



Leadership A U R O R A

2021 - 2022
Class of



Dear Leaders!

It is the 1st month of the year and of course, I want to wish you a Happy New Year. The feeling of joy and contentment is my hope for you all in this coming year.

I recently read an article that said, "It's not too late to make a difference in your community!" That is exactly what we will be doing by moving forward on the goals of supporting DAVA. This will create great moments and memories between us, and above all,

making a difference in the lives of the families and staff at DAVA! There is no such thing as a bad time to give back and help the community in which we live and work.

The Jadoo Brew is now officially a reality! Mehran, Nycci and Casey (and Steve) talked to Dave at Launch Pad Brewery, and they have agreed to brew the Jadoo Brew! Here are the details: Jadoo Brew Style: Fruited Blonde. Flavor Profile: Mango Passion Fruit with Vanilla.

Come join us for Brew Day: February 12th @ 8am - everyone is encouraged to come out and participate in the brew process.

Brewing Party: March 5th @ 2pm - Invite your family and friends to come out and enjoy our Jadoo Brew! \$1 per beer sold of the brew will go to Leadership Aurora.

Here's a great bonus.....Winners of Season 11 **Great Food Truck Race**, *Big Stuff Food Truck*, will be at our Brewing Party to help us celebrate and serve up some amazing food! [Here is the link for our fundraiser.](#)

The brew will be featured the entire month of March! Thereafter, Launch Pad will donate 10% of the Jadoo Brew back to Leadership Aurora. Legends of Aurora Sports Grill will also carry the Jadoo Brew and donate 20% of the proceeds back to Leadership Aurora. Now that is sustainability!

Best regards,
Nycci



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We all know how important family is to the makeup of our lives. While not always a one size fits all, family is the fabric of people's foundations and what is held most closely to heart. Leadership Aurora class of 2022 member Dr. Dan Clarke and his team of professionals rallied this concept to create Mamabird Interviews, a video biography of sorts to help capture the essence of prior generations to share with their family -- specifically the generation coming after them.

Conducted primarily via Zoom, the interviews document family history, stories, wisdom and advice.

Not only do families reap the benefits of having a precious keepsake to pass down to future generations, they do so while engaging with local young women of color who conduct the interviews. Through the interviews, these women are able to open doors for themselves to future opportunities while cementing a legacy of serving their communities. According to the company's website, Mamabirdinterviews.com, these trained professionals gain confidence along with real world skills from every interview to prepare them for success in their eventual careers.

Below is a Q&A that will give you some insight into Dan Clarke and his Mamabird Interviews venture:

Q: What was the inspiration for creating Mamabird Interviews?

A: The inspiration behind anything I do is the amazing young people I have had the honor of teaching over the past 10 years --- young people from Montbello and Aurora, who have all the talent and potential in the world, but need more access and support to make their dreams come true. I also believe that young people from marginalized communities are the leaders our world needs for the present and the future.

As for the idea to interview families' loved ones, it comes from my father who had the idea almost 40 years ago when the first home VHS camcorders came out. He interviewed my grandfather who passed from cancer soon after. He tried to do this work as a business, but was never successful.

Q: How has this concept informed your leadership style and what has been the most eye opening part of the experience so far?

A: My leadership style is still developing each day. I want to lead by example, and I want to lead with empathy. The young women I work with make it easy for me to be honest with them and I respect them on every level. The most eye opening part of this work is becoming aware of the importance of mental health for our young women. This is why I am so proud that we have partnered with the Center of Trauma and Resilience to offer the women in our program free professional therapy. It has been life changing for our women, and inspiring to their families who often look at mental health support as a weakness and not a strength. Our women are helping to put mental health first for themselves and change the perceptions in their communities.

Q: Ideally, where do you envision this concept going in the next 3-5 years?

A: Mamabird Interviews is making progress every day and that progress is compounding. In three to five years I would like to see our interviewers grow from the 10's to 1,000's. We believe our interviews will become priceless in the future. The more interviews we do the better, and the more people whose

essence we capture with our interviews the better. We can do this while empowering and opening doors for amazing young people. It is a true win-win-win.

Q: Tell us a little bit about the students you work with on this concept? How many students do you have on your team? Are there any commonalities that tie them together?

A: Our original interviewers were all students I had the pleasure of teaching in my 10 years teaching in Montbello at the high school level. They are all young Black, Latina and Indigenous women from Montbello, Aurora and Denver. The commonality that brought us together was my film and business classes, but really what they have in common is they have so much potential after graduating from high school, but not the support that is needed to be successful when navigating systems that have not been developed to support them. We have impacted 34 young people in our program, but we have six core interviewers. [This video](#) introduces you to some of our amazing women.

