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Center for Economic Inclusion Grows Team and Expands Capacity to Lead and Advance Inclusive Growth to Achieve Regional Prosperity

(SAINT PAUL, January 26) — Today, the Center for Economic Inclusion (Center) announced the addition of seven new staff in executive, director, and administrative positions: **Michael Aromolaran** (Vice President of Impact and Accountability), **Ethelind Kaba** (Vice President of External Affairs), **John Micevych** (Director of Product and Analytics), **Bridgette Moore** (Executive Administrative Assistant), **De'Vonna L. Pittman** (Director of Employer Inclusivity), **Genesis Sudderth** (Administrative Coordinator), and **Allissa Waukau** (Executive Administrative Assistant).

“The Center was created to disrupt the stagnant regional ecosystem of economic development and diversity and inclusion initiatives. Our key strategy: equipping public- and private-sector leaders with the tools they need to dismantle institutional racism in their sectors,” said Tawanna A. Black, Founder and CEO.

“As an increasing number of business leaders and policy makers recognize the need for this work, the demand for our expertise has been tremendous. We are growing our capacity to meet that demand and accelerate the pace of building a racially inclusive economy,” continued Black. “We are thrilled these leaders have joined our team.”

MICHAEL AROMOLARAN, Vice President of Impact and Accountability

As the Vice President of Impact and Accountability, Michael Aromolaran brings more than 24 years as a nonprofit professional and considerable skills in board leadership, operations management, change management, and fund development.

Most recently, Michael worked for Atlanta Habitat for Humanity, where he developed an entrepreneurship program and lecture series for its current and potential homeowners. He also previously served as CEO of Next Great Student in Atlanta, providing start-up, product development, and leadership for the nonprofit online education platform service provider. In addition, Michael has considerable private sector experience in the consulting and retail industries.

Michael has broad academic credentials, holding an MBA with specializations in Strategy and Finance, an M.A. in Computer Science and a B.A. in Mathematics.

ETHELIND KABA, Vice President of External Affairs

As the Vice President of External Affairs, Ethelind Kaba oversees strategic marketing campaigns, communications, development, and strategies to advance the Center for Economic Inclusion’s work of disrupting systems to advance an inclusive economy. She brings nearly two decades of experience raising awareness of urgent social issues to mobilize support and drive action.

Prior to joining the Center, Ethelind worked at one of the country's leading legal firms, shepherding high-impact brand and communication initiatives that enabled its attorneys to stay connected to their clients, colleagues, and the community. She serves on the board of The Jeremiah Program, a nationwide organization

dedicated to transforming the lives of low-income single mothers and their children, and volunteers at Twin Cities Habitat of Humanity, Edina Public Schools Legislative Action Committee, and TPT Community Resiliency Advisory Council. In 2014, she founded The Stargirl Initiative, a nonprofit dedicated to empowering teen and tween girls, for which she was named a Changemaker by MN Women's Press.

Ethelind holds a B.A. in Legal Studies from Hamline University, a Policy Fellowship from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota, and is pursuing an M.A. in Strategic Communication at the Hubbard School of Journalism at the University of Minnesota.

JOHN MICEVYCH, Director of Product and Analytics

As Director of Product & Analytics, John Micevych leads digital product development and results measurement at the Center. He supported the founding of the Center in 2017, and since then has led a variety of initiatives, including the development of the Center's racial equity assessment products for private companies, as well as its regional indicators that measure economic inclusion in the Twin Cities.

Prior to joining the Center, John worked as an independent consultant for progressive causes in Minnesota, including a philanthropic partnership for criminal justice transformation and an industry collaboration to reduce the cost of housing. He is the founder of Guide & Seek, a social enterprise that provides career counseling software for workforce development, and he started his career as a management consultant at McKinsey & Company.

John graduated summa cum laude with a B.S. in International Economics from Georgetown University and is currently pursuing a Master of Public Policy at the University of Minnesota. He lives in St. Paul, where you might find him reading science fiction or watching the Twins.

BRIDGETTE MOORE, Executive Administrative Assistant

Bridgette Moore joins the Center with more than 20 years of experience as an administration professional in nonprofit and for-profit organizations. As the Executive Assistant, Bridgette applies her passion for social and economic justice and stellar communications skills to ensuring the Center runs efficiently and effectively.

Prior to joining the Center, Bridgette served as the Senior Executive Assistant to the President at College Possible and in multiple high-level Executive Assistant roles at Schwan's Company.

Bridgette holds a B.A. from Metropolitan State University and a Mini MBA for Nonprofit Organizations from the Center for Business Excellence at the University of St. Thomas.

DE'VONNA L. PITTMAN, Director of Employer Inclusivity

As Director of Inclusive Growth, De'Vonna Pittman leads the Center's efforts to create broad, measurable shared accountability among public local, regional and statewide leaders and policy makers by equipping leaders and agencies with the knowledge, tools, and resources needed to close racial wealth gaps and accelerate inclusive economic competitiveness through racially equitable workforce, land-use, economic development, housing, transportation and infrastructure policies and investments.

An experienced leader, De'Vonna has spent almost two decades in public service. Her expansive experience with Hennepin County and work in the community ranges from handling million-dollar budgets and contracts to working with ex-offenders and individuals on probation (2002 – 2021). Her most recent role at Hennepin was in disparity reduction where she oversaw internal and external racial equity efforts in education, employment, income, housing, health, justice and transportation.

A community connector, De'Vonna has been committed to facilitating dialogue that empowers women, their families, and the communities they live in. She founded the Minnesota Black Author's Expo in 2017 creating a

space for community, educators and African American authors to find each other. In just three short years, thousands of Minnesotans have been able to access African American literature in one space.

De’Vonna is currently a board member for the ACLU Smart Justice Committee, and has previously served on the City of Lakes Community Land Trust, and the Sexual Violence Center Board. She is a 2015 Josie R. Johnson Leadership Fellow, and holds a Master’s Degree in Public Policy and Law Enforcement Leadership.

GENESIS SUDDERTH, Administrative Coordinator

As the Administrative Coordinator, Genesis Sudderth brings years of experience in government, administrative support, customer service, and project management.

A native of Tennessee, Genesis worked for both the Tennessee General Assembly and the state Department of Commerce and Insurance prior to relocating to the Twin Cities region. She also served as the Executive Assistant to the CEO at Enterprise Minnesota and as a Project Coordinator at Abbott.

Genesis has a B.A. in English from Vanderbilt University and an MBA and Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Corporate Communications from the University of St. Thomas.

ALLISSA WAUKAU, Executive Administrative Assistant

As the Executive Administrative Assistant, Allissa Waukau supports the organization’s leadership and programmatic areas through administrative management, including event coordination, messaging, and media relations.

Most recently, Alissa worked in the Office of Minnesota Governor Tim Walz and Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan, tasked with representing the Governor and Lieutenant Governor at events in the Native community. Prior to her work in the Governor’s office, Alissa worked in marketing and sales where she excelled with a Native American Veteran-owned company and advanced working relationships with many tribal clients and corporate partners. She also previously served as the Executive Assistant to the President and CEO of Achieve Mpls.

Alissa volunteers in support of important public affairs issues, including event coordination for the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, speaking at the Nobel Peace Prize Forum, and serving as a member of the Equity and Diversity Impact Assessment Committee for the Minneapolis Public Schools.

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About the Center for Economic Inclusion

The Center for Economic Inclusion is a cross-sector organization committed to strengthening the Minneapolis-St. Paul region’s civic infrastructure and collective capacity to disrupt systems and influence market forces to catalyze shared prosperity and advance an inclusive economy. More at CenterforEconomicInclusion.org