

deir in lighting **NEWSLETTER**

The **DEIR in Lighting newsletter** is a quick and easy way to collect and share news, events, and resources. Check out our new [webpage](#) for past issues and spread the word via your own networks!

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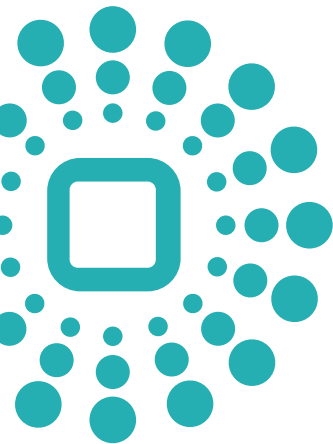
october meeting recap

DEIR and the Renewable Energy Revolution

In our final meeting of 2023, Kate Hickcox, Energy and Environment Research Scientist at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), and Ivory Mayhorn, CEO of [Launch Point](#), a community development resource center in Houston, discussed the potential of renewable energy as a solution to multiple societal challenges as well as climate change. They presented their collaborative efforts and vision for underserved communities to be at the forefront of renewable energy solutions.

Kate kicked things off by introducing Ivory and their joint work related to energy, equity, and justice as members of the Clean Energy Systems Technology Energy Equity and Justice working group (ST-EEJ) led by PNNL. The working group aims to provide a platform for DOE-funded labs to discuss approaches and form collaborative opportunities to integrate energy equity and justice into clean energy deployments. Over the past year, the working group has met monthly and has benefited from the assistance of external advisors such as Ivory with “boots on the ground” experience related to their mission.

Ivory has worked with the team since 2021 and spoke in the meeting about the climate crisis and its impacts on underserved communities, including natural disasters such as hurricanes, temperature extremes, dangerous landfills, and unemployment. He pointed out that these marginalized and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods could be utilized to combat climate change. Given the right resources, they could be used to evaluate sustainable initiatives such as home weatherization, solar energy, and efficient heat pumps. Such programs would have numerous positive benefits. First, these unfairly disadvantaged communities would be empowered and revitalized. Next, they would positively impact the environment by reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions, especially as these communities, due to poor housing quality, are inadvertently inefficient. Finally, education and employment opportunities would be



october meeting recap (continued)

created, providing pathways for learning, skill acquisition, and bringing new industries into the areas where they are most needed.

Ivory and Kate are working on a plan to realize this vision of putting underserved communities at the forefront of the renewable energy revolution. Central to their plan is education. By integrating renewable energy curriculums, fostering environmentally conscious perspectives, and preparing students for sustainable careers, they propose that long-term, sustainable change can take place. To demonstrate the power in community-driven solutions, Launch Point initiated a pilot program where 300 high school students without construction experience were tasked with building seven tiny homes in two days. Such grassroots, rapid-response solutions were contrasted to current, bureaucratic programs which fall short of meeting immediate needs and providing emergency housing after natural disasters.

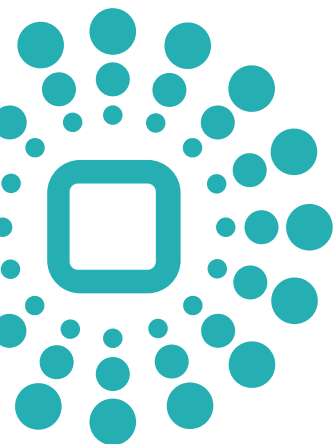
Ivory challenged attendees to consider holistic strategies for implementing renewable energy that address both societal and environmental concerns. He reiterated that renewable energy solutions in disenfranchised neighborhoods would not only allow marginalized communities to rise from systemic disadvantages but would help the nation in our fight against climate change.

Following Kate and Ivory, some of our working group members talked about their DEIR work in the lighting industry.

Signify's Global DEI Focus

Damian Gardley, vice president and general manager at Signify, provided an update on the company's DEI initiatives, which emphasize transparency, cultural inclusion, and leadership engagement. Damian occupies a dual role at Signify, leading an OEM (original equipment manufacturer) business unit while also passionately working on DEI initiatives in the Americas as well as globally. Signify, as a major player in the lighting industry, aims to leverage its position and influence to drive awareness in the broader industry. The company has a "two-plus-one" strategy that prioritizes increasing the representation of women and early-career talent across the company along with a "plus one" that is determined by regional initiatives. In the U.S., this focus is on increasing representation of traditional minority groups. Damian has been working on DEI initiatives since 2017 and noted that DEI efforts over the past few years have been ramping up, particularly in transparency and embedding a culture of inclusion, which includes publication of an inaugural DEI report last year and plans for integration of DEI principles into business policies. To embed a culture of inclusion, Signify is focusing on middle management and people leaders. The aim is to help these groups understand the business imperative of DEI through listening sessions, role modeling, and storytelling. Damian emphasized Signify's commitment to DEI and invited attendees to [reach out](#) for further discussion.

