



THE FUND *for* GIRARD COLLEGE



Amara M. Briggs

Senior Vice President, Middle Market
Truist Financial Corporation

Amara M. Briggs is Senior Vice President and Relationship Manager for the Delaware Valley/Lehigh Valley Region at Truist Financial Corporation, the nation's 7th largest bank. In this role,

Amara is responsible for delivering best in class lending, advisory and treasury services for privately held and not for profit businesses and educational institutions in the Delaware Valley/Lehigh Valley regions.

Prior to her current role, Amara worked as Senior Relationship Manager for Wells Fargo and Citizens Bank in the Greater Philadelphia and Delaware region.

Amara sits on the Boards of the Economy League of Greater Philadelphia, Business Leadership for Catholic Schools and Cobbs Creek Restoration Foundation.

Amara lives in Bala Cynwyd in the Main Line section of Pennsylvania with her husband, Jason, and two children. She is a graduate of Phillips Academy, Andover and Georgetown University.



Malik Brown

President & CEO
Graduate! Philadelphia, Inc.

Malik Brown is a seasoned leader with a unique portfolio of cross-sector experiences. His work and impact span multiple industry sectors, including business, philanthropy, and higher education. In his current role as president and CEO of Graduate! Philadelphia, Malik is responsible for advancing the mission of adult degree completion, workforce readiness, and inclusive economic development.

In his previous role as the associate vice president of workforce solutions & community impact at Peirce College, Malik was responsible for building workforce development solutions, cultivating strategic partnerships, and driving community impact.

Prior to joining higher education, Malik was part of the executive leadership team at Diversified Community Services. He was responsible for the adult and family services division of the organization. Malik partnered with colleges and universities, city and state officials, corporations, and foundations to help working adults and families across the region achieve economic wellbeing and financial stability.

Over the course of his career, Malik has worked in finance, customer relationship management, and diversity and inclusion. His time with national organizations like Inroads, Accenture, and the United Way has provided him with a broad range of management insights and capabilities—and a passion for serving working adults and nontraditional populations.

Malik is a passionate advocate and champion of social and economic mobility for non-traditional adult learners. To make a difference and give voice to important regional issues, Malik also serves on several nonprofit boards, including the Economy League of Greater Philadelphia, Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC), ACHIEVEability, Nuemann University, and the Merakey Foundation. Malik has also served on the Education and Talent Steering Committees for both the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce and the Main Line Chamber of Commerce.

Malik is a life-long learner. He strongly believes in ongoing career development, sponsorship, and life coaching for those who are most disconnected from opportunity. He is a servant leader who is dedicated to the personal and professional development of others.

Malik attended Clark University in Worcester, MA where he earned his BA and MBA. Malik has been married to his wife Ayana for 15 years and has two little girls (Aleena and Myka). He resides in the West Oak Lane section of the city. Above all else, Malik is most proud of his relationship with his two daughters.



Lynette M. Brown-Sow

President, L. M. Brown Management Group, LLC

Lynette M. Brown-Sow is a lifelong Philadelphian who has dedicated her career to the organization, development, and wellness of communities as a strategic consultant, change agent, and connector.

She is President of L.M. Brown Management Group, LLC, a strategic consultancy firm based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Brown-Sow's extensive governance, organizational development, branding, communications strategies, and government relations experience spans a career of more than 50 years in the private and public sectors.

Her proven expertise and solutions-oriented leadership style are rooted in what she deems the 3 V Approach: Vision. Values. Voice. In summation, the 3 V Approach asserts that: the vision, values, and voice of an entity must be mission-focused for it to become, and remain, a force for change.

She served as Vice President of Marketing and Government Relations at the Community College of Philadelphia for over 22 years. Brown-Sow has held several political and civic positions. She served as Mayor Rendell's Deputy Mayor of Administration. She is the board's chair of the Philadelphia Housing Authority, a member of the board of Philadelphia Parking Authority, and

Chair of the board of Youth Advocate Programs, Inc., a global juvenile justice organization. She is also a member of the board of *Philadelphia Tribune*, NHS Enterprises, Inc., and YAP Ireland. She is a member of the Board of Directors of City Trusts and Chair of the Girard College Committee. She is a convener of the Forum for a Better Pennsylvania.