Q: Regarding the team of students you work with, what do you hope they take away from these interviewing/editing/writing experiences?

A: Our goal is empowerment and opening doors. I want to live in a world where the young people of marginalized communities have every door open for them, and the power to walk through them. I want to live in a world where young women are leading their communities to the future they deserve. Our women are learning so much from interviewing elders. They learn life and communication lessons and what is really important to people who have lived very fulfilling lives. On top of this they are learning professional skills, and most importantly networking skills. Networking is not taught well at any level in public education, and the best way to learn is by doing. Between meetings with our clients and also meetings with business partners, our women are learning the importance and power of networking.

Q: How do you envision the Leadership Aurora program helping you take your business to the next level?

A: LA has already helped me as a leader in so many ways. I have learned from my peers in the ways that they lead as well as the program itself being such an inspiration. I think the biggest impact for Mamabird Interviews will be the network that is built through LA. Mamabird Interviews is a completely scalable program that can provide an invaluable keepsake for families while empowering an amazing young person. We need the world to know about the work we are doing, the reasons we are doing it and the amazing young people we are impacting. With the vast network of LA becoming aware of Mamabird Interviews it will only propel us to greater success in the future.

Q: What are the most important things you want the community at large to know about Mamabird Interviews?

A: We believe that young people from marginalized communities are the leaders this world needs. We have found a way to empower and open doors for so many amazing young people and with the support of Mamabird Interviews -- whether that is purchasing an interview yourself or simply sharing our story -- we can literally change the world. We see so much value in our interviews, whether that is interviewing your grandparents or parents, your graduating senior, or you. We know that the interviews have value today, but the true value is in the future. You cannot go back in time, but if you could, who would you interview from your family?

Interviewed & Written by:
Julius Vaughns

Class Project Update

The Leadership Aurora class of 2022 is requesting donations from local businesses and specifically, from employers who have sponsored their members going through this program. The Project Committee is asking for each member of the class to solicit their employer for donations. Most businesses are happy to donate to charitable causes and need only to be nudged by someone they trust to donate to the right cause.

The members of LA2022 have seen firsthand some of the community needs and have chosen to focus our class project on Downtown Aurora Visual Arts (DAVA). DAVA provides a safe, creative space for children to thrive. Our project addresses immediate and long-term safety concerns that will pave the way for DAVA to positively affect the lives of children for many years to come.



The total cost of our project and safety improvements is \$15K. Donations directly support inclusive education programs that cultivate art, life, and job skills for thousands of kids per year. A tax-exempt document will be provided to all donors, and the deadline to receive donations is February 28, 2022. [CLIK HERE to access this link](#) ; donate and reach out to any project committee member for questions.

[DAVA Tax Exempt Document.](#)

Written by:

Mehran Ahmed

Aurora Ranks #1 in Colorado for Immigrant Support

The City of Aurora has so many great programs, as we learned on City Day, each of them deserving and serving the needs of the residents of our great community. When trying to fund the city, it is difficult to determine which program is more deserving of funds than others. Part of what goes into those decisions is answering the question: *"What do we want the priorities and the focus of our city to be?"*

Leadership Aurora was tasked with assessing the different programs and determining which program should win our "Go Fund the City" Bucks. After careful consideration, we chose to award the Office of International and Immigrant Affairs our City Bucks. We weren't the only ones to recognize this department.....The City of Aurora was ranked number 1 in Colorado for Immigrant Support by New American Economy for 2021.

Aurora Mayor Mike Hoffman said: "One of Aurora's greatest assets is the diversity of our people, coming from around the world in search of a better life." It is easy to see that this is more than just a good sounding statement. Year after year, Aurora has continued to prioritize immigrant integration and inclusion, helping it to move higher in this ranking. The ranking looks at each cities economic empowerment, inclusivity, government leadership, community, emergen-

cy management and job opportunities.

The LA Class of 2022 wasn't the only one impressed by the Office of International and Immigrant Affairs. At a time when it is hard to find common ground, the City of Aurora, with their focus on celebrating the diversity of neighbors, is a bright spot.

Written by:

Jessica Hegewald



"It is literally true that you can succeed best and quickest by helping others to succeed."

— Napoleon Hill

CCA Foundation Annual Luncheon

The 2022 CCA Foundation Annual Luncheon will be held on Thursday, April 7, 2022, at the Hyatt Regency Aurora-Denver Conference Center located at 13200 E 14th Pl, Aurora, CO 80011. The doors will open at 11:00 AM and our program will begin promptly at 11:30 AM.

