



## FEBRUARY 2022 ISSUE

The Monthly Newsletter of BCBSM Leadership Development Association



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February is extra special for many reasons



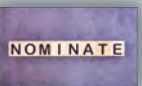
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**Sharese Hogan**  
BCBSM LDA President, 2021-2022



**Harriet Tubman**

## FROM THE DESK OF OUR PRESIDENT

Greetings BCBSM LDA members.

February is an exciting month for many reasons, but my favorite was celebrating Valentine's Day when I was in grade school. We brought enough candy and cards to share with the entire class, smiling as we passed them out with extra excitement when we gave that extra special card, with the extra special message to an extra special person.

Well, I think the leadership team of BCBSM LDA has continued that tradition. We spend extra time planning events, with extra special messages (by our Blue Cross executives and external experts), to deliver to extra special people (you, the BCBSM LDA membership).

This month, I would like to highlight some upcoming events including the final part of the Level Up Leadership Series with Kristie Stocker, a talk about pursuing happiness with SVP, Dr. Aaron Friedkin, and our first BlueNights<sup>SM</sup> Mixer of 2022 with Scott Suever, Director of Sales Learning and Development. I try to avoid making promises about the outcome of events, but I have worked closely with each of these speakers, and you don't want to miss these extra special presenters.

Another important part of this month for me is the celebration of black history. This reminds me of my days growing up in Detroit and the special memories I have dressing up and reciting my black history speeches about the legacies of African American contributions to our country, my favorite was when I played Harriett Tubman. I remember the stage set and how I crawled on my knees and pointed to The North Star in my reenactment of her heroism, helping hundreds of slaves (or my fellow classmates) to freedom through the Underground Railroad. This role was the beginning of my motivation to help others and lead. Like many of you, I want to keep learning about the road many have taken to help our community; so join me this month for the Black History events hosted by the ERNs, BlueActs and AAIM UP.

As I close this president's message, I recommend you make some special memories this month. Register for an event, visit a museum, volunteer in the community and share your knowledge.

In Service,

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

Sharese Hogan, 2021-2022 President, BCBSM Leadership Development Association, Chapter #141



## BlueACTS & AAIM UP Celebrates Black History Month

### February 17<sup>th</sup> Noon- 1pm

**The Racial Gap in Financial Literacy: Guest Speaker Brenda Oldham  
(CEO/Owner of RAM Insurance & Financial Services).**

Financial literacy is the ability to understand and make use of a variety of financial skills, including personal financial management, budgeting, and investing. In this learning session Brenda will help attendees develop financial literacy and gain a strong fundamental understanding of the stock market.

### February 23<sup>rd</sup> Noon-1pm

**Then and Now: An Overview of Black Hospitals and Mary Mahoney  
Professional Nursing Detroit Organization**

The learning session will offer the attendee insight into the little-known history about the presence of Detroit's many Black hospitals; the legacy of Mary Eliza Mahoney, the 1<sup>st</sup> professionally trained Black nurse in the United States and her connection to Detroit where the oldest known African American nursing organization in the United States was founded and still serving the community. Attendee will hear a nurse's story and learn of other local African American nursing organizations that are impacting change today and for the future of nursing and healthcare.

### EVENT LINKS:

[Racial Gap in Financial Literacy](#)

[Then and Now and Overview of Black Hospitals](#)

# SEEKING BOARD MEMBER NOMINATIONS

BCBSM Leadership Development Association is now accepting nominations to fill four outgoing Board of Director positions.

We're seeking nominations for the following:

- Three Directors, three-year terms
- One At-Large Director, one-year term



The BCBSM LDA Board of Directors encourages you to consider serving or nominating someone to serve your fellow BCBSM LDA members while gaining an invaluable rewarding experience of serving on the Board of the second largest chapter nationwide. Our chapter has earned prestigious awards due to:

- Numerous community involvement events
- Networking opportunities of learning leadership skills
- Lunch and learn sessions with highly recognized industry professionals
- Bi-monthly mixers that are ever more creative
- Sponsoring a speech contest for young leaders
- Award winning communications like the blueprint
- And above all, serving LDA members with unprecedented commitment to help our members grow professionally

While the most important qualifications to become a BCBSM LDA Board of Director includes confidence, dedication, and commitment to serving our members, the **chapter bylaws require that eligible candidates meet the following qualifications:**

1. Must be a member of the BCBSM Leadership Development Association.
2. Must have served as a committee chairperson or vice president for at least one year prior to taking office as a board member.

