



**“Lessons Learned from the Pandemic”**

**Roundtable on  
Broadband Access, Affordability and Deployment**

**Sponsored by the  
Communications Equity and Diversity Council  
Digital Empowerment and Inclusion Working Group**

**Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554**

**March 23, 2023**

**Speaker and Panelist Bios**

#### **Introduction**

**Jamila Bess Johnson, Designated Federal Officer, FCC  
Communications Equity and Diversity Council (CEDC)  
Media Bureau**

#### **Opening Remarks and Presentation**

**Heather Gate, Executive Vice President of Digital Inclusion  
Connected Nation \*  
CEDC Chair**



*\* indicates a member of the Communications Equity and Diversity Council*

As the Executive Vice President of Digital Inclusion for Connected Nation (CN), Heather Gate is responsible for strategy development and implementation of programs that impact digital inclusion for all people in all places. Ms. Gate has more than 15 years of experience working in digital inclusion with the mission of improving the lives of vulnerable populations across the country via technology access, adoption, and use. She has extensive experience engaging with minorities, rural communities, families, and others on the frontlines of the digital divide and working behind the scenes as an advocate and tactician with local, state, and federal leaders.

Heather currently serves as the Chair of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Communications Equity and Diversity Council (CEDC). She previously served on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Advisory Committee on Diversity and Digital Empowerment (ACDDE) as the Chair of the Digital Empowerment and Inclusion Working Group (2017-2019) and Vice-Chair of the full ACDDE (2019-2021).

## **Panel 1: Availability, Affordability, Deployment**

*Moderator*

**Clayton Banks, Founder  
Silicon Harlem\***



Clayton Banks is the CEO of Silicon Harlem whose goal is to combine technology and innovation with affordable connectivity that can enable a sustainable economic engine in emerging communities across the United States. Under his leadership, Silicon Harlem has attracted over \$50 million dollars into upper Manhattan for advanced infrastructure research and test bedding. Mr. Banks has positioned Upper Manhattan as a tech and innovation hub that is one of the fastest growing areas for tech startups, entrepreneurs, and companies. Banks has been able to galvanize the public sector, the private sector, universities, and community stakeholders to embrace tech as a sustainable economic engine for Upper Manhattan. Banks has established critical programs based on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in public schools and several non-profits in Upper Manhattan to prepare citizens for 21st century jobs and careers. These programs have become gateway opportunities for many students to pursue further education.

Prior to Silicon Harlem, Banks was a pioneer in the cable and communications industry. He set the vision for Ember Media, a development group that builds digital solutions and interactive applications for top brands and non-profit organizations, across multiple platforms. Known as a pragmatic visionary, Banks has developed and deployed leading edge technology and applications for network cloud, gaming consoles, social media, augmented and virtual reality, interactive TV, tablets, mobile apps and over 400 interactive properties. Banks worked with former President of the United States Bill Clinton to publish a first-of-its-kind interactive college guide series called “The Key,” that targets underserved communities and features Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic Serving Institutions. Banks served as Vice President of Affiliate Relations for Comedy Central. While at Comedy Central, he was part of the launch of South Park, the Daily Show with Jon Stewart, and the Upright Citizens Brigade.

He has been recognized with many awards and honors including selected as one of New York City’s “Tech Power 50” leaders in the technology industry. Banks has been inducted into the Library of Congress, has received proclamations from the Public Advocate, Manhattan President’s office, Brooklyn’s President Office, and Advocate of the Year from Society for Africans in Diaspora.

*\* indicates a member of the Communications Equity and Diversity Council*

*Panelists*

**Joshua Breitbart, Senior Vice President  
ConnectAll NY**



Joshua Breitbart is the Senior Vice President, ConnectALL at Empire State Development. In that role, he serves as New York’s Director of the Division of Broadband Access, overseeing the statewide digital equity plan and administering over \$1 billion in public investments across the state. Joshua Breitbart is a former Deputy Chief Technology Officer for New York City. He led development of the city’s first comprehensive broadband strategy, which was successfully piloted during the COVID pandemic and secured a mayoral commitment of over \$150 million, the largest ever municipal allocation for broadband infrastructure of any U.S. city.

