

Council Business Meeting

June 1, 2021

Agenda Item	Appointments to the Social Equity and Racial Justice Commission	
From	Melissa Huhtala	City Recorder
Contact	Melissa.huhtala@ashland.or.us ; (541) 488-5307	

SUMMARY

Confirm Mayor's appointment of Amit Chaudhary, Cheri Elson, Julie Gillis, Keith Jenkins, Irene Kai, Anyania Muse, Nataki Myers, Emily Simon, Tamara Williams, and Precious Yamaguchi to the Social Equity and Racial Justice Commission.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

Ashland Municipal Code (AMC) Chapter 2.19.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION

N/A

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This is confirmation by the City Council of the Mayor's appointments to the Social Equity and Racial Justice Commission

FISCAL IMPACTS

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

N/A

ACTIONS, OPTIONS & POTENTIAL MOTIONS

I move to approve the appointments of Amit Chaudhary, Cheri Elson, Julie Gillis, Keith Jenkins, Irene Kai, Anyania Muse, Nataki Myers, Emily Simon, Tamara Williams, and Precious to the Social Equity and Racial Justice Commission with a term beginning June 3, 2021 and expiring April 30, 2024.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Amit Chaudhary Application
- Attachment 2: Cheri Elson Application
- Attachment 3: Julie Gillis Application
- Attachment 4: Keith Jenkins Application
- Attachment 5: Irene Kai Application
- Attachment 6: Anyania Muse Application
- Attachment 7: Nataki Myers Application
- Attachment 8: Emily Simon Application
- Attachment 9: Tamara Williams Application
- Attachment 10: Precious Yamaguchi Application

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO
CITY COMMISSION/COMMITTEE**

Please type or print answers to the following questions and submit to the City Recorder at City Hall, 20 E Main Street, or email melissa.huhtala@ashland.or.us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Recorder at 488-5307. **Attach additional sheets if necessary.**

Name Amit Choudhary

Requesting to serve on: Social Equity and Racial Jus (Commission/Committee)

Mailing Address Box #325 . 2305 Ashland Street, Suite-C, Ashland, OR, 9752

Physical Address 2870 Wedgewood lane, Ashland, OR

Occupation Software Engineer/Farmer Phone: Home 458 225 0845

Work

Email

Fax

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? Sheel Niketan Higher Secondary School

What degrees do you hold? Bachelor in Computer Science and Engineering

Masters in Management Information Systems

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

I have been working with my friends to organize the vigils and marches for racial equity. Have been the actively part of

organizing community free meditation for about 3 years where people from all the faiths and races are welcome.

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

Continuing my above answer, I have met so many people in ashland who have joined for weelkly meditation

for last three years. Talking to them and getting to know them in person and their problems have

always inspired me to work with them to make there life better in anyway i can

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? I can always learn more about all the cultures around

the world including their history, that will make me more informed about diversity.



3. Interests

Why are you applying for this position?

Just want to actively

engage in community welfare working with the government system.

4. Availability

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings? Do you prefer day or evening meetings? Yes I can (if I am informed in time).

I would prefer evening

5. Additional Information

How long have you lived in this community?

3 years

Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position

I donot have a special qualification for this post. But working with my friends on recent events for racial justice have motivated me to invest more and more of time to the things that really matter and I have started finding immense joy in being part of these community events. I would love to engage myself more in such activities.

Plus, I have been working on some of my own ideas to make things better in community with my personal skillset:

Some of my ideas include:

1. My masters thesis was in pattern recognition in random data sets

I came accross an article that was about human trafficking accross I-5 Highway.

I have been working on my software to make it more and more efficient in

determining the pattern of human trafficking accross I-5 and to work with our police department

to estimate this pattern and minimize this problem in society.

2. Solar farm: As an entrepreneur I want to invest in a solar farm that

will generate more green electricity and help reduce green house gasses in our valley.