## **At-Large Director:**

1. Must be a current member of the BCBSM Leadership Development Association for at least two years.
2. Must have participated in the last 12 months in a minimum of two chapter-sponsored activities. Activities may include the following but are not limited to these events. A variation of these events is preferred:
  - o Monthly meeting
  - o Networking event
  - o Volunteer event
  - o Professional development course
  - o Volunteered on a committee
3. Must fully demonstrate the leadership competencies by delivering results, leading people and building for the future.

We encourage all potential candidates to seek guidance from their direct leadership since it involves time commitment to participate in monthly meetings and other related activities. You may nominate yourself, or a qualified BCBSM LDA member to run for the available positions on the board.

[CLICK HERE TO EMAIL YOUR NOMINATION](#)



**The deadline for nominations is Friday, February 11**

If you have any questions regarding the process, contact Erica Addison [EAddison@bcbsm.com](mailto:EAddison@bcbsm.com) or Dana Bell [DBell2@bcbsm.com](mailto:DBell2@bcbsm.com).

**For full details regarding board responsibilities, see [Article IV, section 2](#) of the bylaws found on the chapter website.**

## NEW MEMBER CORNER



OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS

Welcome

Ashley Kosciolek  
Lindsey Malzahn  
Rachael McCabe  
Jeremy Murray  
Katie Sweeney  
Dominik Treadway

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

### Member Benefits

- Networking through monthly meeting 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



## NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

by Michelle Banaszak, communication specialist

One of our newest members, Al LaBarrie, started his career journey with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan as an intern in the IT department. After graduating from Wayne State with a bachelor's degree in accounting, his first role was as an IT auditor. He decided to go back to school and got a Master of Business Administration from Wayne State and a master's in data analytics from Penn State.

After finishing graduate school, he went back to auditing and worked for Ally in Detroit. There he helped lead the data analytics team. About three years ago, Al accepted his current position as a manager of data analytics within the internal audit department.

In his current role, Al has learned how to work within health insurance. He's also learned how to work within a different office culture. He's grown as a leader and is still learning how to interact with other leaders and develop good team relationships.

Since starting at Blue Cross, Al says, "I've become more confident as a team player. I also think the leadership learning activities are great. They've helped me grow as a professional."

He focuses on what his leaders are doing to grow and become a better leader himself – which is one of his main reasons for joining BCBSM LDA. "I wanted to have the opportunity to network with other people, especially being remote we don't have as many team interactions. I also want to be able to learn some different leadership skills through BCBSM LDA."

Al's favorite parts about working for Blue Cross are the people and team culture. "When I was an intern, I had a really good leader. I really enjoyed my time working here. I was happy at Ally but having the opportunity to come back to Blue Cross has been something I looked forward to."

Working on the data analytics team, he likes to connect people with data, be able to understand business problems and come up with solutions, and help tell users a story with their data.

### Al LaBarrie



### A FEW MORE THINGS ABOUT AL:

- His favorite restaurant is Capers – a steakhouse in Detroit.
- Outside of work, he enjoys playing hockey, keeping up with sports analytics and sharing his favorite childhood things with his 2-year-old daughter, Abigail. Scooby Doo and Sesame Street are at the top of the list.
- He'd really like to visit London one day because he enjoys a lot of British music, TV and movies.



**British music**

**Teaching Abigail how to play ukulele**



**Mark your calendars!** The BCBSM Leadership Development Association Youth Leadership Speech Contest will be held virtually March 30.

Local contest winners will receive a \$100, \$250 or \$500 scholarship prize by rank. The first-place winner will advance to the national stage to compete for the \$4,000 scholarship grand prize.

The ongoing success of this annual inspirational event is due largely to the enthusiastic support of its volunteers. Contact [Lydia Officer](#) for information.

## SELF-LOVE



Valentine's day is just around the corner! A day to celebrate love and relationships. But I encourage you to focus on self-love during this month.

Taking time for self-love is important. It allows you to rejuvenate and recharge. It's like setting a reset button unscrambling any confusion and getting you back on track to be the best you for yourself and your loved ones.

