

# *The Langston*

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Tabor 100 Newsletter



MAY 2025

  
Tabor

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**T**abor Neighbors! We all have seen and some of us have experienced the backlash against DEI, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The current federal administration has made this issue a focal point of its culture war against the liberal left and businesses and governments that want to address decades of unfair treatment and discrimination toward populations of color.

The results of the Administration's work in both the public and private sector is a mixed bag. While it has targeted law firms, large corporate entities and even its own federal agencies, the results of its efforts are not resounding. Among some, there is a backlash to attempts at ending programs that benefit people of color. One of the reasons is the fact that people of color are growing in population in this country and recognize much of the "DEI" dismantling is aimed at them.

Here in King County, people of color are an ever-increasing segment of the population. Asian, Hispanic and Black individuals all increased population in the county with the "majority" population actually declining. This trend is continuing

and the population of people of color has steadily increased each year. While there is much focus on eliminating or reducing opportunities for people of color, the people are pushing back. And while it would be nice to say that everyone boycotting stores and the like, are people of color, the reality is that both people from the majority and minority populations are joining forces to reward those who value DEI and punish those who do not. Our local major retailer, Costco, has rejected attempts to reduce its commitment to DEI and has seen its

stock price soar along with increases in revenue. While most name brands have quietly modified their "DEI" efforts and worked to keep their profile low on the issue, a few others have joined Costco. Notably, the Marriott Hotels CEO, which operates 8700 hotel properties throughout the world, announced the

firm would not abandon its DEI efforts. In 24-hours, he received 40,000 supportive emails, mostly from the chain's employees.

I mention these efforts and their current status to highlight the fact that, while sometimes the road is hard and our efforts to grow our businesses seem futile, there are those in powerful places who are working to address injustice. The work of Costco, Marriott and many other private sector entities that have taken a stand against discrimination and racism, is admirable and an example for all of us. ▶

**"Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues with injustice."**

- Proverbs 16:8

**Ollie Garrett | CEO and President**



# Door Swings

May 2025 Visits | 3,505  
Since Opening | 32,043

We must stand together –  
Still, we Rise!



*We are not  
going back!!*

## SAVE the DATE

- 3 JUNE** **Quickbooks Set Up Workshop**  
6:00 - 8:00 PM  
@ The Hub
- 10-11 JUNE** **Lean Leadership Workshop**  
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
@ The Hub
- 10 JUNE** **Digital Skills That Get the Job Done Workshop**  
6:00 - 8:00 PM  
@ The Hub
- 11 JUNE** **Protect Your Business from Fraud Workshop**  
6:00 - 8:00 PM  
@ The Hub
- 12 JUNE** **ChatGPT for Business Workshop**  
6:00 - 8:00 PM  
@ The Hub
- 17 JUNE** **Resume Building Workshop**  
6:00 - 8:00 PM  
@ The Hub
- 20 JUNE** **Tabor 100's First-Ever Business Showcase**  
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
@ The Hub
- 24 JUNE** **Workplace Professionalism Workshop**  
6:00 - 8:00 PM  
@ The Hub
- 26 JUNE** **Leadership Training Workshop**  
6:00 - 8:00 PM  
@ The Hub

## New Members – MAY

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Dorothy L Capers</b><br/>Family Behavioral<br/>HEALTH Institute</p>      | <p><b>Jasper K</b><br/>Aagon Small Business<br/>Consulting I ABC</p>              |
| <p><b>Gloria Coleman</b><br/>Exit Bliss LLC</p>                                | <p><b>Rebecca Linville</b><br/>WA State (DES) Dept of<br/>Enterprise Services</p> |
| <p><b>Mouhamed Diop</b><br/>Evergreen Safety<br/>Signals</p>                   | <p><b>Harrilyn K Smith</b><br/>AMB General Contractor<br/>LLC</p>                 |
| <p><b>Alisha Ghanie</b><br/>WA State (DES) Dept of<br/>Enterprise Services</p> | <p><b>Curtis Snipes</b><br/>First Choice Pressure<br/>Washing</p>                 |
| <p><b>Aharon Goins</b><br/>Prosperity Blue<br/>Enterprises</p>                 |   |

Have a question related to  
labor laws?  
Scan this QR code or email:  
zene.hall@tabor100.org



 **Seattle Office of  
Labor Standards**

## The Power of Unity: How the Legislative Black Caucus is Advancing Opportunities for Minority-Owned Businesses

Written by Rep. Kristine M. Reeves,  
Washington State 30th LD



**T**he 2025 Washington State Legislative Session showcased the power of what's possible when communities are organized, focused, and united in their priorities. At the forefront of this momentum was the Washington State Legislative Black Caucus (LBC), whose growing influence continues to shape policy outcomes that expand access, equity, and economic opportunity for Black- and minority-owned small businesses.

