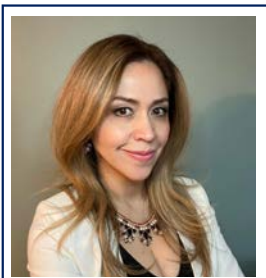
Upon my graduation I was blessed with an opportunity to work for the Broadway Youth Center, the very same grass root organization that helped me obtain a GED after being dropped out of high school. With this opportunity I have been able to give back in ways that I never thought possible. I have gone on to create the first Pride club in Little Village Lawndale high school where I mentor youth and help guide them towards finding their own path to success. I have also gone on to facilitate workshops on Trans competency issues with organizations that have historically & structurally discriminated against us. Even though my identities lie in the margins of oppression I consider myself to be very privileged to be here, because I wasn't supposed to be here. My motto in life is: If you aren't uncomfortable while sitting at the table then you did not learn anything other than how to be complacent.

**Session: TRANSforming Our Community, One VOICE at a Time**

*Workshop Cycle II | 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM | Room 177C*

*Workshop Cycle III | 1:45 PM - 2:45 PM | Room 177C*

# FEATURED SPEAKERS



**CARMEN ALVARADO**  
FEATURED SPEAKER

*Hola, me llamo Carmen Alvarado. Nací en Santana, California y me crié en Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco. Regresé a los Estados Unidos cuando tenía 24 años. He estado casada durante 18 años y soy madre de dos niños de 13 y 17 años.*

*Toda mi educación fue en el Colegio Pedro Moreno en Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco. Colaboré durante seis años con un grupo juvenil de MJVC en Jalisco y luego diez años en Chicago en el movimiento JMVC para parejas casadas, de unión libre, divorciadas o separadas. Desde que tuve mi primer hijo, siempre me gustó involucrarme en las escuelas. Actualmente soy Presidente del Consejo del Comité de Padres Bilingües en Berwyn South School District 100.*

*Actualmente, estoy dando charlas de Empoderamiento de la Mujer en escuelas y parroquias. Estoy certificada en: Empresarios del futuro, Inteligencia emocional, Neurolingüística, El arte de hablar en público, Virtus.*

*Como mujer, tengo el siguiente pensamiento; "Cada obstáculo que encuentro en mi vida es un escalón para subir más alto. Soy mejor de lo que creo". Mi motivación en la vida es ser una mujer feliz y ayudar a otras mujeres a sentirse felices y descubrir la hermosa luz que hay en su interior.*

Hello, my name is Carmen Alvarado I was born in Santana, California and raised in Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco. I returned to the United States when I was 24 years old. I have been married for 18 years, and I'm a mother of two boys, a 13 and a 17 year old.

All my schooling was at "Colegio Pedro Moreno" in Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco. I collaborated for six years in a youth group of MJVC in Jalisco and then ten years in Chicago at the JMVC movement for married couples, free union, divorced or separated. Since I had my first child, I always liked to get myself involved with the schools, and I'm currently the President of the Bilingual Parent Committee Advisory at Berwyn South School District 100. Currently, I'm doing Women Empowerment talks in schools or parishes.

I am certified in: Entrepreneurs of the future, Emotional Intelligence, Neurolinguistic, The art of speaking in public, Virtus

As a woman, I have the following thought; "Every obstacle I encounter in my life is a stepping stone to climb higher and that I am better than I think". My motivation in life is to be a happy woman and to help other women to feel happy and discover the beautiful light that is within them.