They say it's the simple things in life that can make you happy.

Here are some suggestions on how to practice self-love. It's more than a mindset. It's taking time to do something for you. You'd be surprised how just a little bit can go a long way!

- Make a homemade dish that you have been wanting to try and never had the time
- Start a journal
- Take yourself to an exquisite restaurant
- Read some inspirational quotes
- Go for a 15-minute brisk walk in the cool air
- Binge watch an entire season of your favorite show
- Meditate
- Go skating – ice skating or roller skating
- Dress up and do a photo shoot
- Learn a new skill on YouTube
- Dance to your favorite song
- Turn your phone off
- Or – Do absolutely nothing

## CALENDAR of EVENTS

February  
9

### Level Up Leadership Series, Part 4

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

We'll be starting our discussion of Level 4: Realign Your Expectations

**Speaker:**

**Kristie Stocker**, CEO of Kinetik Edge LLC

[Link to register](#)



February  
15

### February Member Meeting

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Aaron Friedkin will discuss his non-traditional journey through life and career with lessons learned along the way, including the importance of understanding your "why." Aaron will share stories about some of the most important transitions in his career with the hope that his perspective and experience can serve as an additional input and point of reference as you think about how you can pursue happiness throughout your lives.

**Speaker:**

**Dr. Aaron Friedkin**, SVP - Care Delivery Transformation

[Link to register](#)



February  
16

### BlueNights<sup>SM</sup> Mixer Networking Event

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

This one-hour session will allow LDA members the opportunity to meet and greet with Mr. Scott Suever. Members will also have a speed networking opportunity at the end of the session to mingle with other BCBSM LDA members.

**Speaker:**

**Scott Suever**, BCBSM Director of Sales Learning and Development

[Link to register](#)



February  
22

### BCBSM LDA Book Club Meeting

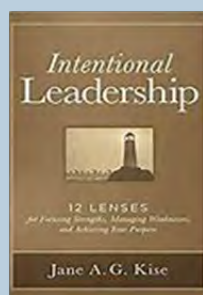
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

We'll be starting our discussion of Chapters 9 and 10.

**Facilitator:**

**Veronica Beasley-Robinson**, BCBSM LDA Chair of Professional Development

[Link to register](#)





*BlueNights Mixer Presents*

# Leading With Empathy & Compassion

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Critical Components  
Of Team Success



Hosted By Scott Suever  
*Dir Sales Learning & Development*

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**FEBRUARY 16, 2022**

**12:00 – 1:00pm**



Leadership Development Association



## LEADING THROUGH CRISIS

*By Erica Addison, team leader I*

Leading Through Crisis” Monthly Member Meeting was held on January 19 with guest presenters Denise Fair-Razo, Chief Public Health Officer for Detroit, and our own BCBSM Inclusion & Diversity Vice President, Bridget Hurd. Both leaders shared similar perspectives and experiences on how they managed their professional roles and responsibilities to lead during the Covid-19 pandemic.



Denise spoke about the challenges of leading 250 employees with her mantra “inspire people and serve.” Denise and her team used social media outlets, press conferences and direct education about Covid-19 services, testing and vaccination clinics. One such example is the innovation of drive thru testing and vaccination sites, which has garnered national attention. The result is 46% of the Detroit residential population has been vaccinated, not too far from their vaccination goal of 70%.

BCBSM Inclusion & Diversity Vice President Bridget Hurd spoke about the uncertainty and challenges of navigating through the precarious and deadly Covid-19 pandemic. While Bridget and her staff initially thought Covid-19 would have minimal impact and longevity, it has been the complete and drastic opposite. Bridget and her Inclusion & Diversity team strategized and recalibrated how to execute their professional deliverables. In April 2020, Bridget was appointed to serve on a state task force investigating racial disparities related to Covid-19 outcomes in Michigan. Bridget was able to persevere during this time by demonstrating servant leadership and maintaining balance and self-care.

