



March 2021



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From the Desk of Our President



Sharese Hogan

BCBSM LDA President, 2020-2021

Greetings BCBSM LDA members,
It's Springtime!

This time of the year makes me think of a few things: spring cleaning, springing forward, natural sunlight, and connectedness.

In the past year, we have gone through a lot as employees, families, and communities. This time last year we were just informed that the world as we knew it was going to change. Spring didn't matter because we couldn't go outside, times on our clocks seemed to be at a standstill, there were feelings of inaptitude, and to add to it, you couldn't spend time with the people who brought you a sense of joy. We learned through it by Leading and Thinking Outside the Box – we normalized life the best we could. Tory Niceswander, BCBSM LDA President 2019 - 2020, said it best in his *blueprint* membership message in the [March 2020](#) issue. Take a moment to read and let's begin to think forward!



Like Spring, we can use 2021 to clear our minds and prepare for the next phase of whatever journey you're on or path you wish to follow; we can add time to our day to participate in the things that stimulate us and help us readjust to the normalcies of life, we can challenge ourselves by taking back our power to decide and create opportunities with no fear, and lastly can start increasing our connections and network to build relationships.

I am proud to say that BCBSM LDA programming never stopped, we continued to bring fun, purposeful and exciting events. From Professional Development Coffee Break Networking with Kirk Roy to the upcoming Annual Speech Contest with our Emcee Dan D'Amico, our talented young presenters and a Poet Laureate; I am learning the importance of participating in various types of events to prepare for a new season of opportunities. And as spring represents change, we are preparing to transition our membership from the 2020-2021 to what is on the horizon for 2021-2022. Keep joining, learning and growing.

Finally, as we close out [Women's History Month](#), please take a moment to tell the ladies in your life that you appreciate them and what they have contributed to our society. Read more tributes on page 10.

BCBSM LDA Member, you are appreciated!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sharese Hogan'.

Sharese Hogan, 2020-2021 President ▪ BCBSM Leadership Development Association ▪ Chapter #141

2021 BCBSM LDA board election results announced

Fellow BCBSM LDA members,

The BCBSM Leadership Development Association recently held an election that ended on March 12, to fill six open Board of Directors positions. It is with great pleasure to introduce our new and re-elected members of the BCBSM LDA Board of Directors!

Serving three-year terms
July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024:

Erica Addison



DeAndre Elliot



Heidi Saucier



Serving a two-year term
July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023:

Dana Bell



Serving a one-year term
July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022:

Vaneitta Goines



Serving an Elected At-Large Director Position, one-year term
July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022:

Samah Hamam



You'll be able to congratulate our new board members when they're inducted at the annual meeting in June where our president and CEO, Daniel J. Loepp, will be our keynote speaker.

Erica, DeAndre, Heidi, Dana, Vaneitta and Samah, congratulations on being elected to serve on the governing body!

BCBSM LDA membership and Elections Committee, Karema N. Bobbitt and Angela Hollis

New Member Corner

Welcome OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS



*Nicole Greenhoe
Tangie Haines
Karyn Thomas*

As a member of BCBSM LDA you are now a part of a great group of leaders, striving to live out our theme, "Leading Outside the Box." We encourage you to connect with our members and learn something new about the organization.



Member Benefits

- Networking through monthly meetings and mixers
- Professional development through workshops and "lunch and learn" sessions
- Community involvement through events like Bowl for Kids' Sake, walks for cures and causes, Adopt-a-Highway and more!

We have many upcoming events to begin networking and meeting other BCBSM LDA members. Check them out on the [Calendar of Events](#) page.

We also perform various community involvement services throughout the year. We'd love for you to take part.

For more information about all other upcoming events, please visit [BCBSM LDA's site](#).

We look forward to seeing you at the next event!

Get Acquainted

BCBSM LDA at your fingertips

Have BCBSM LDA at your fingertips! Follow these instructions to add the BCBSM LDA website link to your BluesLink.

Under My Links, click on Manage Links

Manage Links

<https://bcbsm.sharepoint.com/sites/blueslink/SitePages/Personalize-My-Links.aspx>

Click on the down arrow to open the selection options available under Personal Growth

Personal growth (Leadership Development Association, Employee Resource Networks, etc.)

