

# Speaker Bios for the 2024 TCU NONPROFIT COMMUNICATORS CONFERENCE



BOB SCHIEFFER  
COLLEGE of COMMUNICATION

Strategic Communication

## Keynote debrief panel: Keep doing the work

**Daneshé Bethune** is Executive Director of C5 Texas, a youth leadership development program for 8th to 12th graders. She's worked in the nonprofit field for twenty years, serving as the Chief Development Officer, Regional Executive Director, Director of Foundation and Grants, Grants Manager, and other roles at organizations such as The Salvation Army, Big Brothers Big Sisters Lone Star, and Methodist Health System Foundation. She has experience in fund development, executive leadership, effective management, strategic leadership, grants management and writing, organizational development, board development and change management. She holds an MBA from Dallas Baptist University, and an undergraduate degree in journalism with a concentration in public relations from the University of North Texas (Go Mean Green!)

**Keynoter and panelist Raúl Hinojosa** is a diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging expert with more than 20 years of experience serving higher education students and programs in North Texas. Recently, the City of Richardson appointed Hinojosa as vice chair of its new Community Inclusion and Engagement Commission. Hinojosa holds a bachelor's degree in journalism/public relations and an MPA from the University of North Texas and is currently completing a doctorate in education from Texas A&M Commerce.

**Angel Theodore** currently works as a marketing and communications specialist for M. Gale, a consulting firm that helps nonprofits. Her passion for diversity and inclusion dates back to her childhood, when she attended a church that exposed her to a variety of cultures and communities. This early exposure continued into her college years when she attended California State University Northridge (CSUN), now ranked No. 1 in the nation for diversity. Throughout her professional journey, Angel has actively participated in employee engagement committees to develop strategies for creating a more inclusive environment. For Angel, diversity encompasses more than race and gender; it also includes advocating for marginalized groups such as children in foster care and individuals with learning disabilities.

**Moderator -- Adora Drake** is an expert digital marketing strategist, coach & principal consultant at Highspirits Essentials Marketing. She and her team help nonprofit and mission-driven organizations feel inspired to take action, gain clarity in their marketing strategy, and learn how to convert their followers into raving fans who want to be a part of their mission with unique digital marketing consulting and implementation.

## **Artificial intelligence and nonprofit communication session**

**Tripp Westbrook** is an innovative, convention breaking agency leader and President/Chief Creative Officer of Firehouse. His creativity and expertise in challenging category status-quo has been recognized by virtually every major advertising award show and his work includes one of USA Today's top 100 Super Bowl commercials of all time.

**Corrie Brock** is an accomplished marketing and communications professional and a proud graduate of TCU, earning a B.S. in Communication Studies from TCU and a master's in legal studies from Washington University School of Law in St. Louis. In her recent professional roles, Corrie has demonstrated her proficiency in omni-channel strategy development and execution, agency management, project management, performance metrics and analytics, brand consumer insights and buyer journey mapping, digital marketing, and creative thinking. Additionally, Corrie is deeply committed to serving the community, having been actively involved with her church, multiple boards, and National Charity League. Presently, she serves as the Head of Strategy for Firehouse, developing research-backed strategic initiatives to assist clients in meeting and exceeding their business objectives.

## **Getting nonprofit board members engaged to serve as influencers**

**Cobi Lambert** is a passionate nonprofit professional, with more than 23 years of experience strengthening nonprofit organizations and creating collaborations among the private enterprise, nonprofit and public sectors. Inspired by her work with a local NFL Players Association chapter, Cobi quickly developed a deep passion for philanthropic work when completing community service in college. This resolve stuck with her, and over 23 years later, she currently serves as Senior Director of Philanthropy for North Texas Food Bank (NTFB). In her current role with NTFB, she is responsible for leading the philanthropy team to meet or exceed annual fundraising goals, which includes leadership of major gifts, mid-level, recurring and direct response programs and managing a select portfolio of key donor relationships.

**Stuart Williams**, is VP of Operations & Senior Fundraising Consultant for Dala Communications. With the understanding that fundraising is both an art and a science, Stuart incorporates research and data with powerful storytelling to exceed campaign goals and further the sustainability of an organization. More than a strategy partner, Stuart enjoys identifying new donor prospects and reactivating stagnant givers. Stuart values the opportunity to: Integrate fundraising best practices with new technologies; build sustainable and efficient fundraising systems; implement fundraising campaigns that clearly resonate with the right stakeholder audience; and identify new opportunities for nonprofits to better connect with current funders as well as new donors. Prior to joining Dala Communications, Stuart led fundraising departments at various Dallas nonprofits in the areas of early childhood education, community health, homelessness, and addiction recovery.

