



The Monthly Newsletter of  
BCBSM Leadership Development Association

## FROM THE DESK OF OUR PRESIDENT

Greetings BCBSM LDA Members:

The annual NMA Leadership Speech Contest occurred March 30 and it was a true pleasure to hear from our contestants. Each delivered a diverse message about what leadership meant to them and the event proved to be another year of delightful speeches. The Annual Speech Contest provides an excellent opportunity for these young leaders to develop their public speaking skills. A special thanks to Jennifer Pakkala, former BCBSM LDA Board Chair, for acting as our mistress of ceremonies for the night and to the members of the Blue Cross Toastmasters Clubs, SkillMasters and MetroMasters, for their recruitment, mentoring, judges and volunteers.

There are several upcoming events I would like to highlight as we approach the final months of our chapter year. Please look out for community service opportunities (that you can pursue directly with any local organization); our April mixer focused on Coping with COVID-19 Stress and Re-Entry Anxiety hosted by Michelle Fullerton, the Professional Development meeting hosted by Cheri Najor who will share tips on public speaking and the Monthly Member Meeting on the topic of Stepping Up to the Plate, hosted by Kelly Lange. If you've been on the journey with us, you may have noticed that our Blue Cross leaders have been amazing



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

supporters. A more formal thank you will come at a later time, but I would like to express my appreciation for presenting to the BCBSM LDA membership.

I hope you had a chance to cast your vote for the open positions on the BCBSM LDA Board of Directors – please look out for the announcements. Also, look out for invites to join us for Management Week (May 9-12) and the Annual June Meeting with keynote speaker, CEO Daniel J. Loepp (June 13).



**Hope you are doing well, practicing self-care and ready to enjoy some brighter days ahead!**

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

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# BCBSM LDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS' ELECTION

The BCBSM LDA Board of Directors' election has now ended, and the results will be announced in our May issue.

- One At-Large Director, one-year term (through June 30, 2023)
- Three Directors, three-year term (through June 30, 2025)

Candidates receiving the top three highest numbers of votes will be offered to serve on the Board for a full three-year term. There will be one candidate serving a one-year term through June 30, 2023, in the 'At-Large' position.

## CANDIDATES FOR DIRECTOR, THREE-YEAR TERM



*Dana Bartell*



*Jennifer Pakkala*



*Sarah Cheaito*



*Vaneitta Goines*



*Sharese Hogan*



*Barbara Krajenke*



*Yuanjing Pursell*



*Kaitlyn Sibai*

## CANDIDATE FOR AT-LARGE DIRECTOR, ONE-YEAR TERM



*Samah Hamam*



Leadership Development Association

**Save the date!**

**BCBSM LDA Annual Member Meeting**

**Keynote Speaker:**

**Daniel J. Loepf**

President and CEO

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

**Monday, June 13, 2022**

Program begins at noon.



# NEW MEMBER CORNER



OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS  
**Welcome**

- Bobby Lane-Beardsley
- Nicole Dudley
- Tamika Edwards
- Julie Hoffman
- Debra Kresevich
- Alex P. Lenko
- Saray Pearsall
- Abeer Yassine
- Abigail Yoo

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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 Veronica Beasley-Robinson, executive assistant

As a woman of strong faith with a formidable work ethic, Lynn Garrison was excited to challenge herself to join BCBSM LDA. "Joining BCBSM LDA was an opportunity for me to level up as a leader in my career and to network with other employees throughout the enterprise." She credits Lisa Pointer, a current member of BCBSM LDA and colleague, for encouraging her to join to expand her reach within Blue Cross.

However, Lynn is no stranger to hard work or humble beginnings. She joined Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Corporate Procurement's Supplier Diversity team as Lead in September 2015, reporting to Senior Director, Jim Line, after returning home to Michigan from living abroad. After she navigated through her career and excelled in her purpose, Lynn was promoted to Manager of Supplier Diversity, a month after joining BCBSM LDA.

She brings experience from both the automotive and energy industries, as well as firsthand international cultural insight from her travels abroad. She has an extensive work history in engineering, cost estimating, purchasing and supplier diversity.