Select BCBSM Leadership Development Association

☒ BCBSM Leadership Development Association

Click on Save My Selections

Save My Selections

You should see the message “Changes Saved”

Under My Links, you should now see the BCBSM LDA link

My Links

BCBSM Leadership Development Association



New Member Spotlight

By Jennifer Pakkala, health care communications analyst

When a surgeon asks you for gloves, you hand some over...even when you're an IT intern.

New BCBSM LDA member Julia Dessert explained that when she interned at Michigan Medical, she was told if anyone asks you to do something, you do it. Although the internship mainly consisted of teaching nurses how to use a new electronic medical system, she witnessed some 30 births, 10 C-sections...and assisted in a surgery by handing over the needed equipment.

Nowadays you'll find Julia far away from operating rooms and instead in the Detroit-based Business Consulting Management department as a Business Analyst II. She's in an IT area supporting the [Blueprint for Affordability](#) program.

She just completed a two-year term as a co-chair for the Young Professionals Network and had previously served as their activities chair. Julia joined BCBSM LDA because she's ready to meet new groups of people and BCBSM LDA's focus on leadership aligns with her career goals. She appreciates the reliability and content of BCBSM LDA's programming.

As for leadership style, Julia said she admires leaders who focus on empowerment, setting expectations ahead of time and team building. "I've seen team building skimmed over," she explained. "I like when leaders place importance on it and value the trust it builds, not when they view those activities as ancillary."

Julia said her own leadership style is similar. "I believe people rise to the occasion. I like to be up front with coaching and then let people loose to be creative and really own it. If you give people too many specific tasks, it loses the ability for people to add their individual take on it."

On a personal level, Julia and her husband, Joseph, welcomed their son, Wesley, in July. In addition to being new parents, they are renovating their 1949 ranch in Ferndale. She is involved in her church and serves as the "unofficial baby shower planner."

While one day she hopes to do a big Hawaii trip, she currently enjoys travelling to the southeast coast, mainly to enjoy the wonderful seafood.

Julia Dessert



Julia's family photo album



The Dessert family



Julia and her husband, Joseph, with their son, Wesley



Charlie, the family Dalmatian

2021 BCBSM LDA Youth Speech Contest

Don't miss the BCBSM LDA Youth Speech Contest on March 31, starting at 4:30 p.m. This annual speech contest is open to students in grades 9-12. It's a unique opportunity for these students to research, write and present a four- to six-minute address about leadership. The winner of our chapter's contest will advance to the NMA Annual Conference. They'll receive airfare and room costs to compete for the \$4,000 top prize.

In 2020, Detroit's own Arthur Harrington won first place at our chapter's speech contest, then went on to win the NMA National Speech Contest. [Register now](#) to watch this year's contestants.



Last year's chapter and national winner, Arthur Harrington

Leadership is for everyone

You don't need to be a leader to join BCBSM LDA.

BCBSM Leadership Development Association is for aspiring and current leaders. It's for anyone who wants to network, learn about leadership and build leadership skills.

Joining BCBSM LDA is easy. Just visit our [website](#) and click on the Join Now button and fill out a brief form. Share the link with your friends.

We're all leaders at BCBSM LDA!



CALENDAR of EVENTS

April
15

April Monthly Member Meeting

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Join us 11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. for virtual networking.

Speaker: Ted Ma, Leadership Keynote Speaker,
Ted Ma Enterprises

[Link to register](#)



April
20

Detroit Economic Club Meeting Opportunity

11:30 a.m.

Subject: Hot Seat: What I Learned Leading a Great
American Company

Speaker: Jeff Immelt, Author

[Link to register](#)



April
22

LDA April Virtual Networking Coffee Hour

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Speaker: Aji Abraham,
Vice President of Innovation and Delivery

Aji will join us for a discussion on leadership and
professional development then network afterward in
breakout rooms.

[Link to register](#)



April
27

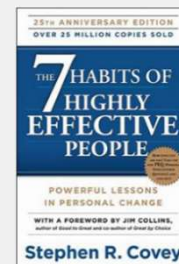
BCBSM LDA Book Club Meeting

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

We'll be starting our discussion of Habit 6: Synergize.