**Session: ¡Mujer empoderada! (en español)**

Workshop Cycle I | 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM | Room 278C

Workshop Cycle II | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Room 278C

# FEATURED SPEAKERS



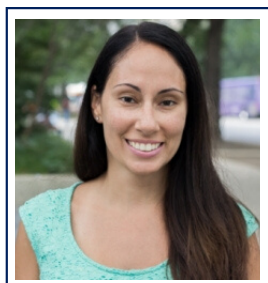
**BRITTANY CANTY**  
FEATURED SPEAKER

 @ComfortEatsDelivery

 @BrittanyCanty

Brittany Canty is a Product Management Leader that has worked with some amazing brands like Redbox, SpotHero and Braintree/PayPal. Not only has she launched new products, many internationally, but has also earned a patent and been a part of a premier tech startup accelerator, Techstars. She's a developer turned product manager, and her experience of working in B2C, B2B, early-stage startup and Non-Profits gives her an amazing perspective of how to build a company from the ground up. She has a B.Sc. in Computer Science from the University of Notre Dame and an MBA in Management and Entrepreneurship from Loyola Chicago

**Session: That #EntrepreneurLife: Creating a Successful Business on Your Terms**  
*Workshop Cycle I | 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM | Room 105C*



**JANETT I. CORDOVÉS, ED.D.**  
FEATURED SPEAKER

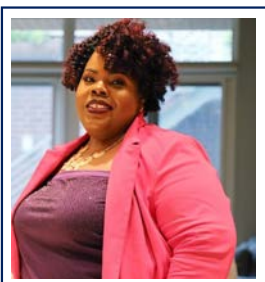
 @JanettIsabel

 janette@ifyc.org

Janett I. Cordovés, Program Manager, equips and empowers campus professional staff and faculty to be interfaith leaders. Prior to joining the IFYC team, Janett worked in higher education for over a decade, elevating the importance of engaging worldview identity and creating religious and spiritual accommodations and policies to support students' holistic development and retention and success efforts. Janett has a bachelor's in applied mathematics, a master's in higher education, and a doctorate in ethical leadership. Her research interests include first-generation, #digitalfaith, leadership development, and spirituality. In her spare time, Janett travels to spend time with family and friends, volunteers with Beyond Younger and the Food Pantry, Catholic Charities, and at her place of worship City Church Chicago.

**Session: A Woman's Place in Interfaith Leadership**  
*Workshop Cycle I | 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM | Room 177C*

# FEATURED SPEAKERS



**CARISSA DAVIS**  
FEATURED SPEAKER

Carissa Davis is the Director of Financial Aid at Morton College. She received her primary and secondary education in the Chicago Public School System.

She holds an A.S. degree in Business, and an A.A. degree in Liberal Arts, Prairie State College. She holds a B.A. degree in Interdisciplinary Studies with a minor in Communications and a M.A. degree in Communication Studies and Training, both from Governors State University.

Ms. Davis's professional career spans fields in higher education, non-for-profit, and banking.

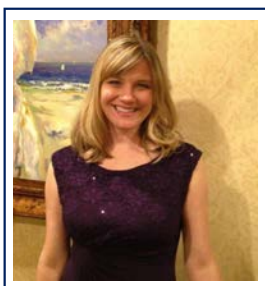
Ms. Davis continues to serve at Morton College. As she embarks on her 19th year in higher education, she has held many positions—Lead Admissions Specialist/Registration; Dental Hygiene Advisor/Enrollment Services Specialist; Coordinator of Veterans and Scholarships; Financial Aid Evaluator & Financial Aid Compliance Manager—each, a promotion that led her to her current role.

In addition to her role as director, she is a small business owner and an adjunct instructor in communications and college success courses.

**Session: Making Money Moves (Financial Aid Planning)**

*Workshop Cycle I | 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM | Room 178C*

*Workshop Cycle II | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Room 178C*



**JAMIE HALMON**  
FEATURED SPEAKER

Instructor of Physical Education and Health at Morton College. Graduate of University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a Masters of Science in Public Health and an emphasis in Community Health Education. Bachelor's Degree in Psychology with a minor in Health from Illinois State University.

While in College I was involved in various student organizations such as Golden Key and Psi Chi National Honors Societies, Health Education Club, The Body Image Network and Peer Education.