► See Damian's "how I got into lighting" profile later in this issue.



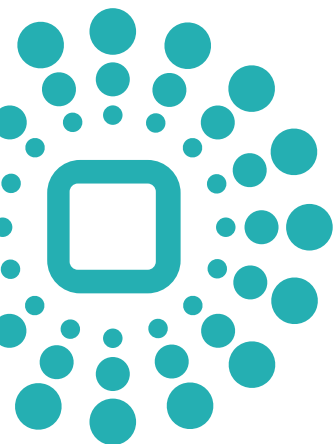
october meeting recap (continued)

WILD: All About Outreach

Ade Wilson, lighting designer at Noctiluca Lighting, provided an update on Women in Lighting + Design's engagement with diversity and community support initiatives. One of WILD's key outreach efforts involves collaboration with the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) and their pipeline program. This program helps create a pathway for students from elementary school to careers in architecture. She also spoke about WILD's upcoming fall social event, focusing on self-investment and personal growth, and discussed the organization's activities in various cities to promote networking and strengthen the concept of sisterhood. Ade then touched upon the launch of a mentorship program and the creation of support groups for continuing education in specific technical areas within lighting design. Through these activities, WILD promotes involvement in the community, support for diversity and education, and mutual support among women in lighting design.

UNM Opening the Doors for Students and Project Funding

Dan Feezell, professor of electrical and computer engineering at the University of New Mexico (UNM) provided the final update. His team recently completed a project funded by the MSI STEM Research & Development Consortium (MSRDC). While acknowledging the good intent of the R&D funds, Dan pointed out that the MSRDC grant funded just one student for one year, minimizing its impact. He contrasted this short-term funding to longer-term projects in collaboration with industry that have resulted in several published papers, conference presentations, and a PhD student on track to graduate. Such activities open doors for collaboration with industry and have a lasting impact on students. Dan proposes that the DOE could explore funding models similar to the Department of Defense, which earmarks funds for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) to participate in major collaborative research programs. At UNM, Dan and his colleagues are working to open pathways for students through hosting student interns and providing exposure to solid-state lighting through collaborations and projects. They also include SSL speakers in their optical science and engineering seminar series and are working to rebuild optics-related student societies and chapters post-pandemic.



how i got into lighting:

Addy Oluyemi-Wnoroski, MBA

End User Marketing – National Accounts North America, Signify



A career in lighting was not something I saw examples of growing up. Successful friends of parents typically worked in healthcare, education, or in offices as attorneys, accountants, or financial advisors. Everyone's expectations were that I study biology as an undergraduate, apply to medical school, become Dr. Adeola Oluyemi, and save lives. I aspired to make my parents proud, and as college progressed, I learned how to anchor my passions in tangible skill sets with applicability in business environments.

During my undergraduate study at Rutgers – New Brunswick, one of my favorite professors was Dr. Jack Aiello, who specializes in leadership; team development; stress management; diversity; culture and communication; gender; feedback; organizational change; and the impact of modern technologies in the workplace. For three years, our research team tackled complex questions around interpersonal behavior, workplace relations, and adoption of modern technologies.

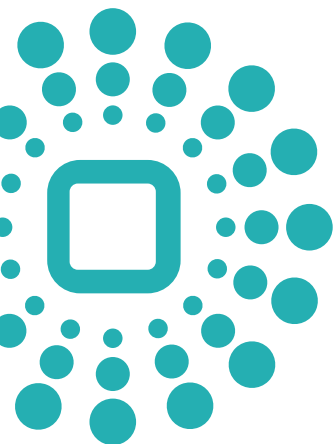
“As an African American woman in lighting, I am regularly the only face like mine in the room.”