Facilitator: Charles Schultz,
BCBSM LDA VP of Professional Development

[Link to register](#)



BCBSM LDA 2021 Virtual Mixer: Building Relationships

by Fonda Overton, senior analyst

The speaker for this month's Mixer was BCBSM LDA President Sharese Hogan. She started with BCBSM LDA in 2009 and has held several chair positions. In April, Sharese will be celebrating 20 years at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan.



Sharese started the mixer by talking about the importance of personal and professional relationships as a bridge for your career development. One-way Sharese has excelled in her career is by building relationships in BCBSM LDA and is with other people in the Blue Cross organization. These connections helped her career journey.

“Don’t rush your path, meet the people you need to meet, make it count.”

Four W’s. Sharese has her own vision for the four W’s targeted towards career growth.

Why – Don’t get hung up on why something did not happen, appreciate the moment you are in.

Who – Make your interactions intentional. Don’t just think about how others can help you; be sure to offer help to those you meet as well.

When – Timing is everything. Nothing happens unless you give it the appropriate time and energy. Always stay ready.

What – Think about what you want to do. Join a community, volunteer somewhere, attend and I&D event or request additional challenges at work. Closed mouths don’t get fed.



Sometimes our personal life may overlap with our professional life. Whether it’s personal or professional, build a bridge. Try to learn about the other person – their favorite movies, kids’ names, birthdays, etc. This will nurture a personal relationship and may even help with your professional development.

Celebrating Women's History Month

By David Shelby Jr., team coordinator

It is officially women's history month. We're honored and blessed to have two great women to help us define the beauty and challenges of this historic month, Lucinda "Cindy" Lord, co-chair of Wonder ERN and Vaneitta Goines, chair of Power ERN.

What Women's History Month figure inspires you the most?



First Lady Michelle Obama

Cindy: [Michelle Obama](#). I was a fan of her husband's presidency. I read her book "Becoming". I was inspired by her story. I've been inspired by the work they've been doing since her and her husband left office.

Vaneitta: [Ida B. Wells-Barnett](#) who was a journalist, writer in the civil rights movement and one of the founders of the NAACP. She was a fighter for women of color and interests that impacted people of color, specifically anti-lynching. She's an example of being an ally to



Ida B. Wells-Barnett

others and to standing firm with things that align with her personally and representative of many black women at that time who fought for the rights of women and Black Americans. Her fight would eventually lead to the rights that would free us all, specifically black women.

What is a fact about Women's History Month that might not be well known to our readers?

Cindy: History shows that women have been hidden from history. Their stories were not told. I think it's our job as women and men to educate young girls that they can accomplish great things even in the face of adversity.

Vaneitta: Women's History Month started in 1987, but the reason we celebrate goes back to 1911 with [International Women's Day](#). The fight for women's suffrage was pushed over for African American rights because there was a belief there could not be both at the same time.

What does women's history mean to you?

Cindy: The opportunities to talk about women and the struggles they continue to face and that gender bias is still out there. It means men and women working together to teach equality to our children so we can have equality in the future.

Vaneitta: Women's history is a springboard to give us an opportunity to focus on the contributions of women. It's an opportunity to turn a light on our own lives and communities to identify how everyday women are making an impact.



Tricia Keith
EVP and President,
Emerging Markets

What women leaders do you follow and why?

Cindy: My sister and I are a fan of Tricia Keith. I enjoy her openness and willingness to share where the company is going. I had a previous boss who taught me a lot about project management and leadership. I really appreciate her willingness to help me grow.

Vaneitta: Stacey Abrams – one of things that pains me the most is that it's political, and I am not going to touch it. To me Stacey Abrams was an excellent example of when laws were not used correctly, and she felt disenfranchised, she used it as an opportunity to educate people and to make a change.