After graduating, I taught Psychology and Ethics at Fox College and since then have worked at Morton College for the past 15.5 years. My roles have included Coordinator of the Fitness Center and Wellness Programs, adjunct faculty and Assistant Softball and Cross-Country coach. I now work here as a full-time Instructor teaching Nutrition, Personal and Community Health, First Aid and Physical Education.

I thoroughly enjoy the subjects I teach and believe in their importance. I hope that my knowledge and enthusiasm I demonstrate in my lectures, inspires others to lead healthier lifestyles as a result.

**Session: Healthy Eating for a Healthy Life: Overcoming Obstacles and Planning for Action**

*Workshop Cycle I | 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM | Room 275C*

*Workshop Cycle II | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Room 275C*

# FEATURED SPEAKERS



**NIA LAUDERDALE**  
FEATURED SPEAKER



@nia\_lauderdale



@nialauderdalepersonalstylist



@nialauderdale

Nia Lauderdale is a Personal Fashion Stylist that assist high achieving individuals & entrepreneurs alike who are experiencing life transitions such as divorce, health concerns, new job, weightloss, etc...to define their unique signature style and step into their personal power.

She works with individuals looking to upgrade their image and create a signature style that inspires them and gives them the confidence to live their best life now!

Nia has a BA in Fashion Design/ Merchandising from Wayne State University; BA in Merchandising from IADT (currently Sandford Brown College; Certification as a Personal Stylist & Fashion Stylist from the School of Style

**Session: That #EntrepreneurLife: Creating a Successful Business on Your Terms**  
*Workshop Cycle I | 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM | Room 105C*



**MAYLEEN MERMEA**  
FEATURED SPEAKER



@\_memoirsofatraveler

@bigmoodcreative



alyssaeignitenational.org

amermea02@gmail.com

Mayleen holds a Master's in Youth Development with a specialization in Educational Policy from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She holds a Bachelor's of Science in Applied Learning and Development - Youth and Community Studies with a concentration in social services and a minor in Educational Psychology from the University of Texas at Austin. While at UT, Mayleen participated in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute's Congressional Internship program in Washington, D.C. Over the past few years, Mayleen has worked in higher ed supporting first generation students in navigating their journey through college. Today, Mayleen is a developing entrepreneur and the founder of her business called Big Mood Creative providing services such as videography, photography, styling and confidence coaching. She also serves as the inaugural IGNITE Chicago Fellow implementing and overseeing IGNITE programming in the Illinois region. Mayleen will be transitioning to consulting in a few months to better understand and challenge how corporate business impacts public policy. Mayleen's political aspirations were sparked at a legislative advocacy conference in 2015 when a woman told her "you need to run for office." Taking this message to heart, Mayleen wants to continue to empower other young women to be powerful forces in the political arena. Mayleen grew up in the border town of El Paso, Texas.

**Session: Leading Locally**

*Workshop Cycle II | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Room 277C*

*Workshop Cycle III | 1:45 PM - 2:45 PM | Room 277C*

# FEATURED SPEAKERS



**LOVE MCPHERSON**  
FEATURED SPEAKER



@love\_mcperson  
@theworkplace



love@lovemcpherson.com

In a world where failing marriages and toxic relationships have become the societal norm, Relationship Expert, Love McPherson is the voice of hope that says, "I was born for this." She is a passionate author, captivating speaker, and engaging media personality on a mission to impact generations and heal relationships by teaching individuals how to love better.

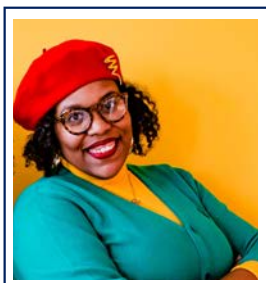
In 2010, she founded her relationship coaching company, Love Infinity, Inc., which has allowed her the opportunity to make a global impact speaking to national and international audiences such as T.D. Jakes Ministries, Northwestern University, DePaul University, the Black Women's Expo, Chase Bank as well as various small businesses and non-profit organizations. Love brings over two decades of experience as a mental health professional to her vast audiences.

