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Spring 2021 Newsletter

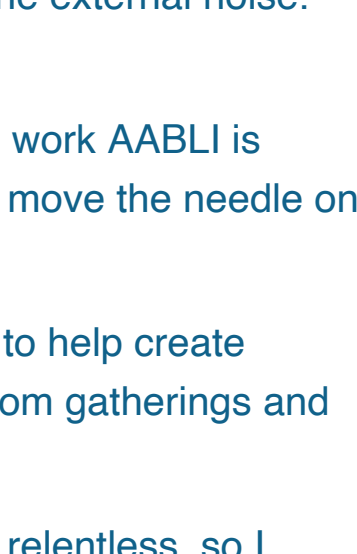
New Beginnings

President's Message

Love, Loss, and Discovery

Dear AABLI Community,

Two days after the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic, the AABLI team scrambled to set up home offices and to venture into the unfamiliar. What followed for me in the next twelve months were new experiences, loaded with a potpourri of emotions.



You see, three weeks after the sheltering-in-place took effect, I lost my daughter to the dreaded fatal disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), or Lou Gehrig disease. Despite the painful loss, I discovered more love in the most unexpected places. Sheltering in place allowed me the opportunity to control my surroundings and dial back the external noise. So, what have I learned?

First, I have a much deeper sense of purpose and commitment for the work AABLI is doing to build a pipeline of African American board leaders, helping to move the needle on board equity.

Second, I learned that since family means everything to me, I needed to help create spaces for memories to flourish. Who knew that the monthly family Zoom gatherings and family vision board projects could bring such joy and togetherness?

Third, I learned that radical self-care is essential. My work schedule is relentless, so I escape with my coloring book, go for daily walks (FitBit family helps), pray, and use the Calm app every morning to meditate. This provides balance and works very well for me.

Through this period of uncertainty, loss, and discovery, I have emerged as a more committed servant leader. What have you discovered?

With grace and peace,

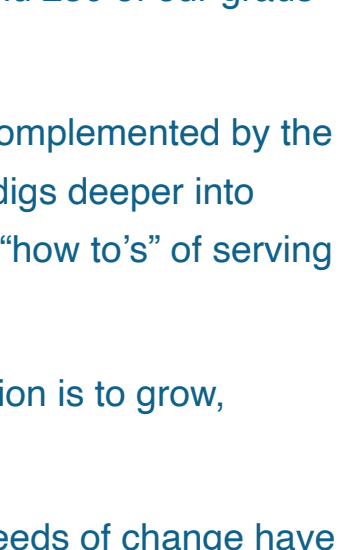
Yvette

Yvette Chappell-Ingram
President and CEO, Co-Founder

A Special Message for AABLI's Ten Year Anniversary

Beverly Ryder

AABLI Founding Board Member



The African American Board Leadership Institute (AABLI) was founded in 2011 as the brainchild of Virgil Roberts and Yvette Chappell-Ingram. Its purpose was to create a pipeline of African Americans to serve on nonprofit, for-profit, foundation and corporate boards and public commissions in response to the dearth of African Americans represented on boards in Los Angeles and throughout the nation.

As founding board members, we were a corps of experienced Black professionals who had served on a variety of governing boards in Los Angeles and around the country, frequently as the only African Americans and/or women in traditional white, male environments. Our knowledge, experiences and observations formed the foundation of AABLI's flagship Board Leadership Program (BLP).

We were passionate about our mission to train and place African Americans on governing boards. We believed our work would 1) strengthen the organizations on which they served and 2) increase the value of a diverse and inclusive set of voices to the enhancement of board effectiveness.

Ten years later, what began as an idea has blossomed into a sustainable, thriving institution recognized for its unique approach to governance training and its commitment to increasing the representation and influence of African Americans on major boards.

Today, AABLI has trained more than 700 African American professionals and 250 of our grads are currently serving on a variety of governing boards around the country.

BLP, which has generated a broad network of committed AABLI grads, is complemented by the Education Leadership Series of public workshops and forums. This series digs deeper into topical governance issues and carefully examines the "nuts and bolts" and "how to's" of serving on commissions and corporate boards.