**Greta Byrum, Principal for Broadband and Digital Equity  
HR&A Advisors**



Greta Byrum currently serves as Principal for Broadband and Digital Equity Principal at HR&A Advisors. Previously, she launched the Just Tech Program at the Social Science Research Council, a program providing holistic support to visionaries at the intersection of technology and social justice. Greta also founded Community Tech NY, a non-profit creating community-owned broadband ecosystems; built the New School’s Digital Equity Lab, an interdisciplinary digital equity research and practice group; and founded the Resilient Communities Program at New America, an initiative bringing storm-hardened mesh WiFi to five neighborhoods in NYC’s flood zones. Greta has a background in urban planning, communication technologies, and poetry; was a Harvard Loeb and a Fulbright Fellow; and serves on the on the New York State Regents’ Advisory Council on libraries, the Southern Connected Communities Project Advisory Board, and the board of the Howland Public Library in her hometown of Beacon, New York.

**Broderick Johnson, Executive Vice President, Public Policy**  
**Executive Vice President, Digital Equity**  
**Comcast**



Broderick oversees the company’s Public Policy team and holds overall responsibility for Comcast’s role in the digital equity space. Comcast is a leader in solutions to bridge the digital divide, and Broderick works closely with our partners in government and other stakeholders to support our shared goal of connecting as many Americans as possible to the Internet, and to shape our corporate policies that allow our businesses to continue to grow and innovate.

Broderick has more than three decades of experience as a lawyer, policy advisor, and political strategist, most recently with the international law firm of Covington & Burling. He has served under two U.S. Presidents, as Deputy Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs under President Clinton, and as Assistant to the President and Secretary of the Cabinet under President Obama. Broderick also served as chief counsel for several committees in the U.S. House.

Broderick is a highly respected and trusted leader in Washington D.C. and across the nation, and he has advised hundreds of clients on a wide array of policy issues, including telecommunications and tech matters. He earned a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Michigan and a Bachelor of Arts degree from the College of the Holy Cross. He sits on numerous boards, including the boards of directors of the Obama Foundation, the Black Economic Alliance, and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation. He also chairs the My Brother’s Keeper Alliance Advisory Council.

**Thu Nguyen, Executive Director**  
**OCA – Asian Pacific American Advocates**



Thu Nguyen serves OCA National as its Executive Director. A graduate from Rice University with degrees in Chemistry and Sociology, Thu found her way into the nonprofit sector through organizing Asian American students on campus and bridging partnerships between student groups and local Houston community organizations. She curated the first Asian American student art gallery at Rice, which pioneered the university’s annual underground Asian American art exhibition. Before OCA, she freelanced for nonprofits and Asian-owned start-ups to do community outreach and social media marketing.

In her capacity, Thu oversees storytelling, relationships, fundraising, and operations for OCA. She brings a unique understanding of grassroots organizing and design to her work at the national level. She serves as the Chair of the Asian American Media Alliance and sits on the diversity, equity, and inclusion council for Charter.

With her spare time, Thu focuses on the intersection of advocacy with small businesses. As the daughter of Vietnamese refugees, she was raised in a nail salon (and is a Texas state certified nail technician) and learned the importance of community building as an entrepreneur. This has led to her work freelancing with restaurants, hotels, and museums to create spaces that bridge sociopolitical issues with cultural activities such as supper clubs, zine-making, and more. To read more on the spaces she makes, visit [thudawin.org](http://thudawin.org).

**Annette Taylor, Director, Office of Digital Equity and Literacy**  
**North Carolina Department of Information Technology, Office of Digital Equity & Literacy**



Annette Taylor joined the North Carolina Department of Information Technology's Division of Broadband and Digital Equity in May 2022 as the director of the Office of Digital Equity and Literacy. She is helping expand NCDIT initiatives to ensure all North Carolinians have equitable access to high-speed internet and digital literacy resources. Annette has more than 25 years of community service and civic engagement in both public and private sector roles and in the philanthropic arena directing resources to organizations across North Carolina.