Brown-Sow also chairs two organizations where she is the founder; the Hardy Williams Education Fund provides scholarships and support in law and social justice, and Women of Destiny, a leadership organization that provides mentorship to professional women of color. She formerly served as the chair of the Consortium board of directors, a behavioral health-care organization that named its service centers the Lynette M. Brown Center of Hope.

Brown-Sow holds a BS in Administration from Antioch University; an MSS in Policy, Planning, and Development from Bryn Mawr College; a Governing for Non-Profit Excellence certificate from Harvard University.



Regina Hairston

President & CEO

African-American Chamber of Commerce of PA, NJ & DE

Regina Hairston is a solutions-oriented and resourceful strategist who employs a creative approach to transforming visions into results. Regina is the President and Chief Executive Officer at the African-American Chamber of Commerce of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware (AACC). AACC has promoted the voice, the vision, and the value of black-owned businesses for over 27 years.

Most recently, Regina served as Chief Deputy for the Honorable Tracey L. Gordon, Register of Wills and Clerk of the Orphan's Court. Regina successfully leveraged her skills of project management and public policy to champion Gordons' mission of protecting generational wealth within the City of Philadelphia.

Previously, Regina was a Senior Associate at Bellevue Strategies. There, she was a registered lobbyist at the state, local, and federal government levels where she advanced client objectives through the development and execution of government affairs, community relations, and media and communications strategies.

Highlights of Regina's work include serving as a key member of a Philadelphia social impact taskforce, where she advised corporate and government stakeholders on economic development strategies, mobilized community resources, facilitated synergistic local partnerships, and tracked deliverables. A natural connector, Regina skillfully identified opportunities and joined the right individuals and resources – a skill she leveraged to secure a research partnership between a global client and local HBCU.

Prior to joining Bellevue Strategies, Regina held multiple roles within the Philadelphia education system. A strong networker with a record of cultivating and managing strategic partnerships with a broad cross-section of stakeholders, Regina served as Director of External Affairs, where she forged government, corporate, and community relationships and successfully secured over \$10M in funding and school resources. Additionally, Regina supported public relations and community engagement efforts for Philadelphia City Council and Pennsylvania State representatives and candidates.

A graduate of Saint Joseph's University, Regina developed a strong command of PR strategies as well as the political landscape, having received her Bachelor of Science degree with a focus in political science and public relations. She achieved a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Pennsylvania further increasing her knowledge of public policy.



David P. Hardy

Interim President
Girard College

Mr. Hardy is regarded as an outstanding educational leader whose founding of Boys Latin – a single-gender school whose student body is predominantly African American and economically disadvantaged – earned national acclaim. After retiring from Boys Latin, Mr. Hardy served as Executive Director of Excellent Schools PA, a school choice advocacy organization. He also is the principal of a consulting practice, Parkway Educational

Consultants. In addition, Mr. Hardy currently serves on the boards of the Center for Education Reform, the Pennsylvania State Coalition of Public Charter Schools, Independence Mission Schools, and Ad Prima Charter School, which he chairs. He is a member of the Steering Committee for the Freedom Coalition for Charter schools and on the boards of the North Carolina Outward Bound School and the Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center. He is also a Distinguished Senior Fellow with the Commonwealth Foundation. Mr. Hardy was a founding board member of the Philadelphia Schools Partnership and is a former board member of the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools and the Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO).



Brendan Heck

Vice President, Environmental, Social, and Governance
UGI Corporation

Brendan Heck is the Vice President, Environmental, Social, and Governance at UGI Corporation. Mr. Heck joined UGI in 2014 and most recently served as Director, Investor Relations. During his time with the Company, he has held various positions in corporate finance and treasury, business development, and strategic pricing. Prior to UGI, Mr. Heck worked at SEI as a fixed income portfolio manager. Mr. Heck received his MBA from Duke University and his bachelor's degree in economics from Lafayette College.