AABLI has become synonymous with building and training leaders. Our vision is to grow, leverage, and replicate our unique training model nationally and globally.

While 10 years is a short time in the history of a cause or movement, the seeds of change have taken root and AABLI has helped transform the ways many organizations think about the value of inclusion, equity, and diverse voices at the decision-making table.

It has been my privilege to serve as a founding board member and to be a part of this exciting and rewarding journey. We started small with a big idea and a passion for change. Ten years later, AABLI has achieved the return on its initial investment: it has developed the next generation of committed leaders, whose bigger, bolder ideas and active leadership will continue to influence governing boards.

Congratulations, AABLI, on ten great years--there are greater things to come in our next decade!

Beverly Ryder, a founding board member, is a retired executive with more than 35 years of corporate experience in the utility and banking industries.

Ms. Ryder retired as the Corporate Secretary of Edison International and its utility subsidiary, Southern California Edison Company. She also served as the company's vice-president of community involvement, overseeing its philanthropic and employee volunteer activities.

Ryder has had extensive nonprofit experience as a board member of numerous community and civic organizations, currently serving as a vice-chair of the board of Claremont Graduate University and as chair of the Trusteeship Committee. She sits on the advisory councils of the Colburn School Society and the Community Engagement Committee and is a member of the Stanford University LEAD fundraising council.

Her previous board and leadership positions have included: Trustee emeritus, Stanford University; board member and audit committee chair, The Colburn School; board president, National Women's Hall of Fame; commissioner, Western Association of Senior Colleges and Universities accreditation commission, and commissioner, Los Angeles City Employees Retirement System. Ryder also has served as a board member of the United Way of Greater Los Angeles, CORO, Encore.org, the Los Angeles Conservation Corps, Los Angeles Urban League, and the YWCA of Greater Los Angeles.

Shining a Light



How Attending AABLI Empowers Me to Serve My Community

Angela Gibson-Shaw
President, Greater Los Angeles African American Chamber of Commerce (GLAAACC)
AABLI Alumna, Class #8

I am honored to be an AABLI alum, Class #8. Prior to AABLI, I had served on many boards because I love to help my community. If you needed help with fundraising, bringing awareness to an issue, or making sure people showed up for an event, I was always on those committees.

But after attending AABLI, I became so much more empowered to help my people and my community. The technical education I received on board governance allowed me to have a more confident voice at the table. I once was a super volunteer on the board, but now I am an intentional and purposeful, contributing board member.

My newfound knowledge includes:

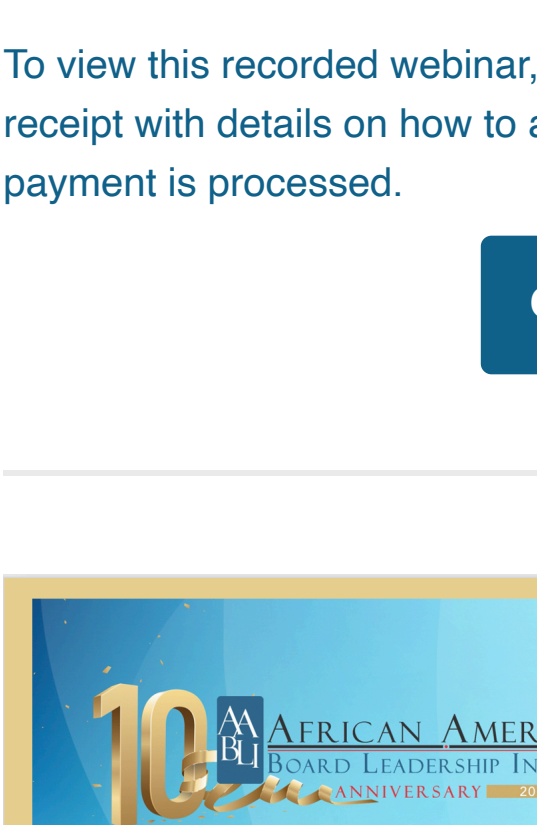
1. Financial Reports – I used to focus only on the bottom line. Now I'm better able to understand balance sheets and profit/loss statements, and how to make sure expenses align with the mission of the board.
2. Board Elections – I'm not certain what processes were used in the past to select new members for boards. Now, however, I am very aware of the need to ensure that the right mix of diversity and knowledge is considered to represent the community we are serving.
3. Committees – I've served on boards whose committees never met. Now I am keenly aware of the use of committees and am able to recognize when a particular committee has served its purpose. When that happens, I will suggest we create a committee that serves unmet needs.