**Ovidiu Viorica, Broadband & Technology Program Manager  
New Mexico Public School Facilities Authority**



Ovidiu has a background in engineering and project management and started his career in the telecommunication industry over twenty-five years ago. He worked on the deployment of large scale wired and wireless telephone and data transport networks in Europe and the US, and has extensive experience with the new construction, upgrades and operations of telecommunication and broadband infrastructure.

Since 2014 Ovidiu has worked on the development and implementation of the Public School Facilities Authority's Education Technology Infrastructure Program, expanded in 2021 to include a Statewide Education Network (NM SEN) to connect students and all public schools in the state to each other and to secure internet service.

During and after the COVID crisis, the NM Broadband team worked diligently to connect as many students and teachers as possible to the internet, leveraging all technologies and sources of funding available, including state, private and federal (s.a. ECF and EBB/ACP).

Ovidiu is working with a great team of committed professionals and many partners at the state and federal level, to help schools, state agencies, other stakeholders, and Internet Service Providers coordinate, deploy and operate a cost effective, reliable, scalable, sustainable and secure broadband solution for all the public schools in the State of New Mexico.

Ovidiu sits on the newly formed Connect New Mexico Council and chairs the Permits, Rights Of Way and Pole Attachments (PROP) working group.

## **Panel 2: Adoption & Digital Readiness**

*Moderator*

**Sarah Kate Ellis, President and CEO  
GLAAD\***



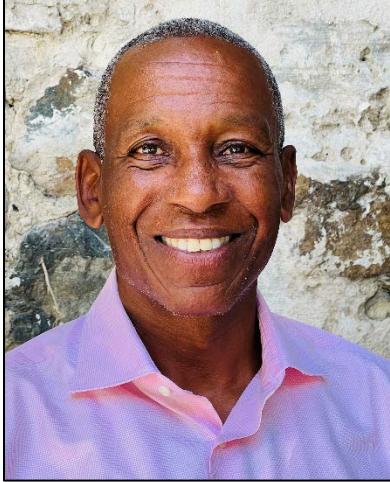
Sarah Kate Ellis is the President and CEO of LGBTQ advocacy organization GLAAD. During her eight years of leading GLAAD, she has run winning campaigns for marriage equality, representation of LGBTQ people in media, education on transgender people, and more. She has moderated and participated in official panels about global LGBTQ issues at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland. She works directly with CEOs, elected officials, and the most recognizable journalists and celebrities to advance LGBTQ acceptance.

Sarah Kate is a regular expert on CNN, MSNBC, and across print and online media. Prior to GLAAD, Sarah Kate was a media executive.

She and her wife Kristen co-authored a new children's book entitled 'All Moms' and they reside in New York with their children.

*Panelists*

**Stephan Adams, President and CEO  
Virgin Islands Next Generation Network (viNGN)**



Stephan Adams is the President and CEO of viNGN, a solely owned subsidiary of the US Virgin Island's Public Finance Authority. He is responsible for the daily operations of this fiber optic middle mile infrastructure company. viNGN provides wholesale Internet access to all the Internet Service Providers in the Territory. Mr. Adams is also the Executive Director of Territory's Digital Equity and Inclusion program in the Territory. He also spearheads an initiative to deploy ubiquitous Wi-Fi in the USVI.

The California native has extensive business acumen in technology. Mr. Adams led Mergers and Acquisitions for KANA Software, a previously publicly traded enterprise software company. He also raised over \$12M in venture capital for a consumer digital media software company he co-founded. Mr. Adams also started a 3-D printing company and negotiated content licensing agreements with the US Army, US Air Force, US Navy, and Boys Scouts of America.

Mr. Adams earned his B.A. Degree in Sociology from the University of California, Berkeley.

**Norma Fernandez, CEO  
EveryoneOn**



Norma joined EveryoneOn in 2013 to establish the organization’s first regional office in Los Angeles. Her efforts led to thousands of households adopting high-speed internet and a framework for engaging cross-sector organizations in digital inclusion initiatives.