Melissa Ludwig

Retail and Consumer Products Industry Executive

Melissa Ludwig is an insightful, strategic executive and nimble problem solver with an accomplished, longstanding business leadership career. Following a 30-year career as a Senior and Group Vice President at Macy's, Melissa joined the Board of Directors at CSS Industries, a publicly-traded consumer products company, and oversaw its successful sale in 2020. She is Board Chair of the National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD) Philadelphia.

During her time at Macy's, Melissa had direct P&L accountability, leading businesses from \$380M to \$600M and high-performing, multidisciplinary organizations ranging in size from 1,300 to 3,000. She brings deep expertise in strategic planning, expense initiatives, BTC, risk management, and has a record of building new capabilities, positioning businesses for responsible growth and sustained success while achieving the optimal customer experience.

At Macy's, Melissa led multiple M&A integrations and brand conversions, implemented technology innovations and built omni-channel capabilities, launched new business operations, and restructured organizations maximizing efficiencies and performance. Serving as a valued leadership mentor, she advanced executive teams and steered organizations through significant business reinvention, transformation and growth while mitigating financial, operational and talent risk. Partnering with Bain & Co., Melissa also led the successful pilot program for the corporation's business localization strategy, with decentralized merchandising and planning functions, paving the course for Macy's national operating model.

As a member of Broad Street Angels, Melissa is conducting due diligence to evaluate the investment viability of early-stage companies across the Real Estate, Medical Device, Technology and Healthcare industries. This work, along with Melissa's passion for business innovation, has resulted in investments in the Healthcare and Technology space and Board advisory roles, providing leadership team counsel and networking advancements. As a trusted consultant and career advisor, Melissa has also partnered with multiple consumer and life science business entrepreneurs in the market developing organizational structuring, business planning, career strategies, and executive talent acquisition with a focus on women-founded companies.

Melissa has been actively engaged in non-profit organizations as a board member including Philadelphia Convention Visitors Bureau, Vice President of Susan G. Komen, ALS, and the co-founder of the Philadelphia Fashion Incubator in partnership with Center City District to help emerging fashion talent achieve entrepreneurial success. Melissa has also guided emerging 501(c)3, in determining the structure, governance, program and financial requirements to become self-sustaining.

Melissa serves on the Board of the Forum of Executive Women, Chair of Women in Leadership, coaching women on the path to the Boardroom and C-suite roles, Women Corporate Directors in Philadelphia and is a speaker and panelist.

Melissa earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Organizational and Clinical Counseling Psychology from Moravian College and Drexel's Raj & Kamla Gupta Governance Institute Certificate and Advisory Board in Director Education.



Lorina Marshall-Blake

President, Independence Blue Cross Foundation
Vice President of Community Affairs, Independence Blue Cross

Lorina Marshall-Blake is president of the Independence Blue Cross Foundation (Foundation), and the vice president of community affairs at Independence Blue Cross (Independence).

In her role for the Foundation, she leads strategic, programmatic, and operational efforts to fulfill the Foundation's mission to lead sustainable solutions that improve the health and wellness of the community. While overseeing grant-making work, Marshall-Blake steered the Foundation to be a collaborator, innovator, convener of diverse organizations, and thought leader in addressing emerging health needs in southeastern Pennsylvania.

As the vice president of community affairs, Marshall-Blake develops and manages relationships with community partners to advance Independence's social mission efforts.

Marshall-Blake is affiliated with more than 30 professional and civic organizations, including the Anti-Defamation League and the United Negro College Fund, and was the 28th President of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Omega Omega Chapter. She has been recognized for her leadership and community service by diverse organizations such as the NAACP, the Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia Tribune, and the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey. She has also been recognized with numerous awards and was listed among the Philadelphia Business Journal's Power 100, an exclusive list recognizing area leaders who are shaping the future of Greater Philadelphia.