This event will provide our community with an in-depth look into our frontline and first responder career paths. From our unique Policy Academy, to our EMT Program, to our Nursing Pathways; you will learn what a day in the life of a CCA student will look like. You might learn a thing or two during our interactive experience as well!

For individual tickets or table sponsorship opportunities, please contact Katlynn Del Dotto at:

Katlynn.DelDotto@CCAurora.edu

Class Project Results:

As a class, your help with fundraising and in kind donations are needed. Think of your circle and who may be able to help and reach out to Mehran, Kelly or one of the committee members. Let's dig deep. Money and materials are needed!

Project Scope:

- Replace outdoor lighting - \$5670.00
- Front door lock repair - Quote in progress
- Refinishing Benches - Class Sweat Equity/ Estimated \$500 in supplies
- Crosswalk - Research in progress to determine approval process and costs
- Outdoor cameras - this may get cut from the list as their electrical panel is at full capacity
- Total project expected to be in the \$10k - \$15k range

Fundraising & In Kind Donations:

Classmates are completing Grant Research and Applications (Goal \$5k)

Nycci has applied for \$3K in donations from Nelnet Charitable Contributions Committee - **This has been approved!**

Aurora Cultural Arts

Photography

Here is a link to the folder where all the photos are being stored. If you have taken pictures please feel free to upload them [in this folder](#).

If you took any videos or photos during Community Day please forward those to Dan at:

clarke@mamabirdinterviews.com

The photography committee has asked us to all dig and find photos of our beautiful selves when we were rocking the wonderful fashion faux pas we talked about at the retreat. Please email Dan with your photo.

Instagram

Please add Leadership Aurora to your Instagram page and follow our JADOO spirit throughout this year! @leadershipaurora is the Instagram handle. The intention behind the Instagram page was started by the class before us so we can document moving forward the progress we make for our community. We will pass on the information to the next class.

Please put your information on [this spreadsheet](#) and @leadershipaurora will follow you if you would like. Please text Mehran Ahmed at 281-451-3152 any pictures you would like uploaded to our Instagram page!



Aurora Cultural Arts District awarded the Colorado Creative Industries (CCI) Designation!

Another Aurora achievement! Aurora Cultural Arts District was one of four districts recently awarded this designation. They will all join 26 other Colorado Creative Districts. Certification is for a five-year period. They will receive an award package including financial support, technical assistance, marketing support, access to grant, CDOT highway signage and leadership training.

The Colorado Creative Districts attract artists and creative entrepreneurs, like DAVA, to a community, infusing energy and innovation while driving growth and development of healthy communities.

You can learn more about Colorado Creative Districts [here](#).

Written by:

Charles Burrell Visual and Performing Arts Campus

New Aurora Public Schools magnet campus to be named after prominent Black jazz musician.

Leadership Aurora class of 2022 member Mehran Ahmed is thrilled to begin leading one of Aurora Public Schools' new magnet campuses, and now he's got a school name to go along with the excitement.

The APS Board of Education recently approved the name recommendation of the site to be called The Charles Burrell Visual and Performing Arts Campus. Opening in August 2022, the K-12 school will carry the namesake of one of Colorado's most well known Black jazz musicians and longtime member of the Denver Symphony Orchestra. In fact, according to Kuvo.org, Burrell is often referred to as "the Jackie Robinson of Classical Music" because he was the first African American to be a member of a major American symphony (the Denver Symphony Orchestra, now known as the Colorado Symphony).

"When you have someone who is the first of any kind we know that this person has to break down barriers for the people who will follow them," Ahmed said. "People should look at this and care to learn that being focused on what they are passionate about builds creativity and confidence." The new APS campus will serve students in grades K-12 throughout APS and the metropolitan area.



The school will focus on arts-related disciplines including dance, music, theater and visual arts.

Students will have the opportunity to major in multimedia arts or performing arts in the high school pathway, Ahmed explained. Under each major, students choose a field of study that gives them a space for creative experimentation, which leads to capstone projects, internships, and industry credentials. K-8 students will be able to explore their creativity and become immersed in their pathway once they begin ninth grade.

[Click here](#) to learn more about The Charles Burrell Visual and Performing Arts Campus.

Written by:

Julius Vaughns

Media Day

Moving into the film room watching a segment from “Back to the Future” some may have wondered how can I get this room into added into my house? We listened to Brian explain his background and what the film school is all about. The potential and competitive nature that the collective of the school from the instructors to the students is very evident in what they are creating. The first thing that came to our minds wasn’t just something on the screen. After watching two small and very emotional clips

we all
that
create



realized
they
art.

The creative minds that they have nurtured and grown shows that they having something very special in our community.

Written by:
David Spencer

And the
Winners
are...

