



## **Housing Equity Accelerator Fellowship 2024 Cohort | Washington Metro Area**

The ability for underestimated developers to help shape and increase access to affordable housing in rapidly developing cities remains hampered by the fact these individuals remain underrepresented in the real estate development industry. To support developers in the Washington metropolitan area to overcome these barriers to success, Capital Impact Partners is implementing the Housing Equity Accelerator Fellowship. This program, funded by a grant from Amazon, seeks to increase the number of underestimated developers in real estate, and help to grow the amount of affordable housing stock in the Washington metropolitan area.

The Housing Equity Accelerator Fellowship builds on Capital Impact's successful Equitable Development Initiative training program for emerging real estate developers across the country. The fellowship includes: advanced real estate training with a focus on affordable housing; connections to local mentors; and the opportunity to apply for grant capital to support project development.



### **William T. Bethune II**

William T. Bethune II, the visionary behind Bethune Development LLC, understands that a sense of Home is sacred. With a heart for service and a mind for innovation, he is revolutionizing affordable housing,

creating homes that nurture the soul and empower communities.

William recognized the challenges that arise when housing is built without considering the lived experiences of its residents. Through state-of-the-art technology, welcoming outdoor spaces, and thoughtful design, he crafts homes that transcend shelter, fostering growth and affirming the dignity of every individual.



### **Nkosi Bradley**

Born in Brooklyn, NY, Nkosi Bradley's career in economic development is marked by a desire for developing housing and fostering communities of opportunity and growth.

Through his company, Partners for Equitable Community Growth (PECG), Nkosi is spearheading projects to enhance publicly driven economic development in the Washington, DC area, drawing upon his community development experience to partner for innovative programming that serves project and community members at large, Nkosi is providing housing opportunities for families for generations to come.



### **Winona Francis**

Winona's journey from a political science degree at Drew University to an MBA at George Washington University, was a gathering of tools to dismantle systemic barriers. The disparities she witnessed ignited a

determination to bridge the gap between zip codes and opportunities.

Over her career, Winona has made a significant impact in the Washington D.C. area, managing over \$600 million in real estate portfolios and developing more than \$170 million and 200-250 units of affordable multi-family homes. As a Development Manager at Manna Inc. and through her firm, WRE Development, Winona creates ecosystems of opportunity by integrating essential services like job training, education, and healthcare into her projects.



### **Fred L. Greene III**

Fred Greene, a native Washingtonian, is a Principal with FLGA, a firm that specializes in assisting property owners, particularly black colleges, universities, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations, to support

their long-term goals through creative real estate development solutions. With an exceptional career spanning 20 years, Fred oversees the development of over 2 million square feet of transformative projects.

In a career marked by success, Fred's devotion to mentoring the next generation of leaders emerges as a defining thread. He created CRE Access, a pathways program for Howard University scholars, and has mentored hundreds of students, ensuring they are equipped to make a positive impact on their communities.



### **Chris Grant**

Born from a deep sense of purpose, Christopher Grant's life and career have been shaped by a powerful question: "How can I help increase access to capital and opportunities in the communities that mean the most

to me?"

In 2021, he launched Yoke Management Partners, a groundbreaking real estate investment firm dedicated to transforming neglected housing stock and revitalizing neighborhoods in Washington, D.C.

With a portfolio of five multifamily assets totaling 78 units, Yoke provides workforce housing for the "missing middle" – the teachers, firefighters, and essential workers who form the backbone of our communities. For Chris, Yoke is more than just a business venture; it is a vehicle for building thriving communities where everyone can reach their full potential.



### **Ikeogu Imo**

Born in Nigeria, Ikeogu Imo's journey has been characterized by a persistent pursuit of knowledge and a commitment to using his expertise for the greater good.

As the founder of Cubed Partners, Ikeogu and his team are pioneering innovative solutions to the affordable housing crisis recognizing that true change requires more than just vision; it demands courage and tenacity to persevere in the face of adversity. Through creative financing strategies and collaborative partnerships, he and his team develop communities where families of all incomes can thrive. Through his work, Ikeogu is not merely building homes; he is architecting a future where every individual, regardless of background, can access opportunities and build a life of dignity, security, and limitless possibility.



### **Kanyi M. Masembwa**

Kanyi Masembwa M.S., M.I.S.M., a fourth-generation Washingtonian, has dedicated his life to transforming communities and empowering lives through real estate development. With an expansive background spanning

architecture, computer technology, and business, he approaches real estate development with both technical precision and passion for the city he calls home.