Marshall-Blake serves on more than 25 non-profit boards and committees of local, state, and national organizations including Blue Cross Blue Shield Association -- Corporate Responsibility Committee, Chamber's Paradigm Award & Scholarship Committee, the Urban Affairs Coalition, and the Urban League of Philadelphia. She also serves on Drexel University's College of Nursing and Health Professions Executive Advisory Council, Rutgers School of Nursing-Camden Dean's Leadership Circle and The Forum For Executive Women.

Marshall-Blake holds a bachelor's degree in human services from Antioch College, a master's in government administration from the University of Pennsylvania, an honorary doctorate of Humanities from Albright College and an honorary doctorate of Health Care Innovation from Harcum College. She is an Honorary Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and was appointed to the National Advisory Council on Nursing Education and Practice in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



William R. Sasso

Chairman Emeritus
Stradley Ronon Stevens and Young, LLP

William Sasso served as Chairman of Stradley Ronon's management committee and board of directors for 27 years, ending on January 1, 2021. He currently serves as Chairman Emeritus of the firm. The transition to Chairman Emeritus took place as a result of his desire to spend more time with his clients, and in his political and community activities.

During his 50 years of experience, he has counseled privately and publicly held companies and religious and nonprofit organizations in various matters, including general corporate and securities law, mergers and acquisitions, health care, education, medical devices, tax and real estate.

After the November 2016 election Mr. Sasso was asked by Attorney General – elect Josh Shapiro to serve as senior counsel to his transition team. He was also appointed by Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf to serve on the board of Independence Blue Cross. He was appointed by former Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett as Chairman of the Pennsylvania Infrastructure and Investment Authority (PENNVEST) and as a Commissioner of the Delaware River Port Authority, an office he held until 2015. He was asked in 2010 by then-Governor-elect Corbett to co-chair his Transition Team in preparation for taking office in January 2011.

In 2018, Mr. Sasso received a lifetime achievement award from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* for his leadership in the legal and business community. Since 2017, he has been named to the *Philadelphia Business Journal's* "Power 100" list of the most influential people in the Philadelphia region. The publication deemed him the "dean of Philadelphia's law firm leaders" and noted that he "often serves as the legal adviser of choice for some of the region's key business and political leaders." In 2019, Mr. Sasso was selected by the *Philadelphia Business Journal* as one of Philadelphia's Most Admired CEOs. The honorees include 25 individuals "who are established leaders with a record of innovation, outstanding financial performance, a commitment to quality, a strong vision, a commitment to diversity in the workplace and contributions to Greater Philadelphia." He was also inducted into the *Philadelphia Business Journal's* "Best of the Bar: Hall of Fame" to honor his outstanding 47-year legal career.



Dr. Steven Spencer, MD, MPH, MBA

Deputy Chief Health Officer
Cityblock

I grew up in South Philadelphia in one of the poorest neighborhoods in the city. Luckily in elementary school, I was given a scholarship to attend a private boarding school, Girard College. There I learned the value of scholastic rigor as well as formulating career goals. I decided in middle school that I wanted

to be a doctor, attracted to the idea of lifelong learning. In high school, I decided that I wanted to also have a role in healthcare administration after learning of the impact this would have on the health of patients on a more global scale. Once I graduated from Girard College (high school), I attended Brown University in Providence, RI where I majored in biology.

I stayed in Providence and continued my education at Brown Medical School. I continued to be enamored with clinical medicine while continuing to give thought to a future career in health care administration. During this time, I developed a better understanding of the work that was needed in underserved populations and wanted to combine my interest in business. This interest was bolstered as I served on the board of a national non-profit that focused on vulnerable populations as well as doing clinical research on sickle cell disease and opioid abuse. During medical school, I decided that I would obtain my Masters in Public Health (MPH) in healthcare management at Harvard University in order to further my education in both finance and management as well as areas of traditional public health.

