

PANELISTS:



JENIECE JONES

Executive Director, HOME (Housing Opportunities Made Equal)



ERIC KEARNEY

President & CEO, Greater Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky African American Chamber of Commerce

FACILITATOR:



KATHRINE NERO

Journalist



CHINEDUM NDUKWE

President & Founder, Kingsley + Co.



MICHAEL SMITH

Vice President of Commercial Development, The Port

WHY REAL ESTATE EQUITY MATTERS

JUNE 25, 2019

As the wealth gap in America widens, a full vision of opportunity for all to prosper can seem unattainable. Real estate is a key driver of both economic outcomes and quality of life. This panel will examine ideas for broadening equity from practitioners who are leading with action to address this challenge in our community.

THE PORT
Making Real Estate Work



JENIECE JONES

Executive Director, HOME (Housing Opportunities Made Equal)

Jeniece Jones, MPA, JD, became Executive Director at Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Greater Cincinnati (HOME) on July 1, 2015. HOME's mission is to eliminate unlawful discrimination in housing in the Greater Cincinnati area. HOME advocates and enforces housing regulations for all protected classes and promotes stable, integrated communities.

Before joining HOME, Ms. Jones was the Chief Executive Officer at Community Shares of Greater Cincinnati, a community fund focused on bringing awareness and fundraising to local community organizations working on social justice, economic justice, and environmental issues. Prior to that, Ms. Jones worked as an Ohio attorney dealing with civil matters. As a real estate attorney, she is familiar with residential and commercial real estate transactions. Having served as a plaintiff's counsel for hundreds of cases in the 88 Ohio counties, she understands the ongoing issues with the residential real estate market. Ms. Jones is on the Board of Directors for the Cincinnati Affordable Housing Advocates group and is working on bringing a housing trust fund to the Cincinnati market.

Ms. Jones is also an active community volunteer. A key accomplishment is co-chairing the Cincinnati Human Services Advisory Committee, where she worked under a mayoral appointment to give advice to City Council on issues of funding human services organizations working to improve the lives of Cincinnatians. Ms. Jones holds a Bachelor's degree in Journalism from West Virginia University, a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Northern Kentucky University, and a Juris Doctorate in Law from Salmon P. Chase College of Law at Northern Kentucky University. Ms. Jones also teaches graduate school in the Northern Kentucky University Masters of Public Administration – Nonprofit Certificate program as an adjunct professor teaching classes in nonprofit law, nonprofit strategic planning and best practices. <https://homecincy.org>



CHINEDUM NDUKWE

President & Founder, Kingsley + Co.

Chinedum Ndukwe graduated from of The University of Notre Dame in 2007 with majors in Business Management and Psychology. He played five years in the NFL with the Cincinnati Bengals and Oakland Raiders and began investing in real estate following his rookie year. Upon retiring from football in 2012, Chinedum embraced his passion for business and officially entered the world of commercial real estate development forming his company, Kingsley and Company.

Kingsley and Co. is a minority owned commercial real estate investment and development firm with a mission to connect individuals, organizations and institutions to form strategic partnerships and develop innovative business solutions. From site acquisition and development to asset management, Kingsley and Company stretches the full spectrum of real estate development. A licensed real estate agent, Mr. Ndukwe excels in identifying unique business opportunities, assembling diverse teams and executing projects to financial stabilization.

Dedicated to family and community, Mr. Ndukwe continues to immerse himself in civic opportunities. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Cincinnati USA Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Mercy Bon Secours Cincinnati Market Board of Directors. Mr. Ndukwe resides in Downtown Cincinnati with his wife, Alexandra, and their 8 month old son, Nnamdi. <https://kingsleyandcompany.com/>



KATHRINE NERO

Kathrine Nero is a freelance journalist and media personality with more than 20 years experience in the Tri-State. She is an award-winning news anchor and reporter who has worked in television, digital, sports, podcasting and most recently, social media. Watch her Facebook Lives for the Cincinnati Enquirer Monday - Thursday at 10 am.

Ms. Nero lives in Northern Kentucky with her husband and two daughters.



ERIC KEARNEY

President & CEO, Greater Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky African American Chamber of Commerce

Eric H. Kearney has had a career in law, business, and politics. As a state senator, Eric served as Ohio Senate Minority Leader and has championed a number of causes including adoption, children's health, small business development, and pension reform. On a national level, Mr. Kearney was a member of President Barack Obama's national finance committee when he ran for U.S. Senate and President. He has been a leader in Ohio's legal community and is a managing partner of Kearney & Kearney, LPA.

Mr. Kearney has led the African American Chamber since March 2016. The Chamber's mission is to establish, cultivate, and strengthen consumer and business relationships; provide access to major corporate and government markets for our members to help increase business opportunities; aid in the professional development of our members; and assist in developing strategic partnerships and alliances for the purpose of strengthening and growing the African American business community. Under his leadership, the AAC has grown membership over 40 percent, with programs growing more than 300 percent and benefits increasing more than 10 percent. The AAC is the fastest growing chamber in the Greater Cincinnati region.

In addition to politics and law, Mr. Kearney has been a leader in the business community. He founded and built one of the largest African American owned publishing companies, Sesh Communications, which publishes The Cincinnati Herald, The Northern Kentucky Herald, The Dayton Defender, and other publications. Eric graduated from St. Xavier High School, earned a B.A. in English from Dartmouth College and Juris Doctor from the University of Cincinnati Law School. He is married to Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney Esq. who is a graduate of Dartmouth College and Harvard Law School. They have two children, Celeste (a student at Dartmouth College) and Asher. <http://african-americanchamber.com>



MICHAEL SMITH

Vice President of Commercial Development, The Port

Michael Smith joined The Port as Vice President, Neighborhood Development in 2018. He transitioned to Vice President, Commercial Development in June 2019 to leverage his expertise by leading commercial development and expanding The Port's initiative to drive real estate ownership and entrepreneurial opportunities for African Americans, including through The Port's DREAM Loan Fund that helps finance real estate improvements to first-floor neighborhood business district retail for small and minority-owned businesses. He joined The Port after a 14-year career leading and growing relationships as Vice President, Regional Business Banking Sales Manager at PNC Bank.

A key leadership team member, Mr. Smith guides initiatives dedicated to redeveloping commercial real estate that support The Port's holistic strategy to transform historically disinvested neighborhoods into places of opportunity by repositioning blighted property. To accomplish this, he develops relationships with foundations, private banks, community development financial institutions, other funders and accelerators that share The Port's objectives to reduce barriers to entry for minority entrepreneurs and provide accessible tenant spaces.

He expands and diversifies The Port's pipeline of small and minority-owned entrepreneurs readying for a bricks-and-mortar location and has successfully strengthened The Port's partnerships with minority business accelerator organizations and nonprofits that help train and ready entrepreneurs for opportunity.

He is The Port's point person marketing MidPointe Crossing, a 25-acre development ready site ideal for office and retail at the southeast corner of Reading Road and Seymour Avenue, and 5,500 square feet of newly renovated commercial spaces in the Bond Hill Business District.

Mr. Smith is active in the Over-the-Rhine neighborhood as a Chamber of Commerce Board Member, Ensemble Theater Board Member and a member of the planning committee for the Tender Mercies fundraiser, Taste of OTR.

Mr. Smith earned a Bachelor of Science from Xavier University. He serves on the Greater Cincinnati Micro Enterprise Initiative Loan Committee, the City of Cincinnati Economic Inclusion Advisory Council and as Co-Chair of the Over the Rhine Chamber of Commerce Business Attraction and Retention Committee. <https://cincinnatiport.org>

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