Lucinda "Cindy" Lord
co-chair of Wonder ERN



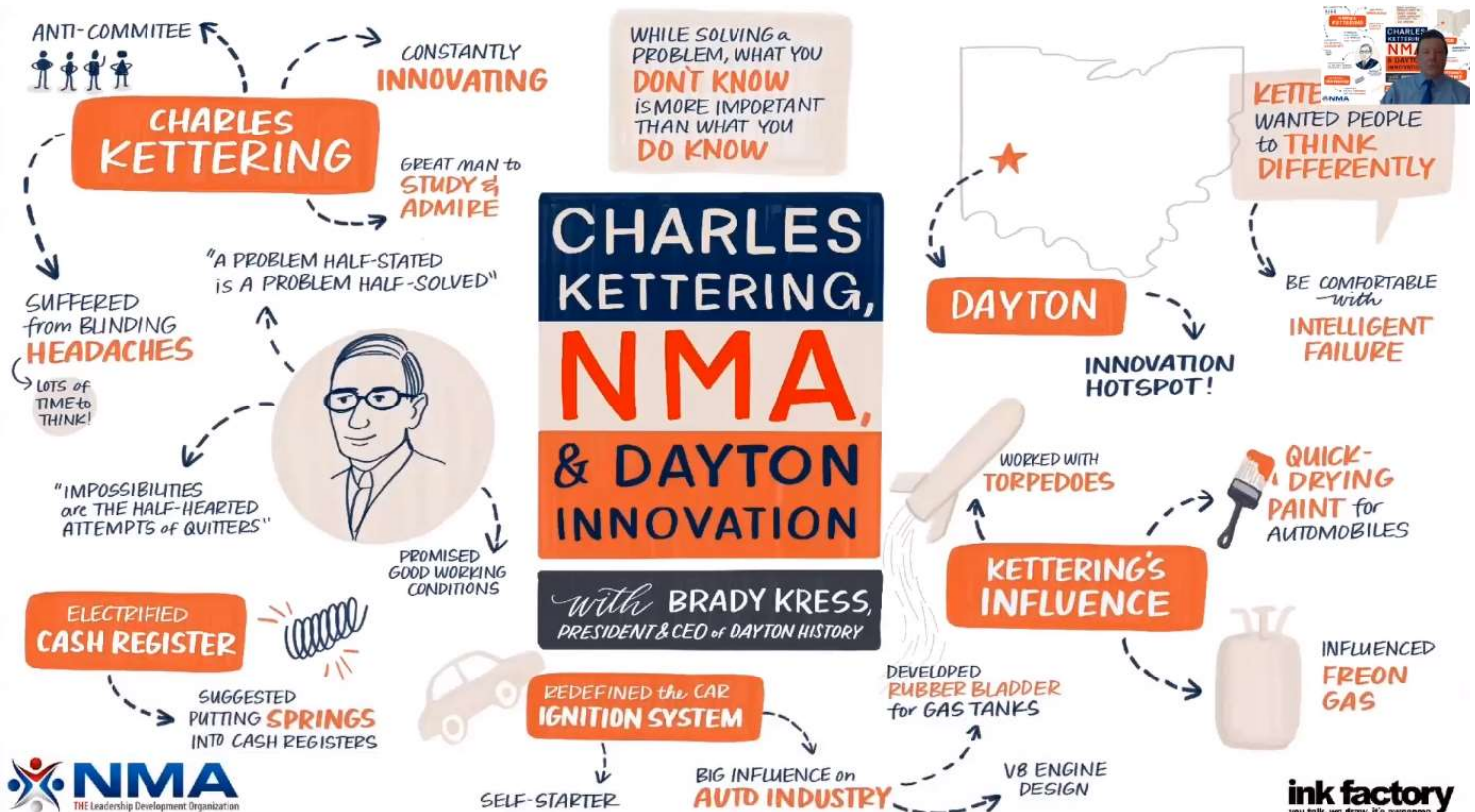
Vaneitta Goines
chair of Power ERN

Did you know...



That NMA conducts monthly webinars? NMA's Professional Development Committee sponsors the webinars with a wide variety of topics and facilitators. The webinars are on the third Thursday of every month, except January and July. In those months, they are on the fourth Thursday due to the NMA Board of Directors' meeting. Webinars are at noon and 3 p.m.

Visit [NMA Live Online Webinars](#) to see upcoming topics, and [NMA LiveOnline Recordings](#) to watch previous webinars.