After completing my MPH and then my MD, I began my Internal Medicine residency at Temple University in Philadelphia. This was a very deliberative choice as the hospital was located in an underserved area of the city which would allow me to refine my clinical skills as well as apply my knowledge of public health to a population that was in need. While here, I was able to submit abstracts in the area of infectious and kidney disease as well as to do rotations with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health.

Upon graduating residency, I joined Abington Health System which would later merge with Jefferson Health. I spent 15 years there as a primary care physician and hospitalist. For ten of those years, I served as the Medical Director for Population Health for Jefferson Medical Group-North as well as an Associate Medical Director for the Delaware Valley Accountable Care Organization. This work allowed me to focus on quality improvement projects including preventative screening, transitions of care, readmissions, and telehealth. I submitted presentations for several conferences and publications based on this work including at the Institute for Healthcare Improvement. I was able to create and lead a clinical ambulatory pharmacy program that transformed medication and chronic disease management in our system leading to publications at IHI and the American College of Clinical Pharmacy. I was also honored to be chosen as a content expert by the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) in the area of chronic kidney disease progression.

In my spare time, I love to travel and listen to music. I currently reside in North Carolina with my spouse and two sons.



Nicole C. Wixted

Partner

Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP

Nicole Wixted is regarded for her steadfast representation and counseling of insurance and financial services industry clients on a wide array of issues. An experienced commercial litigator, Nicole represents clients in disputes in state and

federal courts nationwide, with significant experience in civil and appellate litigation.

Nicole counsels insurers and brokerage general agencies on issues relating to life and property casualty insurance and vigorously defends their interests in litigation. She has extensive experience with producer issues, premium financing, cost of insurance, fraud, lapse, beneficiary disputes, interpleaders, suitability, the secondary market for life insurance, and stranger and investor originated life insurance (STOLI/IOLI). She also advises and litigates on issues related to claims handling, suitability, market conduct and issuance of insurance to foreign nationals.

For property and casualty insurers, Nicole handles first- and third-party claims, and coverage disputes involving, inter alia, construction defects, product liability, business interruption and premises liability. As a member of the firm's Property and Casualty Insurance team, Nicole is closely monitoring developments related to business interruption coverage claims amidst the COVID-19 outbreak to effectively assist clients in managing and defending such claims.

Insurance and annuity companies turn to Nicole in disputes arising from the attempted assignment of annuity payments, third-party garnishments, improper payee claims, unauthorized withdrawals, interpleader claims, beneficiary disputes and overpayment recovery in jurisdictions throughout the United States. Nicole is versed in issues relating to structured settlements, including transfer of the payment rights thereunder.

Nicole represents companies of all types in business disputes and in defending against class actions. She has counseled and represented financial industry clients in connection with improper fund withdrawal and payment claims, handled tax shelter-related claims for plan administrators, and defended an international software manufacturer in alleged improper product implementation. In connection with a health care acquisition, Nicole defended against claims seeking a retroactive \$65 million capitation payment.

After law school, Nicole clerked for the Honorable Lee B. Laskin of the Superior Court of the State of New Jersey in Camden.



Sylvia V. Bastani, CFRE, CPC

Executive Director
Chief Advancement Officer, Girard College

Ms. Sylvia Bastani currently serves as the Chief Advancement Officer at Girard College.

Sylvia is an experienced fundraising professional, consultant, executive coach, and innovation expert with more than 30 years of experience in nonprofit management. Sylvia has raised more than \$750M during her career.

Sylvia serves on the Board of Directors on the Association of Fundraising Professionals' National Foundation of Philanthropy. She is also a member of the Advisory Council for Drexel University's School of Nursing and Health Professions and The Forum of Executive Women.

She is the author and co-editor of *The Healthcare Nonprofit: Keys to Effective Management* (Health Administration Press, 2019), which is used at colleges and universities throughout the US. Sylvia holds Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees from the University of Pennsylvania.