Those are just a few examples of the knowledge I acquired from AABLI and how it's helped me help others. I serve on the board of directors of the Inglewood Airport Area Chamber of Commerce and as a Los Angeles County small business commissioner. Currently, as president of the Greater Los Angeles African American Chamber of Commerce, I'm using my AABLI knowledge daily. When I'm invited to have a seat at the table, it informs and supports my work to help our small business community get access to funds and resources desperately needed to recover from this double pandemic. It will help me ensure that our community thrives and becomes resilient moving forward. Thank you, AABLI!

As an AABLI strategic partner, GLAAACC promotes the growth and economic development of the African American business enterprise. It continues to focus on four primary benefits for its members:

1. Growing and developing business domestically and internationally
2. Providing information on access to capital
3. Creating networking environments
4. Influencing public policies to make them more favorable to African American business

Writer's Corner



Pandemic, Blackness, and Higher Education

Kim Wilson, Ed.D.
California State University, Los Angeles
Assistant Professor
AABLI Alumnus, Class #16

Nine thousand two hundred and forty hours have passed--as of this writing--since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic.

COVID abruptly halted or disrupted frequent flyer miles, conference schedules, worship services, hikes, and gatherings with family and friends.

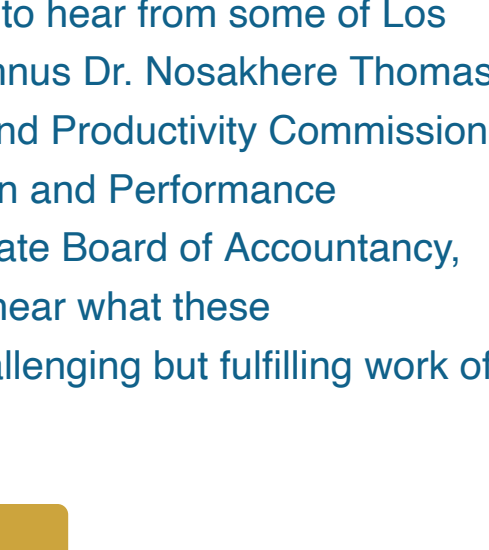
Some of its effects were unexpected. To my physician's delight, Los Angeles' air quality drastically improved for me, an asthmatic. He had always loved our interactions but for medical reasons certainly had yearned to see me less.

Other effects have been unhappy ones. Gone, for example, are physical interactions with Black academics who filled me with so much joy. Those have been reduced to Zoom gatherings, a new technological version of self-care. [READ MORE](#)