She lives by the following scriptures: ***So don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will have its own worries. Each day has enough trouble of its own. You cannot add any time to your life by worrying about it, Matthew 6:27, 34 NCV.*** These scriptures are a daily reminder to Lynn that life is full of things to worry about and if we're not careful, worry can consume our lives. She is a young woman of conviction and dedication to helping others succeed.

Her favorite part about working for Blue Cross is making a difference in the vendor community in which she serves. Lynn feels that helping others is her purpose. She's always finding ways to build others up around her. Lynn enjoys brainstorming and thinking of creative ways to solve problems, and that's helped her to be a better leader.

## Lynn Garrison



### MORE ABOUT LYNN:

- She enjoys spending time with friends and family, reading, spa dates, movie dates with family and volunteering with her church's outreach program.
- She attends Lawrence Technological University's Robofest program and supports volunteering activities as a general member of Alpha Kappa Alpha.



Lynn and her husband  
Marion Jr.



Children - Mia, Puggs and Marion III



Lynn with her mom, Barbara,  
and sister, June

# 2022 BCBSM LDA YOUTH LEADERSHIP SPEECH CONTEST

By Ebony Benson, team lead I

On March 30, BCBSM LDA members, judges and volunteers gathered for one of the most anticipated events of the year, the BCBSM LDA Youth Speech Contest.

The eight Michigan high school contestants were judged in categories including speech content, delivery and body language. The contestants had six minutes as they spoke about their definition of what makes a leader and their own personal successes on demonstrating leadership such as endurance, effective communications, change advocates and empathy.

After the last contestant finished their speech, the judges submitted their ballots. As we waited to hear the results, we had a chance to hear from 2020 BCBSM LDA and National NMA Speech contest winner, Arthur D. Harrington. He spoke on leading with integrity, being proactive and not reactive as a leader, and encouraging contestants to keep going and never give up.

All the speech contest contestants are winners, even if they didn't place in this year's contest. They all have great talent and showed their dedication to the leadership topics and inspired the audience.

A special thanks to the coaches that assisted the participants in preparation for the speeches and all the volunteers that help make this event happen every year.



**1st Place** – Nadia Johnson

Nadia won first place for her speech, "Good Character Makes Good Leaders." Her speech was about the three super powers of leadership, speech, image and confidence. She was awarded a \$500 scholarship and will participate in the NMA national contest in October with a chance to win a \$4,000 scholarship.



**2nd Place** – Neha Partha

Neha spoke about her passion for art and made the connection between that passion and her leadership skills.



**3rd Place** – Benjamin Lerner

Benjamin spoke about the relationship between leadership and endurance.

# CALENDAR of EVENTS

April  
19

## The Speaker's Toolbox: How to Keep your Audience from Falling Asleep

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Discussing public speaking skills and oral communication, whether an audience of 200 or one. Learn how to devise and deliver speeches and fundamentals of oral communication with clarity, coherence, and confidence.

### Speaker:

**Cheryl "Cheri" J. Najor**, Customer Experience Manager, Corporate Marketing and Customer Experience

[Link to register](#)



April  
21

## NMA LiveOnline Webinar - Workforce Inspiration

12:00 - 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Discussing Workforce Inspiration to promote utilization of experiences and life-skills within various work and leadership positions.

### Speaker:

**Steve Van Oosstenbrugge**, Interim Executive Director, Institute of Certified Professional Manager (ICPM).

[Link to register](#)



April  
25

## Stepping Up

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Join the program administration committee for its April member meeting

### Speaker:

**Kelly Lange**, VP Enterprise Compliance

[Link TBD](#)



April  
28

## BlueNights<sup>SM</sup> Mixer - Coping with COVID-19 Stress and Re-entry Anxiety

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Discussing New Emerging Marketplace followed by Networking Event

### Speaker:

**Michelle Fullerton**, Senior Director, Group Customer Advocate and Performance

[Link to register](#)





## NMA ADDS VALUE FOR YOU FROM THE LATEST NMA BREAKTIME PUBLICATION

*by Brian Berg, NMA Executive Director*

It is with great pleasure that the NMA Membership and Marketing National Committee announces a valuable new partnership with Localhospitality. Localhospitality has partnered with NMA to bring to our members significant savings on hotels, car rental and vacation/entertainment companies. These saving opportunities are with the major companies in each sector of their industry.