05/17/2021

Date

Signature



**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO
CITY COMMISSION/COMMITTEE**

Please type or print answers to the following questions and submit to the City Recorder at City Hall, 20 E Main Street, or email melissa.huhtala@ashland.or.us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Recorder at 488-5307. **Attach additional sheets if necessary.**

Name Cheri Elson

Requesting to serve on: Social Equity and Racial Justice Commission (Commission/Committee)

Mailing Address 599 Ashland Creek Dr., Ashland, OR 97520

Physical Address 599 Ashland Creek Dr., Ashland, OR 97520

Occupation retired Phone: Home (541) 630-0016

Work

Email pitzkele@me.com

Fax

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? UC Santa Cruz - Santa Cruz, CA
Ventura College of Law - Ventura, CA

What degrees do you hold? BA in Music and a JD

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?
While I have not had any formal training in this area, I engaged on a self-training journey about 4 years ago. Like many liberal white folk, I did not have a clear understanding of my white privilege and it has been eye-opening to say the least. This is a continuing journey for me - I will never be done learning or helping to disseminate what I have learned!

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

My 20 years as an estate planning attorney has taught me the value of listening so that I can serve my clients and fulfill their needs (and not mine). In the past four years, I have also become politically active, with racial equity being an important subject. As a Jew (whose mother is a Holocaust survivor), I sadly have direct experience with racism and also know the frustration of others telling me I am over reacting. I know that, as a white person, I don't get to say what racism is - my job is to listen, learn, and support (just as, as a Jew, I do get to say what anti-semitism is and non-Jews have a role to listen, learn, and support).

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? Ongoing training is imperative - living an anti-racist life is not something achieved by reading a book or 10 - it is learning, adjusting, and learning and adjusting more - it's really a continuum on which I can keep moving and the best way to do that is through training which can then be turned into action.



3. Interests

Why are you applying for this position? _____

Social equity and racial justice are extremely important to me and I know that this entire country's system was built on a lack of both. In order for us, as a society, to live up to our full potential, we must break down the systemic racism and become a truly equitable and racially just society.

4. Availability

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings? Do you prefer day or evening meetings? I probably prefer days, but could to evening

meetings if needed.

5. Additional Information

How long have you lived in this community? Since 7/31/2014 - almost 7 years!

Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position

I think my answers above summarized everything pretty well. This is some of the most important work I think I can do. Judiasm teaches us the concelp of Tikum Olam, which means "Repair the World." We are each tasked to leave the world a better place than it was before we entered it. I can think of no better way of fulfilling this obligation than by doing what I can to end the systemic racism of this country (on a national, state, and local level). Serving on this commission would allow me the oppportunity (and honor!) of being on the front lines and helping our beautiful town become better.

May 11, 2021
Date

Cheri Eisen
Signature



**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO
CITY COMMISSION/COMMITTEE**

Please type or print answers to the following questions and submit to the City Recorder at City Hall, 20 E Main Street, or email melissa.huhtala@ashland.or.us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Recorder at 488-5307. **Attach additional sheets if necessary.**

Name _____

Requesting to serve on: _____ (Commission/Committee)

Mailing Address _____

Physical Address _____

Occupation _____ Phone: Home _____

Work _____

Email _____

Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? _____

What degrees do you hold? _____

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? _____

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO
CITY COMMISSION/COMMITTEE**

Please type or print answers to the following questions and submit to the City Recorder at City Hall, 20 E Main Street, or email mcloyst@ashland.or.us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Recorder at 488-5307. **Attach additional sheets if necessary.**

Name Keith Jenkins

Requesting to serve on: Social Equity and Racial Justice (Commission/Committee)

Mailing Address 226 Grant Street Ashland OR

Physical Address 226 Grant Street Ashland OR

Occupation Political Consultant

Phone: Home (510)746-6839

Work _____

Email _____

Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? Laney Community College

What degrees do you hold? None

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

I am the Vice President of SOBLACC. I am deeply knowledgeable in matters of racial equity and inclusion.

Living in Ashland as a Black Man has been a real challenge because of the racism and Anti Blackness I have encountered

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

I've been a community organizer for the better part of the last 15 years. From working with Oakland Rising

To working on the We-count Oregon campaign for the census, to Starting my very own Org called

Southern Oregon Black Leaders, Activists, & Community Coalition (SOBLACC)

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? Absolutely, we are never done learning so the more

trainings I can attend the better equipped I am to deal with the issues that come up day to day.



3. Interests

Why are you applying for this position?