After graduating from Rutgers in 2016, I gained two years of work experience in sales operations at a start-up solar company, which fostered my interest in energy efficient technology. In 2018 I returned for a master's in business administration at Rutgers Business School concentrating in marketing and market research insights and analytics. I was looking for a diverse, sustainable, multi-national company to learn from and grow with. Between my first and second year, I found an internship in sales operations with the carbon neutral lighting company Signify, whose most well-known

brand, Philips, was founded in 1891. Since graduation, I have transitioned to several full-time sales and marketing roles within the organization. I am convinced I will never leave the lighting industry, even after only 4 years. The opportunity to be fully immersed in innovative technologies and creative designs that improve the lighting infrastructure we grew up with is exciting!

As an African American woman in lighting, I am regularly the only face like mine in the room. At LightFair 2022 in Las Vegas, I was overjoyed to meet members of Black United in Lighting & Design (BUILD) during an incredible seminar by Lauren Dandridge, LC, IES, principal at Chromatic and adjunct associate professor at the USC School of Architecture. We exchanged information and BUILD invited me to join their monthly meetings. Over a year later, I have gotten to know the BUILD community, network with members individually, and had the pleasure to host a joint event with Signify's employee resource group BRITE (Black Representation, Inclusion, Talent & Empowerment).

Our missions at BUILD and BRITE are to create safe affinity spaces for black lighting professionals with a focus on advancement through networking, collaborating, and celebrating black excellence. We partner with universities to drive recruitment of diverse talent, and other groups like WILD, NOMA, Light Justice, and the International Association of Lighting Designers (IALD) to strengthen our network, educate our industry, and empower the next generation to achieve equity in lighting.



how i got into lighting:

Damian Gardley

Vice President and General Manager, U.S. OEM Channel, Signify



Flipping a switch on or off when I needed illumination (or not) was the extent to which I thought about lighting before getting into this industry. Little did I know what lay ahead for my career!

My interest in science and technology began when I received my first chemistry set at the age of five and grew through my student years. I attended an HBCU, Hampton University, and went on to get my degree in chemical engineering from the Illinois Institute of Technology.

Upon graduation, I worked in process engineering and operations in the automotive industry and had a great career ahead of me. But fate has its ways, and I decided to step outside of my comfort zone and transition into sales and marketing in the energy storage and battery industry. I was interested in working in an area that was going through a significant transformation (in this case, the advent of hybrid and all-electric vehicles).

“I was fortunate to have had a mentor....thus, I am especially keen to pay it forward.”

Similarly, it was the significant transformation occurring in lighting that attracted me to our industry and to join Philips (now Signify) a decade ago. A switch flipped in me when I learned how light can deliver so much more than simple on/off illumination.

I was fortunate to have had a mentor – someone whose entire career was in lighting – to lay the groundwork for me. Thus, I am especially keen to pay it forward: by driving more interest in lighting among students and early career

professionals, particularly those from underrepresented groups, and by helping them develop into the future leaders of our industry.

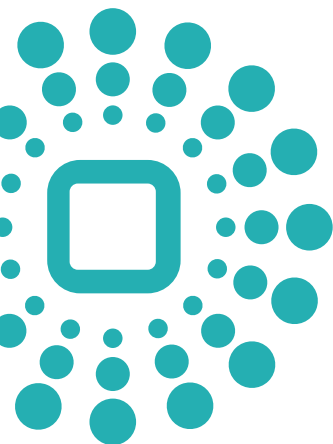
One piece of advice I’ll share: find those people who will be in your corner, who will advocate for you and who will create a psychologically safe place for you to turn to for help. I wouldn’t have been able to get to where I am today without having built such a strong support network in the workplace.

Having industry-wide affinity groups such as BUILD and WILD can also help create a sense of belonging and offer that safe space for connection and support. In addition to fostering inclusion, their grassroots engagement can help attract diverse talent to the lighting profession.

I’m proud to see leaders like Signify, the Illuminating Engineering Society (IES), and the Department of Energy step up and take responsibility in driving diversity, equity, inclusion, and respect. Now, we need to consistently reinforce the value that DEIR brings to our workforce and industry, so we can continue to drive progress.

We’d like to develop stories from all of you, to be collected and shared by all of us – via emails, newsletters, LinkedIn, and other means. Sharing your stories may alert others to existing opportunities, or spur ideas for future pathways we can create.

