

April Sims



(Keynote Speaker)

April Sims (she/her) was elected President of the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO in October 2022 and was sworn in to begin her four-year term in January 2023. She is the first woman to be elected WSLC president and the first Black woman elected to the presidency of an AFL-CIO state federation. As President, Sims is the chief executive officer of the council, supervises all of its activities and staff, and leads Washington's largest union organization representing more than half a million union members.

Sims' lived experience is evidence of the power and potential of organized labor. The granddaughter of Louisiana sharecroppers and the daughter of a single mother, Sims has seen the power of unions to change lives. The Great Migration brought Sims' grandfather to Washington, where his union job provided economic dignity for his family. Her mom's union job pulled their family out of the cycle of poverty. As a young mother, it was Sims' union job that allowed her to build economic security – and activated her as a leader in Washington's labor movement.

In 2002, Sims joined the staff of her union, Washington Federation of State Employees, AFSCME Council 28 (WFSE), eventually serving as Legislative and Political Action Field Coordinator. April joined the WSLC staff in 2015 as Field Mobilization Director, before becoming the WSLC's Political and Strategic Campaign Director in 2017.

In 2018, the unions that comprise the WSLC elected Sims as Secretary Treasurer of the council, the first person of color elected as a WSLC executive officer. She served in that office, as the chief financial officer of the council, from 2019 to 2022.

An innovator and change maker, Sims is a life-long resident of Tacoma, living with her family and 110-pound chocolate lab in the gritty city she's proud to call home.

Nathan Webster



(Guest Speaker)

Nathan A Webster was born and raised in Vancouver, WA. He honorably served in the United States Marine Corps before starting his educational career at Clark College. While pursuing his associate's degree, he officially began his entrepreneurial journey serving his Portland-Vancouver metropolitan community. After earning his MBA, his background in management and nonprofits ignited a passion for developing businesses and community leaders. Nathan started his consultancy agency focusing on nonprofits before it evolved into marketing. In the same year, he became a business college adjunct at his alma mater, launching his career as a college professor. In 2016, he became a podcaster focused on social entrepreneurship and evolved it into [Let's Talk Marketing with NDUB Podcast](#). As the lead marketing consultant, Nathan continues to run his [marketing agency](#), developing marketing strategies, websites, and operational support for small businesses. He has a big heart for his kids, loves the outdoors, and is learning to golf when he's not networking or working in his company.

Chana Lawson



(Guest Emcee)

Chana Lawson is known as a connector — whether as a leader in the nonprofit world, a guiding hand connecting alumni to campus, and linking students to higher education and career opportunities.

Lawson earned her Bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences with a concentration in Self & Society with a double minor in Education and Non-Profit Management at University of Washington, Tacoma. She also attained her Master's degree in Organizational Leadership and a graduate certificate in Human Resources Development at Chapman University.

Always busy, Lawson keeps her hand in various projects and activities, volunteering and serving as a Chair of the Tacoma Pierce County Black Collective Political Committee, President of the Black Women's Caucus Tacoma Chapter, and giving her time to other committees and groups that impact change.

She has had a longtime passion for helping others while celebrating the past and future, which began at her alma mater as a founder of the MLK Jr. Unity Breakfast while she was a student and Vice President of the Black Student Union at UW Tacoma. After collaborating with over 26 nonprofit organizations in Pierce and King County, working in higher education to help over 600 students graduate from college, and receiving the City of Destiny Award for Equity and Empowerment, Lawson returned to her alma mater, UW Tacoma making a difference for the campus and South Sound community. She is the mother of 3 sons and lives with her husband in Puyallup and Tacoma.

Marcia Tate Arunga



(Libation Ceremony Facilitator)

Marcia Tate Arunga is the Academic Dean at Evergreen State College (Tacoma Campus). Dr. Arunga was born and raised in Seattle, Washington USA. She is the author of the book entitled, *The Stolen Ones and How They Were Missed*, an allegorical tale about a girl who was stolen from her African home and was missed by her family and village. Marcia's book is a tool to explore the essence of the culture in the context of stories. After living in Kenya East Africa for more than a decade and after returning to the USA, she established experiential learning communities who engaged in global joint ventures. As the cofounder of Cultural Reconnection Delegations and AAKEWO, she led 75 African American women on delegations to Kenya to practice relationships of mutual empowerment. On the faculty at Seattle Central College, Marcia teaches in sociology and leadership. Marcia holds a BA in Sociology, Masters in Human Development, and PhD in Leadership and Change. Her doctoral thesis entitled, *Back to Africa in the 21st Century: A Narrative Analysis of African American Women*, contributes to the fields of Diaspora Studies, Women's Studies and Africana Studies. Diasporas and cultural reconnections influence the rapport people in their ancestral homelands. Marcia continues to reside in the Pacific Northwest with her family.

Cultural Reconnection Delegations are intensive interactions that deepen our understanding of cultural heritage through experiential travel groups for self and collective discovery. As the convener of a vision and planning team established in 2002 that subsequently formed 501c3 nonprofit organization called the African American Kenyan Women's Interconnect (AAKEWO), ongoing high stakes joint ventures have been achieved.

Dr. Shamyka Sutton



(Kahoot Facilitator)

Dr. Shamyka Sutton is a clinical, forensic psychologist and Certified Sex Offender Treatment Provider. She earned a doctorate of philosophy in clinical psychology with an emphasis in forensic psychology and holds bachelor's degrees in criminal justice and liberal arts (psychology major). Originally from Palo Alto, CA., she joined WSH as a pre-doctoral intern in 2012. After completing her internship, she finished forensic post-doctoral training at the Special Commitment Center where she completed forensic evaluations for sexually violent predators. In 2014, she rejoined WSH at the Center for Forensic Services as a ward psychologist in the not guilty by reason of insanity program. There she developed the first forensic Dialectical Behavior Therapy program, integrating psychosocial and DBT principals within the ward milieu. Dr. Sutton then took a ward psychologist position in the Breaking Barriers competency restoration program and helped implement practices that reduce the length of stay for competency restoration patients. Before becoming the Gage Center's Chief Clinical Officer, she was the interim CFS Psychology Services supervisor. In that role, she helped develop and implement practices to support the Trueblood and Ross settlements. She takes pride in supporting staff and mentoring students and is the WSH Critical Incident Stress Management Coordinator and Psychology Practicum Training Coordinator. Dr. Sutton recently completed her Postgraduate Master's, in Clinical Psychopharmacology, from New Mexico State University. Dr Sutton currently runs her own private practice.