[Link to full presentation](#)



## BLACK HISTORY MONTH: BCSBM LDA PRESIDENT, SHARESE HOGAN'S THOUGHTS ON THE CELEBRATION

By David Shelby Jr., coordinator

As we approach February, we are reminded of one of the more important factors within the month, Black History Month. In today's social climate it's perhaps more important than ever to not only share with the world the accomplishment of Black Americans but also to remind the Black American community of the progress made and still to be made. Thankfully we have leaders among our ranks to share their thoughts on the celebration. We asked Sharese Hogan to share her thoughts.

### How do you celebrate Black History Month and how does it impact you personally?

I celebrate it by making sure I'm spreading the word of Black culture and the Black community about where we came from and why we are here. Prior to Covid-19 I would host a Black History Month celebration. It's not only about partying but about sharing and sharing is caring and I do a lot of that.

For part two of your question, I have two daughters and they have grown up in suburban schools. So personally, it impacts me because it's not easy in the world that we live in to help and almost makes your children understand the value of it. It impacts me because the world we live around is not Black history focused. Even during the month most people probably don't pay much attention to it. So it impacts me because I feel like I have a bigger job to do because I want to give my children the best opportunities in life.

### How does Black History Month help to benefit the Black community?

Our communities thrive when we understand why we exist. When we understand why the fight mattered and when we understand who we're fighting against per se and who we're fighting for. More importantly, to me it's taking a minute to understand your own lineage as it relates to this.

### What do you think about legislation on race education will do to Black History Month?

It's sad and it's not true history. It allows for diversity and inclusion to be washed away with a whole bunch of stuff that's not about Black people. The biggest problem I have with it is that people, non-Black people, care less and less as time goes by and that's why we are still talking about Martin Luther King Jr., as if there is no one else who created a movement.





# LEVEL UP LEADERSHIP SERIES

## LEVEL 3: REALIZE YOUR LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL

## Level **UP** Leadership

By Kaitlyn Sibai, LDA Vice President Professional Development

To kick off the new year, the BCBSM LDA professional development committee hosted part 3 of the Level Up Leadership Series on January 13, titled Level 3: Realize Your Leadership Potential.

During the session, Kristie Stocker—CEO of Kinetik Edge LLC and an award-winning keynote speaker, success coach and leadership consultant—gave insights on how to build yourself as a leader and how to build your team. As she does in each of her sessions, Kristie assigned a list of action items to attendees to help them achieve their leadership goals.



**Kristie Stocker**

### Steps to Building Yourself as a Leader

1. Identify your potential. Know your strengths, what you're willing to do (and not do), what motivates you, what makes you stressed and what mindset you'll choose to have in various circumstances.
2. Gain leadership experience. Be creative to identify areas of leadership opportunities, such as in your church, local nonprofits, professional organizations, mentorship, or leading projects within your department.
3. Build meaningful connections. Find leaders you respect and ask them to meet with you. Interview them to learn about their leadership style. Be prepared to ask engaging and targeted questions!
4. Know why and when to move. Moving up is not required. Review your vision from Level 1 and figure out if it's the right time for you to move up. Remember that you can grow where you are or take a lateral move.
5. Shine bright like a diamond! Go above and beyond to help you shine bright and "bring it" every day.

### Build Your Team

Kristie talked about the differences between a manager and a leader, noting that we need both in this world. One of the key differences is that managers manage tasks and leaders lead people. She challenged attendees to understand which they identify as now, which they strive to be and what they need to do to reach their goal. She also provided two key tips for leaders.

1. Be the spark. Bringing energy, motivation and vision will make people want to join your team.
2. Be the connector. Demonstrating trust, empowerment and compassion will make people want to stay on your team.



If you missed this event, you can watch the recording by [clicking here](#). You can also find previous session recordings below. Join us for the Level Up Leadership Series finale—Level 4: Realign Your Expectations—on February 9th, 2022 from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.!

### Recording Links

Level 1: Reimagine Your Vision – [watch the recording](#)

Level 2: Release Your Limitations – [watch the recording](#)

Level 3: Realize Your Leadership Potential – [watch the recording](#)

**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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<https://nma1.org/141/>

**BCBSM LDA Board Officers**

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President: Sharese Hogan

President-Elect: DeAndre Elliott

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Dana Bell

DeAndre Elliott

Christina Frison

Vaneitta Goines

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VP of Program Administration: Sarah Cheaito

VP of Professional Development: Kaitlyn Sibai

**NMA National Mission Statement**

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