Love is a recurring guest on the #1 news broadcast in Chicago, WGN TV, as well as WGN Radio Chicago 720AM, Windy City Live on ABC Network, and the Willie Moore Jr. Show ATL. Graduate of Columbia College Chicago, Love puts her degree in Communication to use weekly on the two-time Stellar Award winning iHeartRadio station, Inspiration 1390AM, with host Sonya Blakey for her "Relationship Talk Thursday" segment during the morning drive. She has also been featured on other media outlets such as - WVON 1690AM, WCIU TV, and V103 FM. In 2018, Love was featured by the EarthHeart Foundation for the "Do You See Me" Project, a community project highlighting the confidence, success, and stories of black women in Chicago.

Love says her greatest success by far is being the wife to Anthony McPherson, her husband of 35 years and Vice President of Love Infinity, Inc. Together they have two beautiful daughters, Tiffany McPherson, her Executive Assistant and Brand Manager, and Christa Pepala. When Love isn't on the speaking circuit or conducting private coaching sessions, you can find her dating her husband or enjoying family time at their South Loop Chicago condo.

## **Session: Me, Myself, and My Next**

*Workshop Cycle III | 1:45 PM - 2:45 PM | Room 105C*



**TIFFANY MCPHERSON**  
FEATURED SPEAKER



@mcfiercin



tiffany@lovemcpherson.com

With over 7 years in the industry, Tiffany is a graduate of Columbia College Chicago and has managed to become a published stylist and creative consultant recognized by Saint Heron of Solange Knowles and other notable influencers. The common thread in all her work has always been female empowerment that focuses on encouraging women to be their best and live their true image from inside out. Her businesses "ONE FIND DUO" (vintage resale boutique) and "made by mcfiercin" (branding and image consulting) allow her the freedom to put her passion and ministry into action. Tiffany is also an adamant advocate for using her voice to impact the masses. She shares a podcast with her mother, Relationship Expert, Love McPherson called 88Sixty Podcast which offers life and love lessons from a cross-generational, mother-daughter perspective.

Outside of her career endeavors, Tiffany enjoys entertaining the masses on social media, eating elotes, camera phone photography, and exploring Chicago events with friends. She lives with her parents, Love and Tony McPherson (www.lovemcpherson.com) in Chicago's South Loop.

## **Session: Me, Myself, and My Next**

*Workshop Cycle III | 1:45 PM - 2:45 PM | Room 105C*

# FEATURED SPEAKERS



**DENISE PEDROZA SANDOVAL**  
FEATURED SPEAKER

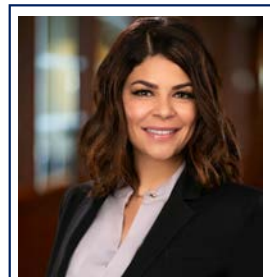


[denise@pedrozasandovaltherapy.com](mailto:denise@pedrozasandovaltherapy.com)

Denise Pedroza Sandoval is the owner of Denise Pedroza Sandoval, LCPC, LLC, a private practice located that offers mental health services in Berwyn, IL. As a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) in Illinois, she also provides psychological evaluations for immigration cases. She obtained a bachelor of science degree in psychology from Loyola University Chicago and a master of education degree in community counseling from DePaul University. Throughout her career, Denise has worked as a bilingual psychotherapist in diverse settings such as Catholic Charities, Heartland Alliance, and Pillars Community Health. She also served as an ambassador for the Young Professional Advisory Board for Mujeres Latinas en Acción and chair for the Community Development Committee. Denise actively participates in community events and shares her knowledge to build a more trauma-informed community. With almost a decade in the mental health field, Denise works to increase awareness of the importance of prioritizing mental health and reducing the stigma behind it in the Latino Community. She wrote an article for NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) titled Take a Deep Breath and Join the Walk; an article that speaks to struggles minority group members experience when addressing mental health. Denise has been invited to multiple panels, workshops, and radio segments relating to mental health. Denise is co-author for Today's Inspired Latina Vol. 6. She is currently working on publishing a children's book about feelings in Spanish. She will also launch her podcast that speaks of domestic violence stories in the Spring of 2020. During her free time, she loves to travel, and her favorite color is purple. Denise believes "Everyone deserves to be happy."