This session, the LBC remained steadfast in our collective mission: to dismantle systemic barriers and create pathways to prosperity. Whether advocating for equitable access to procurement contracts, expanding technical assistance and capital resources, or challenging outdated regulatory frameworks that disproportionately burden

marginalized entrepreneurs, the Black Caucus delivered with intention and impact. But none of this happened in a vacuum. Progress is possible because we remain disciplined in our approach – prioritizing community-driven legislation, building strong coalitions, and showing up in full force when it matters most. Our strength lies in our unity. And that's a lesson the business community can take to heart.

Minority-owned businesses in Washington have an unprecedented opportunity to engage with policymakers not just as stakeholders, but as partners. The business community can benefit greatly by organizing around shared priorities, aligning with values-based coalitions, and leveraging relationships with

legislative bodies like the WSLBC to push for meaningful change. We encourage entrepreneurs and business advocates to see the Legislative Black Caucus not just as champions, but as strategic allies. Let us know what you need. Work with us to shape the agenda. Join us in public hearings, policy roundtables, and economic equity conversations. Because when our communities, our businesses, and our leaders are aligned, we don't just pass laws – we shift systems.

As we look toward future sessions, one thing is clear: the real power isn't just in any one bill – it's in building a movement that refuses to leave anyone behind. Let's keep organizing. Let's keep prioritizing. And let's keep winning – together. ▀

**W**hen asked about legacy, Sound

Transit's newly selected Chief Economic Development and Civil Rights Officer, Daphne Cross, immediately thought about her parents. Raised right in the heart of Seattle, Daphne was born to Jesse and Lottie Cross, who operated and owned Sunshine Center Laundromat just on 23rd & Spring in Seattle's Central District from 1969-1975. Being a black woman and the daughter of proud and hardworking small business owners, at first, Daphne said she didn't realize how much of an achievement for her parents this was until she started working with small and disadvantaged business communities herself.

"I was [just] a little kid" Daphne said. "It's pretty quite unimaginable these days what they did to achieve that."

Long before her professional career at Sound Transit, Daphne's background made her very aware of how women, black people, and people of color within her community have not been provided the same opportunities and resources needed to pursue their dreams. Having a desire to support her community and honor her parents' legacy, Daphne made a promise both in honor of her parents' memory and for her daughter, Briaan Barron.

# Walking in Big Shoes

## An interview with Daphne Cross, Sound Transit's Chief Economic Development and Civil Rights Officer

"I made a promise...that I would live a life that makes them proud" Daphne said. "I'm walking in the big shoes of the many leaders who got me here, living and passed, and will not let them down."

Therefore, for the past nearly 24 years she's worked with Sound Transit in various roles, Daphne has committed herself towards creating opportunities to help her team members and the community members Sound Transit serves to achieve their own dreams like that of her family. One example of this commitment was Daphne's joining Sound Transit's department of Civil Rights, Equity, and Inclusion department back in 2018.

Another example is the foundational role Daphne played in creating employee resource groups within Sound Transit. These groups provided employees safe environments to share their various lived experiences to engage in real conversations about race, diversity,



equity, inclusion and other identities in the name of fostering a better work environment.

"I am a strong advocate for the fair treatment of people in all aspects, so leading civil rights programs was a natural next step" said Daphne.

Such initiatives would eventually lead to Daphne's recent selection as an officer of the CEO's

executive cabinet. Acknowledging how connected economic development and civil rights are, Daphne said she aims to broaden her vision within her new role by dismantling systemic barriers to ensure equal opportunities for jobs and access to resources and services to all individuals and businesses within the region.

One method towards realizing this vision is creating resources that make it easier for small business owners to do business with Sound Transit. Being a public agency leading large projects, Daphne said she wants to address the continuous struggle small, disadvantaged businesses face by providing new options to support said small businesses in doing business with Sound Transit.

"We're thinking more innovatively of ways to remove those barriers" said Daphne. "We're going to do the best we can to help more and more people."

One way of addressing these barriers is the creation of the Sound Transit Economic Empowerment Loan Program (S.T.E.E.L). A low-interest business loan program, Daphne said the program acts as a direct response towards removing traditional bank lending barriers by providing applicants with their representative to guide applicants closely through the loan process during their first year of approval.

Additionally, the S.T.E.E.L. program will be complemented by the promotion of a Sound Transit technical assistance program that provides various educational resources and services to any businesses either interested in, or currently doing business with Sound Transit.

