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LAFCU’s Kelli Ellsworth Etchison named a 2024 Top Chief Diversity Officer by COLOR Magazine

Recognition celebrates Ellsworth Etchison’s transformative DEI leadership and dedication



Kelli Ellsworth Etchison

LANSING, Mich. —Kelli Ellsworth Etchison has been named to COLOR Magazine’s Top Chief Diversity Officers POWERLIST. This special edition recognizes exceptional leaders shaping the future of diversity, equity, and inclusion across the country.

As LAFCU’s chief diversity officer, Kelli has driven initiatives that emphasize equitable access to services and foster a culture where employees and members feel valued. Her contributions include implementing DEI strategies that prioritize education and bias-free practices and leading the formation of an employee-led DEI committee.

A cornerstone of Kelli’s approach has been her commitment to comprehensive DEI education at every level of the organization. From onboarding new hires to training the board of directors, Kelli

has ensured that all members of the LAFCU team are engaged in DEI learning. She has also been guiding the executive team through a weekly study of *Racial Justice at Work* by The Winters Group, a practical guide for translating justice-centered principles into actionable policies. This initiative underscores her commitment to embedding DEI into LAFCU’s core, fostering an environment of ongoing learning and growth.



“Being recognized by COLOR Magazine is a profound honor,” said Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, chief marketing officer and chief diversity officer at LAFCU. “This acknowledgment reflects the hard work and dedication of everyone at LAFCU who embraces the mission of fostering an inclusive culture. DEI is not just a program; it’s woven into who we are and how we serve.”

Under Kelli’s leadership, the team has developed robust DEI training program, a culture-focused pre-hire video, and an award-winning internal communications campaign. These efforts have led to tangible improvements, such as a rise in employee survey responses indicating LAFCU’s commitment to diversity from 80% to 94%.

Kelli’s advocacy extends beyond her work at LAFCU. She has volunteered with numerous organizations, including the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commission of Mid-Michigan and the YMCA of Metropolitan Lansing. She also helped establish East Lansing’s Independent Police Oversight Commission and serves on Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s Black Leadership Advisory Council.

“Kelli’s work reminds us that advancing DEI is a continuous journey that thrives on empathy, action, and leadership,” said Patrick Spyke, CEO at LAFCU. “Her recognition by COLOR Magazine underscores her commitment to making positive change, not just within LAFCU, but throughout the community.”

About LAFCU

Founded in 1936, LAFCU (pronounced laugh-cue) is a not-for-profit, member-owned credit union open to all who live, work, worship or attend school in Michigan, and to Michigan businesses. LAFCU serves more than 74,000 members and holds over \$1 billion in assets. With a particular focus on serving people of modest means, LAFCU is committed to enhancing its members' financial well-being and creating long-lasting positive change across generations. Awarded the prestigious Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Community Service Award, LAFCU is known for its people-helping-people mission, which has led to award-winning financial literacy programs for all ages. Twice honored as a national ‘Best Credit Union to Work For’ and recognized globally for its diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, LAFCU stands out for its commitment to creating an inclusive workplace. Learn more at www.lafcu.com.

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