## **Session: Self-Esteem 101: What My Mirror Sees; What the World Sees**

*Workshop Cycle I | 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM | Room 277C*



**TARINA RODGERS**  
FEATURED SPEAKER



[fa.ml.com/tarina-rodgers](http://fa.ml.com/tarina-rodgers)

Tarina Rodgers is a Wealth Management Advisor at Merrill Lynch, Northbrook, Illinois. Her work focuses in designing financial plans and solutions tailored to achieve her client's goals and preserve their wealth for generations to come. She serves a widely diverse clientele at both corporate and individual level. With a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management from the University of Phoenix already under her belt, she is currently studying to obtain a Master's Degree in Project Management from the same institution.

Tarina has an extensive background in Finance. Prior to Merrill Lynch, she managed Private Client relationships and worked as a Business Banker at J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, where she had the opportunity to work closely with the Latino community. Tarina was born and raised in the Dominican Republic and moved to the United States during her late teenage years. She is driven by her passion of helping others and creating a positive impact in her community. In her spare time she enjoys traveling, keeping active, and spending time with her family.

## **Session: Your Financial Journey**

*Workshop Cycle II | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Room 105C*

# FEATURED SPEAKERS



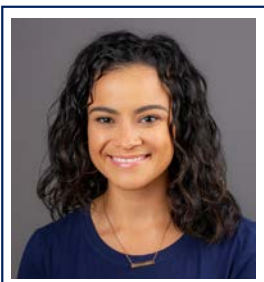
**FREDY ROBERTS - RAMIREZ**  
FEATURED SPEAKER

I have been working in the HIV Prevention Field since 2007, where I started off as a Social Networks recruiter because of my popularity in doing drag in Milwaukee, WI. Currently I am the TGNC Youth HIV Prevention Program Manager also known as the VOICES project at the Broadway Youth Center, a program of Howard Brown Health for the last 2 years. At Howard Brown Health, I work every day to create safe spaces, programming and help dismantle systems that cause barriers for Trans and gender Non-Conforming Youth to make sure they are able to lead safe, fruitful and visible lives. I have been a part of various leadership programs such as the Wisconsin Leadership Fellowship for People of Color, Illinois Getting to Zero Campaign, Howard Brown Leadership Fellowship and now the NMAC Reclaiming Our Place at the Table- A NMAC Policy & Advocacy Program. I dedicate myself to make sure I utilize my platform to speak up on various issues that surround LGBTQIA people and especially Trans and Gender Non-conforming people of color.

**Session: Trans-forming Our Community, One VOICE at a Time**

*Workshop Cycle I | 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM | Room 177C*

*Workshop Cycle III | 1:45 PM - 2:45 PM | Room 177C*

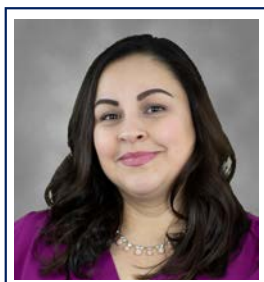


**NYDIA MARÍA STEWART**  
FEATURED SPEAKER

Nydia María Stewart is a Puerto Rican woman raised in Chicago, IL. She has a formal education in the form of a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign in Speech Communication and Latina/o/x Studies, and a master's degree in Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration from the University of Vermont. Nydia currently serves as the Director for Academic Support and ADA Coordinator at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. She is passionate about empowering all marginalized communities to find their voice and help dismantle oppressive systems. She is the proud mami of a rambunctious 2.5 year old daughter, who is the inspiration for all she does.