At the core of Kanyi's work is a commitment to creating homes and communities that residents are proud to live in while preserving the unique character of each neighborhood. Kanyi's impact extends beyond bricks and mortar. He prioritizes a people and partner-centric approach, forming alliances with experts and partners who share a vested interest in developing quality communities and preserving neighborhood character.



### **Rob Richardson**

Born in the Bronx, Rob Richardson's life was transformed when his family moved to a high-opportunity community in New Jersey. This defining experience ignited a deep commitment within him to create

similar opportunities for others, shaping his remarkable 30-year career in affordable housing and community development.

A legacy-focused leader, Rob recognizes that true success is measured by the lives touched and the impact left behind. His journey is marked by the development of 3,500+ multifamily housing units and the creation of over \$500 million in transformative projects. Founding IBF Development in 2007, Rob put into practice the principles that guide his life—the importance of process, the power of connection, and the necessity of continuous growth.



### **Robert McCray**

Robert McCray is the driving force behind Vantage Realty Capital (VRC). He is a leader who embodies empathy, resilience, and fierce advocacy for affordable housing. Growing up in Washington, DC,

Robert's passion for real estate was ignited through mentorship. Armed with degrees from Xavier, Georgetown, and Cornell Universities, Robert embarked on a career that would reshape the affordable housing landscape.

In 2019, Robert founded VRC, focusing on preserving and creating high-quality affordable housing in the Mid-Atlantic region. His hands-on approach and deep local knowledge set VRC apart, prioritizing residents' needs and ensuring their voices are heard. Through specialized projects serving vulnerable populations, Robert and VRC are making an indelible mark, providing luxury units that become havens of solace and dignity.



### **Ali Semir**

Born in Ethiopia and raised in New York City's affordable housing communities, Ali Semir's early years were shaped by the sacrifice of his single mother. Walking the streets of Jamaica, Queens, distributing flyers for his mother's real estate business,

Ali began to understand the intricate connections between people and place, illuminating the transformative power of home.

With over a decade of experience in debt underwriting and a heart attuned to the barriers that often limit access and equity, Ali's extensive knowledge fuels his mission as the founder of Mosaic Affordable Housing. Through Mosaic, Ali has created homes that serve as launchpads for opportunity, generating over \$4 million in partnership distributions and managing nearly 400 multifamily units across three states.



**Mehul Vora**

Mehul Vora's passion lies in making a difference in people's lives. With an undergraduate degree from Wharton and expertise in investment banking and finance, Mehul has advised on billion-dollar M&A deals and private

placements.

As the co-founder of NexGen Housing Partners, Mehul built 380 affordable apartments in Seattle, with rents 15-30% lower than market rates. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, NextGen's portfolio grew to \$100 million in asset value under his leadership. Now, as the founder of Vora Ventures, Mehul is weaving a new chapter, developing missing middle housing in previously zoned single-family neighborhoods in Arlington, VA. He hopes to provide a range of housing types within different income levels and family structures, building bridges across generations and cultures.



**Kendra Whitaker**

Kendra Whitaker is on a mission to transform lives by creating affordable homes and thriving neighborhoods where residents reach their highest potential.

As an educator, Kendra discovered her passion for empowering others, but it was her transition into real estate that ignited her true purpose. In 2021, as a successful realtor and broker in the DMV area, she co-founded MORE – a nonprofit dedicated to stimulating entrepreneurship, developing affordable housing, and eradicating poverty in DC's most disadvantaged communities. Spearheading initiatives that provide grants, entrepreneurship training, and youth programming to empower residents and build resilient neighborhoods. She also founded Grey Crown Investments, LLC, a development firm committed to addressing the critical shortage of Missing Middle housing in the region.



**Jessica Washington**

With a diverse background spanning investment sales, affordable housing development, capital markets, construction management, and commercial leasing, D.C. native Jessica Washington's journey in real estate

began in 2017 as an investor in New Jersey. From there, she transitioned to capital markets, navigating the complexities of affordable housing finance during the pandemic and beyond; returning to the D.C. area in 2021, and diving headfirst into the multi-family arena, completing 30+ transactions in just three years.

Through her podcast, Pretty Girls Love Real Estate, Jessica amplifies the voices of women in the industry, shattering glass ceilings and dismantling barriers. In 2023, she launched a women and minority-owned general contracting firm, a bold declaration of her commitment to empowering the underrepresented.

For more information about the Housing Equity Accelerator Fellowship, please contact:

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