Because I care about Ashland and I want our

Black and BIPOC communities to be heard and seen in a real way. That means that there are black people on this commission. Not as tokens but as contributing members of this commission.

4. Availability

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings? Do you prefer day or evening meetings? I am open to either. The issues that will come

up in these meetings are important and I'll make time.

5. Additional Information

How long have you lived in this community?

1 year

Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position

I am a black man who is not from here. I'm from Oakland California. I think that's relevant because where

I grew up we had representation in our local city government, and with that representation came accountability. I want

to bring that feel here. We know there are Black Folks in Ashland but I can go days without seeing someone

who looks like me. I want people to look at those on this commission and see faces that they can identify with and feel

comfortable bringing us their issues and having open honest dialogue with the goal of creating a better more equitable

Ashland

5/12/2021

Date


Signature



CITY OF ASHLAND

APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO CITY COMMISSION/COMMITTEE

Please type or print answers to the following questions and submit to the City Recorder at City Hall, 20 E Main Street, or email melissa.huhtala@ashland.or.us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Recorder at 488-5307. **Attach additional sheets if necessary.**

Name Irene Kai

Requesting to serve on: Social Equity and Racial Justice (Commission/Committee)

Mailing Address _____

Physical Address 2560 Eagle Creek Lane, Ashland, OR 97520

Occupation Art Instructor at RCC Phone: Home 541-552-1363

Work _____

Email irenekai@gmail.com

Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? School of Visual Arts, Royal College of Art

What degrees do you hold? MFA

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

I am the Co-Founder of the Ashland Culture of Peace Commission in Ashland (ACPC)

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

I am the ACPC Director of Development. I brought the World Peace Flame to Ashland.

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? I am a BIPOC of this community and recently

produced a Cultural Literacy Series for the Ashland Tidings.

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO
CITY COMMISSION/COMMITTEE**

Please type or print answers to the following questions and submit to the City Recorder at City Hall, 20 E Main Street, or email melissa.huhtala@ashland.or.us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Recorder at 488-5307. **Attach additional sheets if necessary.**

Name Anyania Muse

Requesting to serve on: Social Equity and Racial Co (Commission/Committee)

Mailing Address 264 Hargadine Street, Apt 1C, Ashland, OR 97520

Physical Address 264 Hargainde Street, Apt 1C, Ashland, OR 97520

Occupation Director, IDEA - OSF Phone: Home 510-328-8222

Work 773-501-6993

Email anyaniam@osfashland.org

Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? Mills College

What degrees do you hold? MA, Educational Leadership, NonProfit/Public/Organizational Management

BA, Political Legal Economic Analysis Pre-Law

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

Founder & Principal Equity & Inclusion Consultant; Curriculum Development & Leadership Consultant; Government Alliance on Race & Equity; BODHI Framework on Racial Equity and Transformational Social Justice

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

I founded S.A.V.A. Rising, Inc. a national nonprofit focused on the creating educational pathways for underrepresented families and communities.

I have worked with The Center for American Progress and Madera Group Consulting as a Public Policy, Racial E

quity, and Organizational Change consultant. Marin County Equity Officer leading 2700 employees across 22 departments in Racial Equity work.

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? Yes. Learning in this field is always critical to continued advancement of the work.

It is crucial to engage in a manner that supports continuous learning and improvement.



3. Interests

Why are you applying for this position? _____

As the new IDEA Director for OSF the relationships with the community are critical to shifting the dynamics and implementing IDEA change work.

My interest in this commission is based on supporting OSF and sustaining solid relationships for change within the community.

4. Availability

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings? Do you prefer day or evening meetings? Yes

5. Additional Information

How long have you lived in this community? _____

2 months

Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position

I've created and implemented similar commissions throughout my tenure as an Equity professional over the last 15 years.