**Session: Navigating Professional Spaces as a Woman/Femme of Color**

*Workshop Cycle I | 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM | Student Union*



**GINA G. TORRES**  
FEATURED SPEAKER

Gina Torres is an alumni of Morton College and a community member. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Marketing from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She has over 15 years of experience in higher education. She is very passionate about helping students find their educational path. One of her favorite quotes is from Meghan Markle that says "Women don't need to find a voice, they have a voice, and they need to feel empowered to use it, and people need to be encouraged to listen".

**Session: Best Practices to a Successful Interview**

*Workshop Cycle I | 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM | Room 175C*

*Workshop Cycle II | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Room 175C*



[gina.torres@morton.edu](mailto:gina.torres@morton.edu)

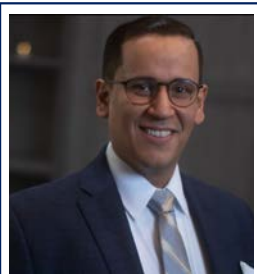


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# FEATURED SPEAKERS



**JESÚS VEGA**  
FEATURED SPEAKER



[fa.ml.com/jesus-c-vega/](http://fa.ml.com/jesus-c-vega/)

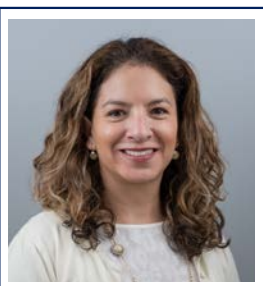
Jesús Vega is a Wealth Management Advisor at Merrill Lynch. His passion is being a trusted advisor to individuals and families by providing customized investment strategies to meet their financial goals. He is keen in giving his clients the best possible life with the resources they have. Jesús has over ten years of experience in the financial services industry. He has served in leadership, credit, and high-net-worth banking capacity for both institutional and individual clientele.

Jesús is a proud alumnus of DePaul University in Chicago, accomplishing a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Finance and eBusiness. He is a member of the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Evanston Chamber of Commerce. Jesús was recently appointed by the Mayor of the City of Evanston as a member of the Minority, Women, and Evanston Business Enterprise Committee ("MWEBE"). In addition, he volunteers with Big Shoulders Fund, a non-profit organization that provides assistance to Catholic elementary and high schools in Chicago's low-income communities.

Jesús resides in the north suburbs of Chicago. In his downtime, he enjoys spending time with his family, jogging, exploring restaurants in Chicago, and traveling.

## **Session: Your Financial Journey**

*Workshop Cycle II | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Room 105C*



**GRISelda VEGA SAMUEL**  
FEATURED SPEAKER



[www.maldef.org](http://www.maldef.org)



**312-427-0701 ext. 406**

Ms. Vega Samuel is the Regional Counsel, Midwest for the Chicago office of Mexican American Legal & Educational Fund (MALDEF). As Regional Counsel she is responsible for the daily operations and overall management of the regional office which covers 15 states. She is an attorney with over 18 years of experience in working in the areas of litigation, policy-advocacy and education, specifically employment law, and general civil rights. Ms. Vega Samuel's advocacy work extends to both U.S. and international fronts, where she has worked on human trafficking legislation, as well as, worked on policy issues related to migrant labor rights, both within the U.S. and Mexican legal frameworks. Most recently she was the Senior Director of Anti-Trafficking Program (ATP) at Safe Horizon in Brooklyn, NY. Ms. Vega Samuel graduated from the University of Iowa-College of Law, and is licensed in both Illinois and Washington State, and speaks Spanish fluently. Griselda is a native of Chicago, IL and her family hails from Guanajuato, Mexico.

