

MEET THE SPEAKERS

Building an Equitable Future:

A Housing Policy Conversation with Gen Z College Students

Fair Housing Month 2023 National Event



Introductory Remarks: Demetria L. McCain

Demetria McCain is the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. Demetria joined HUD in September 2021, bringing dual vantage points to FHEO after having spent years assisting both housing choice voucher holders who sought low-poverty well-resourced housing options and neighborhood groups in underserved communities of color who sought more equitable distribution of resources and services. Before joining HUD, Demetria provided fifteen years of service, with five as president, at the Inclusive Communities Project (ICP), a Dallas based affordable fair housing nonprofit. Before joining

ICP, McCain worked on USDA Section 515 rural multifamily housing matters at the National Housing Law. She was also a staff attorney for the Neighborhood Legal Services Program of Washington, D.C. She is a graduate of Howard University School of Law, New York University and Brooklyn College and a member of the Dallas Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.



Closing Remarks: DeAndrea J. Cullen

DeAndrea J. Cullen is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO). This office leads the federal efforts to end housing discrimination and promote equal access to opportunity by administering and enforcing civil rights laws and educating the public on fair housing rights and responsibilities. DeAndrea has oversight of two divisions: 1) Policy and Legislative Initiatives, and 2) Education and Outreach. Her office also oversees the HUD-wide Limited English Proficiency (LEP) program.

As the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Policy, Legislative Initiatives, and Outreach (OPLIO), DeAndra is responsible for fair housing policy development, education and outreach activities, and media and press coordination. She coordinates fair housing policy issues with the Assistant Secretary and, at the direction of the Assistant Secretary, formulates department-wide strategic plans, program objectives, policies, and standards in support of policy objectives. Under DeAndra's leadership, OPLIO prepares the Assistant Secretary for fair housing policy planning guidance for HUD; serves as the Senior Executive on policy, legislative initiatives and national outreach; supports the Assistant Secretary and other Department Heads in the execution of their statutory civil rights responsibilities; and conducts national outreach to civil rights allies and partners. DeAndra's office supports the Assistant Secretary on all mission-critical civil rights activities.

DeAndra has a law degree from Indiana University, Maurer School of Law in Bloomington, Indiana. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in economics from North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, North Carolina. She is the recipient of several honors including the Trumpet Awards Foundation High Heels in High Places Award for excellence in civil rights, the Secretary's Exceptional Achievement Award from the U.S. Department of Labor, and the Assistant Secretary Distinguished Award in recognition of excellence, hard work, and commitment to the mission of HUD.



Aspen Andersson (*Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institution*)

Aspen Andersson (she/her) is from Clayton, North Carolina. She is a junior and member of the Esther G. Maynor Honors College at UNC Pembroke, where she is majoring in Political Science with a Pre-law concentration and double minoring in Spanish and English. Aspen holds three jobs on campus: Resident Advisor, Chief of Staff for the Student Government Association, and Student Service Leader for Service-Learning Catalogue Coordination. Additionally, Aspen was recently inaugurated as the 2023-2024 Student Body President, so she will be leaving her role as Chief of Staff at the end of this year to serve in this new position. She is also a

Chancellor's Ambassador and the President of the Model United Nations Club and was recently named the inaugural Chair of the 1887 Society. Lastly, she is also a

member of the Pre-law Society, Alpha Chi Honors Society, and the Student Affairs Advisory Board.



Ahmed Chowdhury (*Predominantly Black Institution*)

Ahmed A. Chowdhury is originally from Bangladesh. He is a Criminal Justice major at Georgia State University and the Executive Vice President for the Dunwoody campus for SGA. Ahmed has volunteered for many Non-Profit Organizations. One of his goals is to work on making the community better, by leaving it better than he found it.



Eric Couture (*Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution*)

Eric Couture (they/them) is a Junior at Virginia Commonwealth University majoring in Graphic Design and Craft/Material Studies. They are passionate about queer rights and the telling of stories of queer and trans resilience within a world actively hostile towards them. Through their work as a

Resident Assistant at VCU they have advocated for a more expansive Gender Inclusive Housing policy within the university and are tirelessly dedicated to creating an equitable and safe environment for all queer and trans people within the on-campus housing environment.



Kayla Marie Fairclough (*Hispanic Serving Institution and Predominately Black Institution*)

Kayla Marie Fairclough was born and raised in Paterson NJ. She currently attends Bloomfield College, where she is majoring in English Literature, as she enters her last semester at Bloomfield college.

Throughout her college experience, Kayla has been involved in many different activities, such as being an Executive Storyteller for Enrollment, a student worker in the President's Office, becoming a Peer Mentor, serving as a Resident Advisor in

Housing, and of course having the opportunity to become the Vice President of the Bloomfield College Student Government amongst other clubs and organizations.



Ranen Miao

Ranen is a senior at WashU studying political science, sociology, and women, gender, sexuality studies. He served two years as student body president and is the current president for the Pride Alliance, advocating for access to free menstrual products, expanded access to gender-neutral restrooms, increased investment to affinity groups, increased sex education

and PrEP access, and socioeconomic inclusion. Outside of campus, Ranen has worked at the ACLU, NARAL, Congress, the State Department, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, focusing on racial justice, reproductive freedom, equal opportunity for historically marginalized communities, and environmental justice.



Caren Yap (*Hispanic Serving Institution*)

Originally from Saudi Arabia, Caren Yap is an experienced Asian-American Pacific Islander (AAPI) organizer and double major at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. As a long-time Nevadan and first-generation immigrant, Caren has worked on the local, state, and national level, most recently as an Executive Secretary for the Nevada Legislature to bridge gaps

in education, food insecurity, housing, and civic engagement. Prior, she championed efforts at the Democratic National Committee and Nevada AAPI Democratic Caucus, most notably turning out AAPI, youth, and collegiate voters, making political processes accessible to communities of color. During her student body presidency at the country's most ethnically diverse university, Caren signed onto a nationwide coalition of 111 student presidents for student debt cancellation, leading to her recognition as an inaugural Asian Community Development Council Trailblazer.