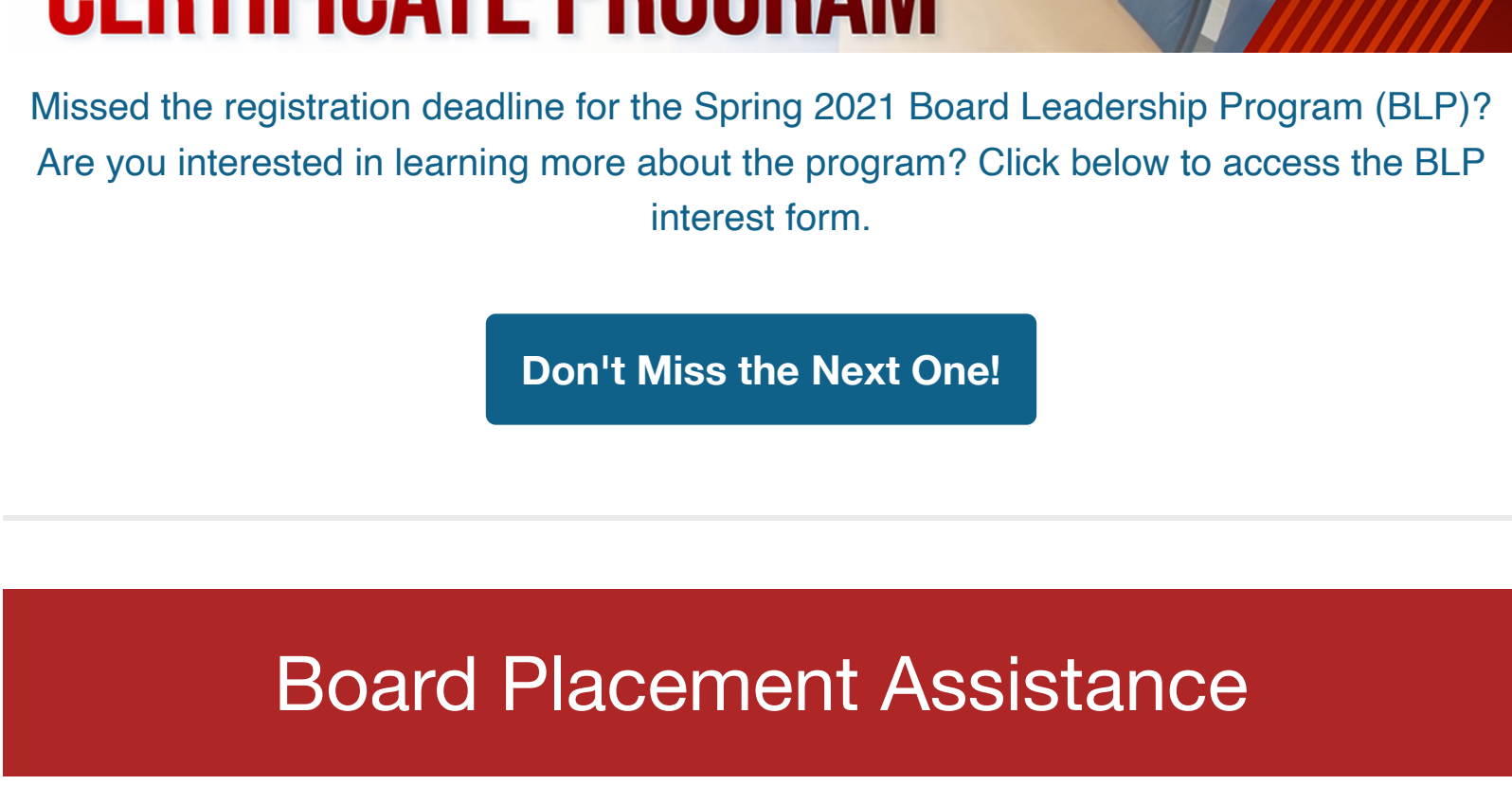
STAFF NEWS

Welcome Shaquana "Dreeta" George to the AABLI team

As associate programs coordinator, Shaquana George supports the day-to-day operations of the organization while assisting with AABLI programs, placement and development. George's responsibilities also include data maintenance and general administrative support. Before joining the AABLI team, her work with nonprofit organizations focused on education, equal access, community collaboration, and program development. George is experienced in program management, coordination, and organization collaboration. She earned a bachelor's degree in sociology at California State University, Fullerton.



Program Recaps



AABLI's Pathways to Corporate Boards January 2021 webinar was packed with the kinds of insider perspectives that can help new board members enter the corporate board environment with confidence. You should have been there!

But wait. You can be there. We're making the webinar available for those who missed it. Here's your chance to review what our panelists had to say.

Because they had a lot to say. Moderated by AABLI board member Beverly Flowers, the panel featured Virginia Walker, managing partner, Jamison Group; Carolyn Fowers, managing principal, Infrastrategies, LLC; and Beverly Cole, independent board member, Bank OZK. In a lively Q & A with webinar attendees, the distinguished trio described routes to landing corporate board seats, networking tips, and the list of skills you'll need before you start your quest for corporate board membership.