PD Exchange

How to keep up when everything is constantly changing

By Kaitlyn Bradley, Management Week chairperson and PD Exchange author

We all know that the past year has been full of change and uncertainty. Although these recent changes have been global in scale and have significantly disrupted our daily lives, the idea of change isn't anything new. Things around us are changing all the time: the weather, people's behaviors, organizational reporting structures, technology, and so much more. According to research, mentorship can be very valuable in helping you succeed in your career. It can speed up a job promotion, increase your salary, and even decrease burn out.



Perhaps you've thought to yourself, "Oh my goodness, another new technology? I just learned how to use the last one!" It can be extremely difficult to keep up with the current trends, but this can be critical for success.

The question is, how do we keep up with all the constant changes?

Here are 5 things to consider when trying to adapt to any sort of change:

1. **Remember that everyone adapts to change at a different pace.** You should push yourself to do your best, but you shouldn't beat yourself up if it doesn't come as easily as you had hoped. When it comes to new technologies, younger generations tend to adapt and learn quickly. It is important for those individuals to be mindful of this, and equally important for those learning at a slower pace to not compare themselves to others.
2. **Don't underestimate your ability to adapt.** Some people don't give themselves enough credit in how much strength they have when it comes to adapting to change. Recognize your strengths and successes.
3. **Changes can be an opportunity for personal development.** Use this opportunity to develop a new skill, learn something about yourself, or strengthen your relationships. A great strategy is to flip your mindset from "I have to..." to "I get to..."
4. **Never stop learning.** This goes hand-in-hand with the personal development opportunities but is especially important with new technological advances. The more you learn, the easier it will be to learn the next new thing.
5. **You get to choose your response.** In the future, how will you want to tell people about your response to a certain change? Do you want to say that you were hesitant to adapt, or do you want to talk about how you were a leader in embracing the change?

Change is inevitable. The best thing you can do is embrace change and use it as an opportunity to grow. Be patient, be diligent, be kind to yourself and be open to change.



BCBSM LDA Code of Ethics

- I will recognize that all individuals inherently desire to practice their occupations to the best of their ability.
- I will assume that all individuals want to do their best.
- I will maintain a broad and balanced outlook and will recognize value in the ideas and opinions of others.
- I will be guided in all my activities by truth, accuracy, fair dealing and good taste.
- I will keep informed on the latest developments in techniques, equipment, and process. I will recommend or initiate methods to increase productivity and efficiency.
- I will support efforts to strengthen the management profession through training and education.
- I will help my associates reach personal and professional fulfillment.
- I will earn and carefully guard my reputation for good moral character and good citizenship.
- I will promote the principles of our American Enterprise System to others, by highlighting its accomplishments and displaying confidence in its future.
- I will recognize that leadership is a call to service.

Statement of Principles

BCBSM LDA is dedicated to managerial excellence, personal and professional growth, and leadership development. The following principles identify BCBSM LDA's core beliefs and provide the basis for the Association's Mission Statement.

- We believe in the highest standards of personal and organizational integrity and respect for the individual.
- We believe in lifelong learning, continuous improvement, and the development of a workforce capable of sustaining a competitive posture in the global economy.
- We believe management is a creative, dynamic, and essential process enabling people to achieve personal and organizational objectives.
- We believe that managerial responsibility is shared among all individuals at all levels of the organization and that leadership is critical to management success.
- We believe that individuals and organizations have a community and civic responsibility.

blueprint team

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BCBSM LDA Board Officers

Board Chair: Jennifer Pakkala
 President: Sharese Hogan
 President-Elect: Sharese Hogan

Board Members

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 Dana Bartell
 Corrie Beaverson
 Dana Bell
 Karema Bobbitt
 Christina Frison
 Nichole Gilbertson
 Vaneitta Goines
 Angela Hollis
 Mitchell Pike
 Angela Tanner

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Christina Frison

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 VP of Awards and Recognition: Joslynn Collins
 Regional Director: Dana Johnson
 VP of Program Administration: Heidi Saucier
 VP of Professional Development: Charles Schultz

NMA National Mission Statement

NMA offers leadership development products and opportunities that maximize the potential of our members, sponsoring organizations and communities.