



Urban Land Institute Charlotte

WLI Champions Profile (2019)

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Discipline - Planning and Development

Describe a Magic Moment in Your Career or Life - a magic moment in my career was when I was able to connect policy and practice in my work to support Charlotte's oldest African-American neighborhoods. Our work created specific tactics, strategies and shaped regulations and policy to create equitable development opportunities, "placekeeping" initiatives, and cultural and physical anti-displacement programs. Today, The community continues to champion this work that will have lasting impacts for years to come.

Describe Who or What has been a Key Influencer in Your Life I've been fortunate to have several mentors, close friends and family supporting me throughout my career.

I feel fortunate to have had many great influencers in my life both personally and professionally. They have helped to shape who I am today and will be tomorrow. There is not a day that goes by that I am not thankful to each one of them for their influence in my life. In my early years, my village in MS began shaping the person I am today. My mom and my aunt are very close to me and with support from my teachers I learned trust, honor, ethics, dedication, integrity, service, unconditional love, and many other characteristics that are deeply rooted in my personal value system and reflected in how I work.

Professionally, I have been blessed to have two strong women leaders that continue to influence me and are also fellow WLI Champions. Debra Campbell taught me the importance of resilience and agility in community development work and the importance of communicating a vision so that others can lead regardless of position or status. Supporting the notion that there is strength in numbers. Pamela Wideman reminds me of the importance of self care and setting boundaries - "you can't pour from an empty cup", she says. You have to nurture your gifts - mind, body and spirit, so that you can be the best version of yourself.

Next Big Challenge as an Industry Our biggest challenge is providing affordable and equitable development opportunities throughout our communities in such a way that becomes the way we do business and not just a project.

What is Your Secret Talent I am a certified Hip-Hop Cardio Dance instructor. I volunteer with a local church by teaching classes to support their Health and Wellness Ministry.

Your Take on Championing Others

When I think of championing others, I think of one of my favorite quotes by Shirley Chisholm Service is the rent we pay for the privilege of living on this earth.

Shirley Chisholm