



THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

STUDENT COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Susanna Hoffman

Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration

Isaac Lopez

Agricultural Science

Kayla Reiman

Agricultural and Environmental Plant Sciences



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ASPIRE *to* GROW 2022

*CULTIVATING TOMORROW'S LEADERS: DIVERSITY
AND INNOVATION IN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2022

3:30 – 5 p.m. | Panel Discussion

5 – 6 p.m. | Networking Social

JUSTIN and J. LOHR Center for Wine and Viticulture



ABOUT

The fourth annual Aspire to Grow Conference explores innovation in the food, agriculture and natural resource sectors. The symposium will focus on the theme of resilience, and the role diversity of thought and experience plays in achieving this.

SPEAKERS

Leslie Coleman

Vice President, Head of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion // Nutrien



Leslie Coleman is the first vice president of equity, diversity, and inclusion for Nutrien, a leading provider of agricultural products, services, and solutions with 25,000 employees and locations across North America, South America, Australia, and Europe, and its headquarters in Saskatoon, Canada. Most recently, she was the global director of diversity and inclusion at International Paper (IP) in Memphis, Tennessee. Prior to joining IP, she served as the global HR leader at Cargill. Coleman is currently a national board member for the National Black MBA Association and former president for the Memphis Chapter, as well as board member for the Memphis Orpheum, TAG and YWCA, among other prestigious organizations. She earned a bachelor's degree in human resources with a minor in psychology at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, and a master's degree in psychology and research from the University of Memphis, and published the article "Self Theories."

Rebecca Sandoval

Senior Recruiter // BrightView Landscapes



Rebecca Sandoval has over 14 years of professional experience. She joined BrightView six years ago and currently serves as a senior recruiter supporting the Evergreen West Region, which includes Washington, Oregon, Northern California, and Southern California. She is part of the steering committee for the Northern California chapter of the employee resource group, GROW, which aims to attract, develop, and retain female leaders in the organization. She is also part of the selection and mentorship committees for the Catalino Tapia Scholarship Foundation. Sandoval's career path is not a traditional one and she is a firm believer that a title does not define your experience or influence in an organization. After graduating from Stanford University with double bachelor's degrees in political science and urban studies, she worked for a non-profit for the first year of her career. As a first-generation college graduate, she had to navigate the professional world without a road map. She switched gears and joined Target Corporation's management training program, where she was introduced to human resources. She left the retail industry and dedicated four years of her career to claims management and although the goal was to land a position in human resources, the opportunity never arose. BrightView Landscape Services offered her the opportunity to bring together her professional and personal experiences to support the professional development of other employees, which became her passion.

Sandoval defines success as having a balanced life. She is a proud mother to a two-year-old toddler, and happily married to her husband of nearly seven years, Fabian Sandoval. In her spare time, she enjoys road trips, traveling, and running her Etsy and Poshmark shops.

Shermika Duerson, M.B.A.

Senior Director, Travel, Meetings & Administration // Elanco



Shermika Duerson has over 15 years of experience working in the agriculture industry. She has spent most of her career at Elanco where her skills and strengths have allowed her opportunities to span over various roles that include operations, supplier relationship manager, and administrative service center director to her current role as senior director of travel, meetings, and administration. She is actively involved in collegiate recruiting to further the development of the next generation of leaders and is a founding member of the Elanco African American Network; and member of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council. She holds a bachelor's degree from Johnson C. Smith University and a master's degree from Indiana Wesleyan University. While working with global partners she resides in Indianapolis, Indiana, with her family.

Toni Riggini Bucci, Ph.D.

Chief Operating Officer // AgBiome Innovations



Toni Riggini Bucci has over 20 years experience working in the agriculture industry. She spent most of her career at BASF Corporation where she began as an R&D biologist and then moved into sales and marketing and eventually business management. Bucci previously managed several businesses for BASF including Professional Turf & Ornamentals, Industrial Formulators, and the Agricultural Chemical Additives businesses. She came to AgBiome Innovations in November 2018 to lead day-to-day commercial operations. She holds a bachelor's degree in biology/chemistry from August State University, a master's degree in entomology from University of Georgia, and a doctorate degree in entomology/genetics from North Carolina State University. She was the 2021 recipient of the Women in Agribusiness Demeter Award of Excellence, an honor bestowed each year to women who have achieved excellence in their field and/or who have exhibited an outstanding contribution to the agribusiness industry.

Simonne Mitchelson

South Coast Estate Manager // Jackson Family Wines



Simonne Mitchelson has emerged as one of wine's most driven and lucid voices for diversity and equity in the wine industry. A background of international hospitality triggered her initial interest in the business, leading to harvest hopping between hemispheres to learn production. Mitchelson landed on the Central Coast in 2018, taking an initial position as general manager of a winery/vineyard in Sta. Rita Hills and is now managing four historic brands as senior south coast estate manager for Jackson Family Wines, the ninth largest wine producer in the U.S. She has charted her own unique path through the world of multi-million case producers as well as boutique micro-vintners and it is her mission to shift representation in a predominantly and historically white industry. In 2020, Mitchelson, alongside Cal Poly alumnus Justin Trabue, created the Scholarship for BIPOC Students in Wine and Viticulture at Cal Poly which saw its first recipients in fall 2021. She also works on the community relations subcommittee for Jackson Family Wines' larger DEI initiatives and is a co-founder of the nonprofit Natural Action, a wine club whose mission is to provide opportunities to BIPOC through education, winemaking programs, mentorship, and careers. She was recently chosen as Wine Enthusiast's 40 Under 40 Tastemakers, Wine Business' Top Industry Leaders, and Imbibe's Top 75 People to Watch.