Norma became CEO in late 2019 and found herself leading EveryoneOn during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, she grew and diversified the board of directors, created a strategic framework, doubled the size of the team, and oversaw the implementation of the organization’s first ever Digital Skills Academy, a training program for individuals and organizations. This has resulted in more than \$3M raised from diverse sources, new partnerships with leading organizations like Capital One and Microsoft, expansion in Los Angeles and the Bay Area, thousands of computers distributed to income-insecure households, and more than 2,000 people trained (virtually and in-person). In addition, under Norma’s leadership, EveryoneOn has facilitated access to broadband to more than 400,000 households across the country. As a trained urban planner and community development advocate, she brings a distinct perspective to the digital inclusion space. Norma has also been a featured speaker on the digital divide and digital equity at Net Inclusion and various nationwide conferences, as well as a guest instructor on digital inclusion outreach strategies with the Nonprofit Technology Network.

Before joining EveryoneOn, Norma worked at the Los Angeles Unified School District implementing a local hire program and also managed neighborhood revitalization projects while at Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative. Norma is passionate about social justice and helping all communities thrive. She draws from her experiences as the daughter of Mexican immigrants, a first-generation college student, and an active volunteer over the years to inform her work. Norma is a proud product of public college institutions, including Santa Monica College and UCLA where she earned a B.A. in Sociology, a minor in Chicano/a Studies, and a M.A. in Urban Planning. Beyond digital equity and social justice, Norma’s other passion is living a full life alongside her family and friends.

**Anisa Green, Director, Federal Regulatory  
Chief of Staff – EVP, Federal Regulatory Relations & Chief Regulatory Officer, Corporate  
External & Legislative Affairs  
AT&T Services, Inc.\***



Anisa Green, Director – Federal Regulatory, has over 24 years of experience and expertise in regulatory, legal and advocacy work. She is based in the AT&T DC office on the External & Legislative Affairs Federal Regulatory team currently working on universal service regulatory issues, with a focus on consumer broadband affordability, digital equity, and rural healthcare matters. She also serves as Chief of Staff for the EVP and Chief Regulatory Officer. During her career – she’s not only gained a wealth of knowledge in the telecommunications, media, and technology field, she has made enriched her network along the way.

Her commitment to serving her community is integral to her work. She champions various organizations focused on empowering, encouraging and educating the youth, women, and marginalized communities, including AT&T’s External & Legislative Affairs Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force, Women of AT&T, FCBA, FCBA Diversity Pipeline Committee, FCBA Foundation, FCC’s Equity and Diversity Council, Genesys Works, Crittenton, Girls Who Code, Junior Achievement, the NETwork Black Integrated Communications Professionals, Women in Technology, Women in Cable Telecommunications, Year Up and many others. She has mentored and sponsored aspiring leaders on their way to career success while maintaining humility, candor, and perspective. She also started her own personal styling and event planning business to help people feel better about themselves and always have a good time doing it.

Hailing from Brooklyn, NY with roots in West Indies, Anisa finished her Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and Communication at the George Washington University, became a certified paralegal and has taken numerous continuing legal education credits to further her knowledge in TMT. When she is not running after her children and caring for her family, she takes advantage of a few stolen moments by shopping, reading a book, catching a movie, or taking a long walk/ride.

**Thomas Kamber, Founder and Executive Director  
Older Adults Technology Services (OATS)**



Tom Kamber is the founder and executive director of Older Adults Technology Services (OATS) and Senior Planet. He is a leading expert on aging and technology and is regularly featured in national media. Under his leadership, OATS and Senior Planet have developed award-winning programs for older adults across America and are now charitable affiliates of AARP. Tom has taught courses on technology, urban studies, and philanthropy at Columbia University, is widely published in professional and academic journals, and has presented his work on five continents. He is also a co-founder of the Afro-Latin Jazz Alliance (which has won multiple Grammy awards) and serves on several nonprofit boards of directors and public commissions.

**Ji Soo Song, Digital Equity Advisor**  
**U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Technology**



At the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Technology (OET), Ji Soo leads the Digital Equity Education Roundtables (DEER) Initiative to expand equitable adoption of high-speed broadband and digital tools for learning. He also develops intra-agency and interagency partnerships to close the digital divide and provides subject matter expertise to external capacity building and technical assistance efforts.

