



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Governor appoints LAFCU's Kelli Ellsworth Etchison  
to Michigan's Black Leadership Advisory Council**

*Council created to combat systemic racism*

LANSING, Mich. — Kelli Ellsworth Etchison has been appointed to Michigan's Black Leadership Advisory Council by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. Ellsworth Etchison is LAFCU's chief marketing officer and chief diversity officer.

The council was created to serve in an advisory capacity to the governor and develop, review and recommend policies and actions designed to prevent and eradicate discrimination and racial inequity in Michigan.

Gov. Whitmer said in a news release announcing council members, "In order to confront systemic racism head on, we need members like those on this council to inform our work in state government. This group of leaders includes experts in economics, public policy, health, technology, the environment, and more. I know that those on the Council will continue to be a force for change in Michigan, and I am excited to work closely with them to create a more equitable and just state for all."



Kelli Ellsworth Etchison

The council's 16 members and four committee chairs were selected from more than 650 applicants. Each member represents Black leaders in a specific field. Ellsworth Etchison is a representative in economics for the term Nov. 12, 2020, to Dec. 31, 2023. She is the only appointee from Mid-Michigan.

"With the recent racially charged events in our country, I am more compelled than ever to amp up my involvement as a positive agent of change," Ellsworth Etchison said. "I believe the time is ripe to make a difference, and Gov. Whitmer is the woman to do it. I am proud to have been chosen to serve on the Black Leadership Advisory Council.

"Arguably, the most important asset I bring to this role is more than 50 years of first-hand knowledge. I have personal experience with racial discrimination and the inequities that

exist within our state. When I first started in the financial industry more than three decades ago, there weren't many people who looked like me. Some said I got the job to fill a quota. I say, 'So what?' I was given a chance. I believe everyone in our great state deserves the same chance."

During her more than 30 years with LAFUCU, Ellsworth Etchison advanced from a loan interviewer to her present responsibilities. As chief diversity officer, she works to establish diversity, equity and inclusion as shared values within LAFUCU and the community. She is also a commissioner and serves as secretary of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commission of Mid-Michigan and is a member of the Study Committee for the City of East Lansing Independent Police Oversight Commission.

Included in the work of the Black Leadership Advisory Council is to identify state laws or gaps in state laws that create or perpetuate inequities; collaborate to promote legislation and regulation that ensures equitable treatment of all Michiganders; serve as a resource for community groups; and promote the cultural arts in the Black community.

Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist said in the news release announcing council members, "With the creation of the Black Leadership Advisory Council, we are affirming a truth that Michigan has benefited from for generations: the leadership shown by Black Michiganders in all areas of life and work is critical to the vitality and prosperity of our state. These leaders' diverse perspectives will be essential as we work to fight against systemic inequalities experienced by far too many Michiganders."

The Black Leadership Advisory Council is housed in the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity.

### **About LAFUCU**

Chartered in 1936, LAFUCU is a not-for-profit financial cooperative open for membership to anyone who lives, works, worships or attends school in Michigan and to businesses and other entities located in Michigan. The credit union serves more than 68,000 members and holds over \$835 million in assets. It was named a Best Credit Union to Work For in 2020. LAFUCU offers a comprehensive range of financial products and services as well as an expanding complement of financial technology solutions. Members enjoy benefits such as low fees, low interest rates on loans, high yields on savings, discounts, knowledgeable employees and nationwide access to fee-free ATMs. A recipient of the national Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Community Service Award for credit unions, LAFUCU enriches the communities it serves by supporting many organizations and causes. To learn more about LAFUCU, call 800.748.0228 or visit [www.lafcu.com](http://www.lafcu.com).

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