



Featured Panelists



Michael A. Webb – Lincoln Financial Group

Vice President, Workplace Solutions IT, Software Engineering

Michael Webb is vice president, Software Engineering at Lincoln Financial Group. In this role, he is accountable for software engineering for various technologies; this includes our Digital Intelligent Automation tools, Business Process Management, Robotics Process Automation Straight Through Processing, Scan/Capture, and Enterprise Integration services. Michael has over 20 years of experience and has dedicated his career to creating and executing major initiatives that consistently produce multimillion-dollar cost savings and technology transformation while impacting operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Michael advocates for diversity, equity, and inclusion and is committed to empowering future industry leaders through engaging training, coaching, mentoring, and professional development opportunities. He is active in his local community, looking to improve people of color's understanding of careers in technology.

Before joining Lincoln, Michael led application development at CNO Financial Group, where he drove vital enterprise initiatives ranging from back-office scan capture programs to front-end web portals for Independent Marketing Organizations.

During his tenure at CNO, the organization released its first Variable Annuity Online Service center, and it transformed its back-office business process by outsourcing its infrastructure to reduce costs and improve productivity.

Mike holds a Bachelor of Science degree, Magna Cum Laude in Management/ Business Information Systems from Indiana Wesleyan University and a Master of Business Administration from the University of North Carolina Wilmington. When not driving organizational performance, I enjoy traveling with my wife, following Formula One racing, college basketball, and volunteering in my local community.



Brandy N. Smith – Lincoln Financial Group

Vice President, Chief of Staff, Office of the CEO

Brandy is vice president, chief of staff for the Office of the CEO. In this role, she partners to drive priority initiatives from the CEO office, including strategic initiatives that require cross-functional collaboration and coordination, CEO-sponsored strategic consulting engagements, and other CEO-related operational responsibilities.

Formerly, Smith served as vice president, workplace diversity, equity, inclusion, and legal counsel. In this role she provided strategic leadership to drive the implementation and execution of enterprise-wide workplace DEI initiatives.

Smith also served as assistant vice president, Chief Compliance Officer & Counsel for the group insurance division at Lincoln. She has held several positions of increasing responsibility since joining Lincoln in 2012. Over the years Smith led the enterprise African American Business Resource Group, spearheaded Lincoln Legal Department's involvement in Diversity Lab's Mansfield Rule, a program that measures and monitors diversity and inclusion for the legal department's top roles, high visibility projects and outside counsel representation and launched the legal diversity action team.

Smith holds a B.S. in Education from Nebraska Wesleyan University and a J.D. from Creighton University School of Law. She currently serves on the board of the Council on Legal Education Opportunities (CLEO - a non-profit focused on increasing diversity in the legal profession) and the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House (a non-profit providing a community, housing and to support families of seriously ill children).

Smith is also a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. She has received recognition by being named a 2022 40 Under 40 by the Philadelphia Business Journal; a Women Achieving Honoree by the Philadelphia Tribune and as a 40 under 40 Lawyer by the National Black Lawyers Association. Brandy is married to her husband Nick Smith and together they have two children – Rosaria (4 yrs) and Nickos (8 yrs).

Moderator



Sulaiman W. Rahman – DiverseForce

President & CEO

Sulaiman W. Rahman is a visionary leader and CEO at DiverseForce, a human capital solutions firm that specializes in helping organizations to recruit, retain, engage, and develop of top diverse talent. With decades of community building experience, Rahman founded UPPN, now known as BBEx Network, in 2007, which has become one of the Greater Philadelphia area's largest and most respected professional networks, with over 20,000 subscribers representing diverse talent pipelines from early career to C-suite.

Under Rahman's leadership, DiverseForce has launched innovative solutions for the social impact sector, including DiverseForce on Boards, in partnership with the University of Pennsylvania, and DiverseForce Executive Search. In 2021, he launched P4 Hub, an 11,200 sqft facility located in a federally designated opportunity zone in the Germantown area of Philadelphia, serving as a high-tech and high-touch hub for advancing racial equity and excellence. P4 Hub has quickly become a leading center for cross-sector collaboration and place-based impact.

Rahman's impressive board and committee memberships include serving as Chairman of the Board for Philanthropi Charitable, a donor-advised fund, Vice President of the Board of Directors at Community College of Philadelphia Foundation, and Executive Committee member of the Board of Directors for Mastery Charter Schools, The Philadelphia Orchestra and Kimmel Center of Performing Arts, and Lenfest Institute of Journalism. He also serves on the Board of Advisors for Lendistry, a fintech social enterprise with annual revenues of over \$250 million. Rahman has been recognized for his significant contributions, including receiving President Obama's Gold Volunteer Service Award and being appointed as Co-Chair of the 2016 Democratic National Convention's Volunteer Committee.

Rahman is an exceptional leader with a proven track record of success in building communities, developing diverse talent pipelines, and advancing racial equity and excellence. His expertise, reach, and impact make him an invaluable asset to any organization seeking to cultivate diverse talent, foster cross-sector collaboration, and achieve scalable impact.

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