



Multicultural Leadership Program
c/o Illinois Wesleyan University
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MCLP Embraces Change to Serve the Community Under New Direction

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. - (August 27, 2020) - Steadfast in its mission of uplifting the community through servant leadership, the Multicultural Leadership Institute's nine-month intensive leadership program, MCLP, will be conducted online this year, with a renewed focus on COVID-19 recovery and racial justice, all headed by a familiar face.

Matt Drat will take on the role of Executive Director of the Multicultural Leadership Institute effective Sept. 8. He comes to the organization with an impressive legacy of leadership in the nonprofit sector. "True leadership seeks not to convince others of a singular point of view but looks at the diversity among us as a chance to learn and grow," shares Drat. "As Executive Director, I will strive to connect the unique visions of individuals and organizations in our community. It is in that connection that we will holistically become a stronger and more vibrant community."

The local nonprofit has also recently appointed new board members, including President Barbara Bouboutsis, Vice President Sharon Peoples, Javier Centeno, and Billy Tyus. Bouboutsis commented, "We are thrilled to announce the selection of Matthew Drat as the new Executive Director. We know he will be a tremendous asset to furthering our mission at MCLP!" Drat will work in collaboration with the board members, a dedicated staff, and incredible volunteers to run the Multicultural Leadership Institute's flagship program, MCLP, which is in its 12th year.

The MCLP Class of 2021 will convene via Zoom and utilize an adapted curriculum created in direct response to emergent community needs and built off the organization's core philosophies.

The participants will still work in teams to complete a project with one of five local nonprofits. This year's community partners are the Immigration Project, Integrity Counseling, One Hope, Prairie State Legal Services, and the YWCA.

Embarking on this leadership journey are Alpheaus Johnson, *Bloomington*; Amanda Papinchock, *Bloomington*; Ben Wright, *Bloomington*; Brittany Perkins, *Bloomington*; Christina Evans, *Bloomington*; Christy Germanis, *Bloomington*; Corey Burgess, *Hudson*; Desiray Yeaw, *Bloomington*; Donnelle Pressburger, *Normal*; Emily Nafziger, *Normal*;

Hannah Johnson, *Bloomington*; Harsh Thakkar, *Bloomington*; Jesse Slater, *Normal*; Jennifer Thome, *Bloomington*; Jill Benson, *Bloomington*; Kara Kirk, *Bloomington*; Kelsie Langheim, *Bloomington*; Linda Randle, *Bloomington*; Madheswaran Singaravelu, *Bloomington*; Mariaton Tate, *Normal*; Ruben Estrada, *Normal*; Sim Sandhu, *Normal*; Tony Reis, *Normal*; Valerie Langston, *Bloomington*.

These 25 unique individuals represent various local organizations, including Illinois State University, State Farm, the YWCA, COUNTRY Financial, Afni, the McLean County History Museum, Heartland Community College, Bradley University, Center for Youth and Family Solutions, US Bank, and Red Raccoon Games.

Julie Emig has been at the organization's helm as Executive Director since 2019 and announced her departure in early July.

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Since 2009 the Multicultural Leadership Program has uplifted McLean County by partnering with over 50 local nonprofits and empowering over 300 local leaders. Our mission is to develop leaders who engage the power of diverse perspectives to improve our world with a vision of fostering thriving and inclusive communities. MCLP is a part of the Multicultural Leadership Institute, a 501(c)3 not for profit organization. To learn more about MCLP, please visit