5/19/2021

Date

Anyania Muse

Signature

Digitally signed by Anyania Muse
Date: 2021.05.19 11:45:07 -07'00'



**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO
CITY COMMISSION/COMMITTEE**

Please type or print answers to the following questions and submit to the City Recorder at City Hall, 20 E Main Street, or email melissa.huhtala@ashland.or.us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Recorder at 488-5307. **Attach additional sheets if necessary.**

Name Natalie Garrett Myers

Requesting to serve on: Social Equity + Racial Justice (Commission/Committee)

Mailing Address 88 Granite Street Ashland, Or 97520

Physical Address 88 Granite Street Ashland, Or 97520

Occupation Artistic Dir. OSF Phone: Home 510-902-2176

Work _____

Email _____

Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? Benkeley H.S., Virginia Union Univ., California Inst. of The Arts

What degrees do you hold? HS Diploma, BA, English, MFA - Theatre/Directing

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

Several years of EDI Training

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

15 years of organizational leadership which includes several years of sitting on EDI Panels and Councils

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? Yes Always. Equity is

an area for continued growth + evolution

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO
CITY COMMISSION/COMMITTEE**

Please type or print answers to the following questions and submit to the City Recorder at City Hall, 20 E Main Street, or email melissa.huhtala@ashland.or.us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Recorder at 488-5307. **Attach additional sheets if necessary.**

Name _____

Requesting to serve on: _____ (Commission/Committee)

Address _____

Occupation _____

Phone: Home _____

Work _____

Email _____

Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? _____

What degrees do you hold? _____

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? _____



**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO
CITY COMMISSION/COMMITTEE**

Please type or print answers to the following questions and submit to the City Recorder at City Hall, 20 E Main Street, or email melissa.huhtala@ashland.or.us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Recorder at 488-5307. **Attach additional sheets if necessary.**

Name _____

Requesting to serve on: _____ (Commission/Committee)

Mailing Address _____

Physical Address _____

Occupation _____ Phone: Home _____

Work _____

Email _____

Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? _____

What degrees do you hold? _____

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? _____

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO
CITY COMMISSION/COMMITTEE**

Please type or print answers to the following questions and submit to the City Recorder at City Hall, 20 E Main Street, or email melissa.huhtala@ashland.or.us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Recorder at 488-5307. **Attach additional sheets if necessary.**

Name Precious Yamaguchi

Requesting to serve on: Social Equity & Racial Justice (Commission/Committee)

Mailing Address 755 Oak Knoll Dr., Ashland, OR 97520

Physical Address (same as above)

Occupation Associate Professor of Communication Phone: Home 323-604-8053

Work _____
Email _____
Fax _____

1. Education Background

What schools have you attended? Humboldt State University (BA degree); Pepperdine University (MA); Bowling Green State University (Ph.D.)

What degrees do you hold? BA in Studio Art w/ minors in Ethnic Studies and Public Relations;

Master's degree in Communication; Ph.D. in Communication Studies

What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?
My doctoral degree is in Communication and I teach courses in international, intercultural, and digital communication;

I also have my cognate (like a minor) in Multicultural Counseling from Bowling Green State University in Ohio.

2. Related Experience

What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?

I've worked with diverse populations of students at a state university, international university, women's college, community college

and culinary institute. I've also published a book on Japanese American women who were imprisoned in the

World War II internment camps as well as several chapters and articles. I've also worked for Asian American and Latinx media in Los Angeles and Ohio.

Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why? Oh yes, I always try to attend conferences annually to

stay up-to-date with the latest research as well as expand my professional network.



3. **Interests**

Why are you applying for this position?

I am passionate about being engaged with my local community as well as working for BIPOC and LGBTQ equality.

4. **Availability**

Are you available to attend special meetings, in addition to the regularly scheduled meetings? Do you prefer day or evening meetings? Day time meetings are preferable, just because

sometimes it's difficult to find evening childcare.

5. **Additional Information**

How long have you lived in this community?

7 years

Please use the space below to summarize any additional qualifications you have for this position

I teach courses in Communication focused on international, intercultural, gender, and digital communication. I published a book and several articles and chapters about communication and cultures such as Ghanaian, Japanese American, and virtual/ online cultures. My Ph.D. is in Communication and I have worked with Asian American, Latinx, and non-profit organizations and media. For four years my co-hosted a Media Literacy radio show on JPR called Signals & Noise.

05/17/2021

Date

Precious Yamaguchi

Signature

Digitally signed by Precious Yamaguchi
Date: 2021.05.17 09:14:38 -07'00'