This is an NMA branded private program which allows below market opportunities to our members. We will have a link on our website with an NMA password for our members access which will take you to our easy to use search and quote engine.



To access these discounts, [click here](#) and scroll to travel discount. Once you begin a search, enter passcode NMA1 (all caps) to take advantage of this exclusive member offer.

Stay tuned for additional announcements as we are working to constantly increase value to you, our members. I hope this will benefit you soon!

# READING BOOKS: NOT JUST FUN, BUT GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH TOO!

By Michael Lawrence, business application developer advanced

Reading is a valuable skill for both kids and adults. As kids we're taught the importance of reading, but as we grow into adults and have other priorities, reading consistently can become difficult. But the importance of reading stays the same, and can become more important, as we age. I recently [read an article](#) outlining the psychological and physical benefits that reading brings to our lives.



-  Some of the psychological benefits related to consistent reading include:
- *Reducing stress*, which could help everyone.
  - Reading can help with sleep readiness by helping you *fall asleep faster*.

-  Some of the physical benefits include:
- *Lowering blood pressure and heart rate* due to the calming factor that reading brings.
  - It's also proven that reading consistently contributes to a *longer life*.

Overall, the article highlights key benefits to consistently reading as we get older and how we should try and keep up on it as we age. Studies have also shown that consistent readers tend to make *more money* in their lifetime. The benefits of consistently reading outweigh any disadvantages it may have, so I challenge you to read a book next time you jump into bed instead of playing on your phone!

## MANAGING YOUR CRAZY LIFE: TIPS FOR TIME MANAGEMENT

By Tambra Hinton, MASP team lead II

Work assignments, school, family, volunteer work and day-to-day tasks; these are things we all manage. Sometimes our to-do list is longer than expected and it feels like we don't have enough time in a day. So, what can we do to help us with our time management? This question was answered at BCBSM LDA's PD event on March 24, "Managing Your Crazy Life: Tips for Time Management." The session was hosted by Vice President of Professional Development, Kaitlyn Sibai. Kaitlyn was the right person for the job, not only is she the VP of Professional Development, but she is also a Senior Healthcare Analyst in Provider Engagement & Transformation, she volunteers for many organizations, has family obligations and still has time for some of her favorite activities like line dancing.

The event was insightful and included great tips for time management such as apps and tools you could use to manage and organize your time, such as Microsoft To Do, Focus Keeper and Forest. She also highlighted the 3 A's of time management skills:

- **Awareness:** thinking realistically about your time by understanding it is a limited resource.
- **Arrangement:** designing and organizing goals, plans, schedules, and tasks to effectively use time.
- **Adaptation:** monitoring your use of time while performing activities, including adjusting to interruptions or changing priorities.

"If it's your job to eat a frog today, it's best to do it first thing in the morning. And if it's your job to eat two frogs, it's best to eat the big frog first." – Mark Twain

*BCBSM LDA members having fun and learning more about time management*



This was an outstanding event, and if you missed it, you have a chance to review the recording on <https://nma1.org/141/meeting-recordings/>. If you would like a copy of the presentation slides, please reach out to [NMAChapter141@bcbsm.com](mailto:NMAChapter141@bcbsm.com).

## 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

Writers: Barbara Krajenke, Erica Addison, Michelle Banaszak, Ebony Benson, Ju Fonda Overton, Jennifer Pakkala, Veronica Beasley-Robinson, David Shelby Jr.

Designer: Carena Freeman

Photographers: Michelle Banaszak, Ju Fonda Overton

Dustin Freeze, Internet public domain Website:

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

## BCBSM LDA Board Officers

Board Chair: Heidi Saucier

President: Sharese Hogan

President-Elect: DeAndre Elliott

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Leonard Alford III

Dana Bartell

Dana Bell

DeAndre Elliott

Christina Frison

Vaneitta Goines

Samah Hamam

Sharese Hogan

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Christina Frison

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Lifetime National Director: Nancy Bennett

Lifetime National Director: Cathy Longo

## Executive Advisors

Sharon Gipson

Darrell E. Middleton

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VP of Public Relations: Terrance Puryear

VP of Finance: Charles Schultz

VP of Awards and Recognition: Carla Harris

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.