Prior to OET, Ji Soo was the senior policy advisor at the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), where he led the research, analysis, and communication of public policy issues concerning digital learning standards and frameworks, educator credentialing, and funding for professional development. Ji Soo represented ISTE as a board member for the Title IV-A Coalition and the National Coalition for Technology in Education and Training.

Ji Soo holds a B.A. in biology and education from Dartmouth College and M.Ed. in education policy and leadership from American University. He was also a 2021 fellow with the Institute for Educational Leadership's Education Policy Fellowship Program. Finally, Ji Soo served as a City Year AmeriCorps Member in the District of Columbia, where he taught third-grade mathematics and robotics and received the 2018 WilmerHale Civic Innovation Award.

**Hal Woods, Chief of Policy**  
**Kids First Chicago**



Hal Woods currently serves as chief of policy at Kids First Chicago (K1C), an education nonprofit that works to ensure every family and child in Chicago has access to a high-quality education. In this role, he works with parents and school district leadership to empower communities and shape education policies to better support students and families. Prior to joining K1C, Hal worked at Chicago Public Schools (CPS) in a variety of roles, including most recently as executive director of the Office of Innovation & Incubation, as well as director of strategy in the CEO's Office. Prior to working at CPS, Hal served as advisor to the president at the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA). A lifelong Chicagoan, Hal is a graduate of DePaul University.



## Closing Remarks

**Dominique Harrison, Ph.D., Chair**  
**Digital Empowerment and Inclusion Working Group**  
**Representing Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies\***



Dr. Dominique Harrison is Director of Racial Equity Design and Data Initiative (REDDI) at Citi, where she is advancing responsible innovation, financial inclusion & racial equity across Citi's products and services on behalf of unserved and underserved communities to drive innovation, customer experience, and growth. She partners closely with Citi's Lines of Businesses (LoBs) to influence and accelerate a firm-wide strategy on racial equity through business activities. REDDI aims to leverage technology to address inequities in the product development cycle to help close the racial wealth gap and increase economic mobility for communities of color.

Prior to Citi, Dr. Harrison was the Director of Technology Policy at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, where she built, scaled, and led the Center's Technology Policy Program on key tech policy issues affecting Black communities. She is the author of *Affordability & Availability: Expanding Broadband in the Black Rural South*, a report that details the potential for broadband to increase economic, educational, and healthcare opportunities in the Black Rural South.

Before joining the Joint Center, Dr. Harrison served as Project Director of the Aspen Digital Program at the Aspen Institute, where she conceived, developed, and led projects at the intersection of equity, technology, and public policy. While at the Institute, Dr. Harrison created the Diversity and Technology Action (D.A.T.A.) Initiative, a multi-pronged effort to rebuild the tech ecosystem to address the challenges of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Her leadership led to a cross-industry partnership that published the *Action to Catalyze Tech: A Paradigm Shift for DEI* report. Dr. Harrison has also worked at the United Nations Development Program Washington, D.C. office and Internews. Her previous academic appointments include faculty and instructor positions at Howard University, the University of Texas at Austin, and Trinity Washington University.

In addition to her work at Citi, Dominique serves as a member of the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) Communications Equity and Diversity Council (CEDC) and chairs the Digital Empowerment and Inclusion Working Group. She is a member of the Program Committee of the Research Conference on Communications, Information, and Internet Policy (TPRC), the Rock Health Summit

Innovation Council, and a community panelist for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA's) Transform to Open Science (TOPS) and Year of Open Science initiatives.

Dr. Harrison earned a B.S. in Advertising from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, an M.A. in Media Studies from the University of Texas at Austin, and a Ph.D. in Technology, Policy and Society from Howard University. Her scholarship focuses on race, multistakeholder governance, and communications policy, and has been featured on *NPR*, *CSPAN*, *NBC News*, *Roll Call*, and *The Hechinger Report*. Dominique is the proud child of Jamaican immigrants and can be found globetrotting at a moment's notice.