Ready to share your story? Contact amy@akoyaonline.com.



events

[November 9: Bystander Skills Building Workshop](#)

On **November 9, 2023**, WILD (Women in Lighting + Design) hosts a [Bystander Skills Building Workshop](#) on how you can help stop, repudiate, and prevent sexual harassment in social and professional environments. Attendees will receive the skills and motivation needed to recognize and respond to behaviors that could lead to or constitute harassment; acknowledge barriers that may prevent action and develop realistic options for intervening; and identify ways they can utilize their spheres of influence to establish a climate of dignity and respect.



opportunities

[JUMP into STEM Student Competition](#)

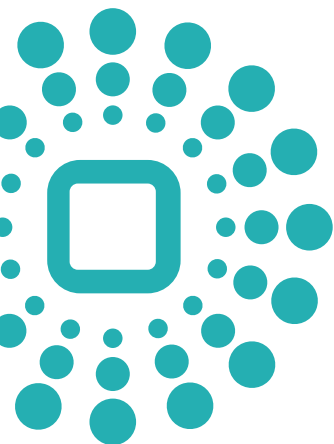
November 10, 2023, is the deadline for the 2024 JUMP into STEM online competition, which asks teams of university students to present solutions for some of today's biggest building science challenges. The [You and Me, Carbon Free](#) challenge is specifically looking for solutions that integrate connected lighting systems with plug load controls. Challenge winners will be invited to compete in the final competition in January 2024 for a paid summer internship at either Oak Ridge National Laboratory or Pacific Northwest National Laboratory.

[DOE Funding Opportunity: Lighting Topic in BENEFIT 2024](#)

As part of the [Buildings Energy Efficiency Frontiers & Innovation Technologies \(BENEFIT\) Funding Opportunity Announcement](#), DOE seeks proposals to develop commercial lighting retrofit advancements with direct applications to buildings in disadvantaged communities, including schools, healthcare facilities, community centers, and churches. The developed products would reduce barriers to adoption and be widely suitable for commercial buildings with exceptional luminous efficacy and light quality that support occupant health. The concept paper deadline is **December 18, 2023**.

[HBCU Clean Energy Education Prize](#)

New track phases of the HBCU Clean Energy Education Prize are open for entry. The [Partnerships Track](#) supports building opportunities between HBCUs and other universities, government agencies, and industry leaders to inform new programs and equip HBCU students with the skills needed for clean energy careers. Phase 1 Partnership Track submissions are due **December 19, 2023**. The [Inspire Track](#) supports the development or expansion of HBCU-hosted clean energy summer or academic break programs for K-12 and community college students. Phase 2 Inspire Track submissions are due **June 21, 2024**.



[No-Cost Registrations for DOE's Energy Exchange](#)

Energy Exchange 2024 is in Pittsburgh, and interested participants can [apply now](#) for no-cost registration. In support of the Justice40 Initiative, Energy Exchange will select qualifying applicants to attend to increase clean energy enterprise creation and contracting in disadvantaged communities, and to increase clean energy jobs, job pipeline, and job training for individuals from disadvantaged communities. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until **March 1, 2024**, or the maximum number of participants has been reached.

[Howard Brandston Student Lighting Design Education Grant](#)

Submissions are now open for the [2024 Howard Brandston Student Lighting Design Education Grant](#) through the Illuminating Engineering Society. The grant was established to encourage and recognize students who demonstrate exceptional professional promise by presenting an original and ingenious solution to a supplied design problem. Individual or group entries are acceptable, and the grant award is \$3,000. The deadline to submit is **June 19, 2024**.



articles

Peter Hugh reflects on the first three years of the IES DEIR Committee and issues this [report card](#).

LEDs Magazine profiles [Women in Lighting + Design \(WILD\)](#), an organization that creates and fosters a community for women in the lighting industry.



congratulations!

On October 25, [DOE announced six winners](#) of the Prototype Phase of the \$12 million [Lighting Prize \(L-Prize®\) competition](#), designed to spur groundbreaking innovation for next-generation lighting in commercial buildings. The winners knocked it out of the park with working prototypes that met the L-Prize's rigorous requirements of exceptional energy efficiency, connectivity and control, visual quality, environmental sustainability, and attention to diversity, equity, and inclusion in lighting design, manufacturing, and application. Congratulations to the Prototype Phase winners: Autani and Leviton, Grid Interactive Efficient Building Alliance, Lightly, McWong International, and Signify Innovation!

Lighting designer Alana Shepherd's essay "[Industry needs to light the way to equity](#)," published in LEDs Magazine, is a necessary reminder that the lighting community can and must put its members above profits. Her essay just won a [2023 FOLIO: Eddie Award](#), which recognizes global excellence in editorial content and design across print and digital media. Congratulations on this prestigious award!