Another way of addressing said barriers is through partnerships with community-organizations, such as Tabor 100. Emphasizing the importance of such partnerships, Daphne said organizations such as Tabor 100 help act as the "eyes and ears" for feedback in spaces that Sound Transit otherwise may not have access towards.

"In my perspective, I see what Tabor 100 does, and other agencies as the roots, trunk and branches of our communities' livelihood," said Daphne. "We honestly cannot be successful without these partnerships and engagement."

Circling back to the topic of legacy, Daphne said none of this would be possible without the examples her family have set for her with the importance of serving one's own community, and beyond.

"They're huge," said Daphne. "My parents are why I started it, and my daughter is why I continue it... I'm committed to not letting them down." ▀



Jesse (left) and Lottie Cross (right) at Sunshine Center Laundromat

# Tabor 100 Scholarship Recipient Highlight- Rachel Joshua

## University of Washington, Class of Winter Quarter 2025)

**U**nsure if she'd choose to go to college, Rachel Joshua, a Tabor 100 Scholarship

recipient, officially graduated from the University of Washington's Foster School of Business in Winter Quarter 2025, majoring in business & sociology and minoring in data science. At first, Rachel said she didn't see college as a realistic option and was even planning on taking a gap year after graduating high school to better understand herself and what direction she wanted to go in.

However, Rachel said factors such as being accepted into UW, combined with receiving a Tabor 100 scholarship, encouraged her to pursue her education and take this next step.

"I honestly wasn't expecting to get it [the Tabor 100 scholarship]," said Rachel. "It was a big deal for me and my family."

Starting in 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Rachel said elements like financial support from sources like scholarships, along with feedback she received from senior students at UW, inspired her to take risks she may not have taken. One of the said risks was Rachel's choice to study abroad after

**"Take time to rest and reflect...or make time. As you get to know yourself better and your values, it will be easier to make choices and calculated risks that will get you closer to what success is for you."**

– Rachel Joshua



talking with colleagues in their senior year, who, unfortunately, did not get the same opportunity due to the pandemic.

"They said 'you should study abroad because I wasn't able to,'" said Rachel.

So Rachel did exactly that – twice.

From February to July 2023, Rachel studied abroad in New Zealand, then again in Argentina from January to March 2024. These opportunities created some novel memories and experiences for Rachel such as hiking through the Laguna de los Tres trail in El Chalten,

Argentina. Other experiences range from unplanned spotings and meetings with UW Alumni while Rachel was in New Zealand, to attending the 2023 Women's World Cup there for only \$20 a ticket.

"Nobody wanted to go because everybody thought their team was going to lose,"

she laughed. "[Traveling abroad] will continue to pay dividends throughout my life."

While studying abroad played a major role in her collegiate journey, Rachel said she also decided to take a break from studying during UW's Winter 2022 Quarter to work for a small sales and marketing startup and stay connected with her local community. Emphasizing the importance of remembering when to take breaks, Rachel said choices like taking a quarter off from school helped her realize both what direction she wanted to go, along with recognizing her values and which directions she didn't want to go in.

"[These experiences helped me] take a step back, re-evaluate, reconnect with community and go forward in a more efficient way" Rachel said.

Now graduated, Rachel said she wants to use her experiences towards listening actively and presently with those around her and learn how best she can help people. Rachel also emphasized that her success came from various forms of support from her community, mentors, and organizations like Tabor 100.

"I am not self-made," Rachel said. "I came from a lot of amazing people and orgs like Tabor."

For any future scholarship recipients just starting college, some advice Rachel suggested is not to neglect what you want to do while fulfilling your obligations. She emphasized taking bets on opportunities that you believe are worth it. For her, those opportunities have given her clarity about where she wants to work towards and how to best spend her time to get there.

Take time to rest and reflect...or make time," said Rachel. "As you get to know yourself better and your values, it will be easier to make choices and calculated risks that will get you closer to what success is for you." ▀

For more information on Tabor 100 Scholarship opportunities, please visit [tabor100.org/scholarships](https://tabor100.org/scholarships).



# May Highlights



# Membership Meeting





# Access to Equal Opportunity

The Port of Seattle is committed to building a strong, inclusive economy. With the Diversity in Contracting Resolution, we're making sure that includes businesses like yours.

Our goal is to triple the number of women and minority-owned businesses that contract with the Port by 2024 and remove barriers to expand the development of other disadvantaged business enterprises.

## **GROW YOUR BUSINESS AND SKILLS WITH THE PORT:**

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