**Moderator -- Leah Ekmark Williams**, APR is a seasoned communications strategist and tactician, serving as president and CEO of Dala Communications, a full-service public relations agency with an adjacent nonprofit consulting practice group. An accredited PR professional, Leah's expertise lies in creating and implementing communications campaigns for B2B and B2C clients in industries ranging from real estate, construction and engineering to nonprofits, healthcare, financial services and retail. Working for well-known brands such as Capital One and global infrastructure giant, AECOM, Leah excels at developing integrative strategies that combine traditional communications campaigns with digital and social media plans. She brings fresh perspective, insight and creativity that helps build brand momentum in situations and causes her clients care about. Leah is committed to mentoring through her involvement in organizations including Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) and PRSA Dallas. She serves on the Woodrow Wilson High School Community Foundation board

as Communications Vice-Chair and is co-president of Pre-Geneva Association, a young parents' association zoned for DISD's Geneva Heights Elementary.

## **Crisis communication with advocacy in mind**

At Hill + Knowlton Strategies, **Sherita Coffelt** helps some of the top transportation providers in the country manage their reputation through creative storytelling, proactive media relations and strategic issues management. With almost 20 years of experience serving as a media spokesperson and advising top executives and elected officials on media relations, Sherita knows how to build and maintain relationships with top media and how to craft compelling narratives that reach the intended audience. Prior to joining H+K, Sherita was the Vice President of Communications for Allied Universal, the world's largest provider of security services. There she led internal and external communications announcements for more than ten mergers and acquisitions garnering coverage in outlets such as Bloomberg, Forbes and Financial Times. She also oversaw communications to over 300,000 employees and helped lead change management initiatives for employees of acquired companies. Sherita is passionate about DE&I and has professional and lived experience in this arena. At H+K, Sherita serves as a co-chair of the Black American ERG. A native Texan, Sherita was born and raised in DFW and earned a degree from the University of North Texas where she majored in journalism with a minor in Spanish.

**Reyne Telles** serves as Chief Communications Officer (CCO), where he oversees the city's Communications & Public Engagement Department, Governmental Relations, and Educational Strategies Divisions. Telles has more than two decades of professional experience and, most recently, was vice president and Public Sector Practice leader with Cooksey Communications. Telles guided Cooksey's governmental clients through in-depth communications audits, institutional planning and execution of engagement approaches that target and reach key stakeholders.

## **Plenary panel: How to work with and advocate for the most vulnerable people served by your nonprofit**

**Gabrielle "Gabe" Madison** is the President of Bonton Farms, a South Dallas farm-turned-community- resource that is disrupting inequitable systems to change lives. In her role, Gabe provides strategic oversight and direction to the organizations' community partnerships and programming. Gabe brings more than two decades of corporate leadership experience to Bonton Farms, having most previously served as Director of Community Relations for international software development giant Thomson Reuters for seven out of her eleven years with the company. Gabe spent more than four years as the American Heart Association's Southwest Region Board of Directors and is the Vice-Chair for the North Dallas nonprofit Trusted World, the "Amazon for non-profits," as well as other board positions. She was named one of D CEO's "Most Powerful Business Leaders" in 2019. She is a proud Baylor Alumni.

**Lauren King** is the Executive Director at Tarrant County Homeless Coalition and has been with the organization for more than six years, first serving as the Director of Development and then being named Executive Director in December 2020. She is a social worker who bleeds purple, but also has a touch of burnt orange in her too. For 15 years, Lauren has dedicated her career to serving in agencies serving those impacted by homelessness and poverty, spending most of her career prior to the Homeless Coalition with SafeHaven and Catholic Charities. She has always been and remains committed to providing service to those most in need. With the Homeless Coalition she is committed to realizing the shared community vision of *a vibrant community where everyone has a place to call home*. Most recently, she helped secure \$64M in capital to build housing for people who have experienced homelessness.

**Scott Langston** is Texas Christian University's Interim Native American Nations and Communities Liaison and recently retired Instructor in Religion, having taught at TCU for nearly twenty years. He is a committed Native American ally, helping organize Native American initiatives on campus and working with a number of Native American communities and groups in Texas, Oklahoma, and Nebraska. In 2022, TCU awarded him its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award for his work with Native American and Indigenous communities. In 2023, TCU's Race and Reconciliation Initiative made him a co-recipient of its Plume Award for his work in establishing and sustaining TCU's Native American and Indigenous Peoples initiative.

**Jason Vallejo** is the Founder & Executive Director of Elevate North Texas - Youth Shelter. Elevate North Texas offers a welcoming, affirming environment with immediate, short-term housing and personal case management for youth (18-24) in crisis, partnering with them to create a path to housing stability. Jason founded Elevate North Texas in 2020 in the midst of a global pandemic that we know as COVID-19. He saw a gap in the homeless system when it came to youth who were between the ages 18 to 24. While North Texas has transitional living programs for youth in this age range, he knew that there was still no emergency shelter for these youth that would meet the immediate needs of youth experiencing homelessness. The organization uses two strategies: one is a 30-day hotel stay program and the other is a reunification program with family member when possible. Jason is active in the community and has been part of the Housing Forward Youth Committee for more than 6 years. He also serves on the SMU Advisory Board, North Texas Human Trafficking Coalition and Dallas LGBTQ Chamber.