[Check out the winners of the
Robot Challenge on page 6!](#)



City of Aurora Day

On Thursday November 18th, our class started the day off at the City of Aurora for a leadership panel breakfast with Mayor Coffman, City Manager Jim Twombly, Mayor Pro Tem Francois Bergan and DEI Officer Janice Napper. We had an opportunity to hear from the elected leaders about their vision for Aurora and the focus to bring impactful economic opportunities to the area. Later, we heard from Aurora Water General Manager Marshall Brown, where he shared about the department’s continued focus to ensure that the water supply can keep up with the population. Mr. Brown shared that while they have a focus on buying up more reservoirs, the residents could also assist by taking advantage of the city’s water-wise landscape rebate – up to \$3,000! Remember though, everything has rules so if you’re interested in participating, visit Water-wise Landscape Rebate - City of Aurora (auroragov.org).

During our mid-morning timeslot, the class participated in a mock council session by acting out their assigned roles while getting help from Deputy City Manager, Jason Batchelor. We got an insight into some of the topics that were presented to the council when they discussed the public and private property camping ban bill. After lunch, we paired up with our accountability partner to “tour” the various City Departments and their booths to hand

out “\$1,000 Aurora Bucks”, to whichever department you felt warranted additional make-believe funding dollars. It was a terrific way to learn about the various departments and the roles each team member played.

Once the teams handed out their Aurora Bucks, we all made our way to Level 10 LLC for a tour of their large nondescript marijuana grow facility. It may have appeared nondescript, but my nose knew better (lol)! Given Colorado’s pioneering ways in the marijuana industry, it was insightful to hear about the recent increase in permits to allow for the expansion of new growing facilities. The tax revenue has continued to support various projects in Aurora, and the city sees this as an opportunity to take the lead in demonstrating how to successfully manage and regulate a high-growth, but still budding market. One thing is for certain, the employees and the local business owners continue to put their passion for Aurora in everything they do.

Written by:
Michael Arellano

Pay it Forward Fundraising

[On Saturday February 19th](#), Legends will be donating 20% of ALL sales for the day to the Pay It Forward effort for Leadership Aurora.

They open at 11am and the kitchen is open until 11:30pm, but the bar will remain open until 1pm.

Weekend breakfast is being served until 2pm. On that Saturday they have a delicious, tender choice 12 oz Ribeye with a Potato & Veggie for \$22.

Local beers on tap include [Launchpad](#), BRUZ and Dry Dock. It will be Karaoke night from 8pm-1am.

If your organization, or one you know about, is accepting grants for art, community projects, or low-income community improvement acts – please contact Katlynn Del Dotto or Mehran Ahmed.

Call to Action

Looking to Spotlight someone on our class that has gone above and beyond or has a great milestone in their life that they have accomplished? Contact DeeDee to feature them in our newsletter.

Do you know of any volunteer opportunities or ways that people can help others?

Contact DeeDee at:
deedee.poole@aurorachamber.org



Leadership Aurora Class Planning Calendar (2021-2022)

| MONTH LOCATION/NOTES | EVENT | | DATES | TIMES |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| September | Pre-retreat reception | 8 | 5:00-7:00 P.M. | Dry Dock North |
| | Class retreat | 16-18 | Varies | Beaver Run - Breckenridge |
| October | Community Session | 21 | 7:45 A.M. -5:00 P.M. | Summit Event Center |
| November | City of Aurora Day | 18 | 7:45 A.M.-5:00 P.M. | Aurora Municipal Center |
| December | Media Session | 16 | 7:45 A.M.-5:00 P.M. | TBD |
| January | Education Session | 20 | 7:45 A.M.-5:00 P.M. | TBD |
| February | Healthcare Session | 17 | 7:45 A.M.-5:00 P.M. | TBD |
| March | Military Session | 17 | 7:45 A.M.-5:00 P.M. | TBD |
| April | Police Session | 21 | 7:45 A.M.-5:00 P.M. | TBD |
| May | Fire Session | 19 | 7:45 A.M.-5:00 P.M. | TBD |
| June | Graduation Day | 2 | 9:00 A.M-8:00 P.M. | Summit Event Center |
| | Golf Tournament | 16 | 8:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M. | Heritage Eagle Bend Golf Course |

Answer from page 5.....

The Mighty Four!

Teamwork makes the dreamwork!

We dug in, made a plan, worked together, and conquered!
Just like our entire class does!

Congratulation team! It was a pleasure working with you all on this project! I am extremely honored to be a part of this amazing class filled with the finest leaders I know!

DeeDee



Together We Will Make Magic
#jadoo

Or in this case...Robots!