The Assemblymember who co-authored CA-AB 979--the groundbreaking bill that mandated diversity on California's corporate boards--discussed his transformative legislation in a fireside chat with AABLI co-founder Virgil Roberts. Assemblymember Chris Holden provided attendees with chapter and verse about the recently passed measure, which could have a profound, positive impact on the make-up of the state's corporate boards.

To view this recorded webinar, first follow the prompts to process your payment. A paid receipt with details on how to access the private video will be emailed to you after your payment is processed.

[Click here to access video!](#)



For Black professionals interested in positions on public boards and commissions, AABLI's March 2021 Commissions Forum was a turning point event. Attendees gained insider perspectives on joining public commissions, and on how to operate successfully in the influential world of public service.

If you missed the 2021 forum, you still have the opportunity to hear from some of Los Angeles' notable commissioners. Moderated by AABLI alumnus Dr. Nosakhare Thomas, panelists Nancy Harris of the Los Angeles County Quality and Productivity Commission; Vincent Jones, formerly with the Los Angeles City Innovation and Performance Commission, and Karriann Farrell Hinds of the California State Board of Accountancy, shared their expertise and resources. AABLI invites you to hear what these knowledgeable veterans have to say about the exciting, challenging but fulfilling work of public commissioners.

[Click here to access video!](#)

BOARD LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Missed the registration deadline for the Spring 2021 Board Leadership Program (BLP)? Are you interested in learning more about the program? Click below to access the BLP interest form.

[Don't Miss the Next One!](#)

Board Placement Assistance

Did you know that we partner with nonprofits seeking ethnic diversity and experience on their boards?

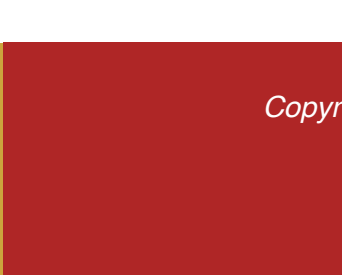
Did you know that we work to match our alumni with these vital, active organizations?



Alumni looking to join a board, [CLICK HERE](#) to contact us!
Organizations looking for new board members, [CLICK HERE](#) to contact us!

We Stand in Solidarity with the Asian American Community

A Message from Our Fiscal Sponsor



The news of recent shootings of Soon Chung Park, Hyun Jung Grant, Suncha Kim, Yong Ae Yue, Delaina Ashley Yaun, Paul Andre Michels, Daoyou Feng and Xiaojie Tan in Atlanta is the latest painful reminder of a disturbing outcome following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic: a resurgence of anti-Asian racism. According to a [recent report](#) by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, hate crimes against Asian Americans increased by 150% in 2020 alone. [Attacks on elderly Asian Americans and personal accounts of discriminatory altercations continue to surface from the Asian American community as a whole. READ MORE HERE](#)

Recommended Podcasts

Get Comfortable with Being Uncomfortable | Luvvie Ajayi Jones

Make Your Goal a Reality | Ronald L. Banks

Time + Talent + Treasure = Giving

Your generosity allows us to enhance our programs, especially in the digital space. It helps us ramp up our outreach to partner organizations seeking African American professionals. It supports our board recruitment efforts and leadership initiatives throughout the State of California.

We are all in this together

Looking for alternative ways to support AABLI and other causes in the community? Here are some ways you can give back:

- Ask about Planned Giving
- Use Employer Matched Donations
- Volunteer
- Support a Local Organization with In-Kind Services
- Clean Up Your Neighborhood
- Check on Your Neighbors

[Let's keep this wave of generosity going... Donate here](#)

Thank You to Our Supporters

The mission of the African American Board Leadership Institute is to strengthen nonprofit, public and private organizations through recruiting, preparing and assisting with the placement of African Americans on a broad range of governing boards.

#AABLImoves #Lead #Empower #Aspire #Diversify

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