## **Session: Census 2020: Count me In! ¡Hazte Contar!**

*Workshop Cycle I | 9:45 AM - 10:45 AM | Room 106C*

*Workshop Cycle II | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Room 106C*

# PANELISTS

## KARINA BAHENA

Karina is a graduate from Morton College and a part-time staff member in the Dean's office. Karina is a senior at Dominican University who will be graduating in May 2020 with her bachelor's degree in Chemistry with a minor in Physics. She plans to apply for a Ph.D. Forensic Chemistry graduate program. Karina's aspiration is to one day work for the DEA, or the FBI as a forensic chemist and help develop innovating approaches in the field.

## JOANNA CURILLO

I am Joanna Curillo-Castro a 36-year-old Mexican American. I am a proud daughter from immigrant parents, who were seeking a better life for my sister and me. Among other things accomplished in my life I currently have 5 Certificates from Morton; 2 Early Childhood education Certificates and 3 Computer Information Certificates. I will be graduating this May with not only 1, but 2 degrees, therefore I will have 3 associates in total. I have the liberal studies associate, I will be part of the very first people to receive, the first Network Degree offered at Morton, this makes me feel special and happy. I worked as a student aid with the CIS/CPS for 4 years until I decided to move and get more experience. I am still a student aid but now I am in the MIS IT department at Morton it has been different, but I am enjoying my time. I am looking forward to the opportunities that are waiting for me thanks to all the effort I have made to accomplish in this new phase of my life. I can't wait to see where my life will be in the next years, but I can say that you are never too old to start a career in what you love, don't give up on your dreams.

## SAMANTHA KUELBS

Samantha is a Morton College student studying biology. She is in her last semester and planning to transfer in the fall. She is a member of the science club and their former president.

## CATHERINE NAPOLETANO

Catherine Napoletano is a Freelance Designer specializing in Web and Graphic Design. She has previously worked at both the University of Illinois in Chicago and Dominican University, and works at SOGO Marketing. She completed her BA at Dominican University and her Associates degrees here at Morton College. She is now working on studying programming for advancing and improving her skills in web design. She won Best of show at Triton College's Graphic Design Competition for her children's book. When not devouring the many books that she owns, Catherine can be found playing a variety of board, role-play and video games with her family and friends. She also enjoys drawing, painting, photography and creating different unique updated designs for existing products.

## ELIZABETH NAPOLETANO

Elizabeth Napoletano is the adjunct professor of Simulation and Game Development here at Morton College. She has been teaching and working at Morton College for 14 years and is working on her Masters in Information Management at Dominican University. Elizabeth plans to continue teaching in the CIS/CPS department here at Morton once she has completed her degree. She is the acting Adviser to the Anime Gamer's Union here at Morton and helps students as the CIS/CPS Paraprofessional with their classes. She is a fan of all sorts of video games and animation, and in her spare time if she's not found enjoying reading and writing, she is crafting costumes based upon her favorite series of novels, games, movies and TV shows.

## MEGAN ROBERTSON

Megan Robertson is a student at Morton College pursuing a degree in Applied Science toward nursing. She is a proud member of Morton College's Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. Before pursuing a degree in nursing, she dedicated over 13 years to a career in home health care.

## SANDRA J. ROMAN

My name is Sandra J. Roman and I am a technology student in my last semester at Morton College. I serve as chapter president for the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers at Morton College and will be attending either Illinois Tech or Northeastern Illinois University in the fall 2020 semester to complete my bachelor's degree in a technology field.

### **Session: Navigating Professional Spaces as a Woman/Femme of Color**

*Workshop Cycle II | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Student union*

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# THANK YOU!

## SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!

STAY TUNED FOR 2021 EVENT DETAILS.

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Check out our official Spotify playlist: [bit.ly/MC\\_WEC](https://bit.ly/MC_WEC)

For more information on our featured speakers visit [www.morton.edu](http://www.morton.edu). Interested in speaking next year? Let us know by visiting and completing the WEC Speaker Form: [bit.ly/WECSpeakers](https://bit.ly/WECSpeakers)



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