



tech valley  
**center** of **gravity**  
THE CAPITAL REGION'S MAKERSPACE

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
ELECTION SLATE ANNOUNCEMENT  
2023**



# DAYONNA BOWLES

is running for a seat on the

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

I'm an Albany Native. I graduated from Russell Sage College with a bachelor's degree in computer science and minor in visual arts. I have about 10 years' experience as an IT professional for companies serving various industries. Also, I'm involved in several local civic groups and educational nonprofits.



# SAM BONFANTE

is running for a seat on the

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

and for the position of

## MEMBER AT LARGE

Sam! Bonfante is a Software Engineering Manager at Justworks, a company which provides benefits & HR solutions to startups and small to medium sized businesses. Sam has been a member of the CoG since 2015 and is regularly found working on all manner of creative endeavors which leverage the various and sundry tools of the makerspace. At various times, she has served as the CoG's coordinator for Electronics, 3D Printing, Laser Cutting, and IT, and she presently serves as the IT Director for the organization. Beyond the CoG, Sam serves as the board treasurer for the Albany chapter of the International Game Developer's Association (IGDA) as well as the board treasurer for the Capital Mages, a nonprofit devoted to supporting marginalized game developers in the capital region.



# KIT CLEMENTE

is running for the position of

## VICE PRESIDENT

Kit Clemente is the proprietor of Trinkets of Troy, a small business started and run out of TVCoG, and has worked for 5 years as a Product Manager for three other CoG-based businesses. She received her degree in historical archaeology from SUNY Binghamton, where her work focused on addressing the underrepresentation of minorities in the American historical record. She has a passion for education and jobs training as a pathway to a brighter and more inclusive future. Kit is also a self taught coder and game designer with 14 years of experience in online games and community management. After officially joining the CoG in 2019, Kit took on organizing TVCoG's Extra Life Events and runs the TVCoG Twitch channel. Kit currently captains the TVCoG Extra Life team, which has raised thousands of dollars for The Bernard and Millie Duker Children's Hospital at Albany Med. As the former Chair of the Internal Committee, Kit hopes to leverage her experience in community management and organizational planning to help focus our mission and position the CoG to grow into a stronger organization with a solid future.



# JOANNE FERNANDEZ

is running for a seat on the

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A seasoned and dynamic government relations leader, Ms. Fernandez possesses two decades of experience in developing and implementing government affairs, legislative and public strategies and initiatives for public and corporate entities. Consistently adapting to a geographic work terrain in which she covers New York State in its entirety with particular attention paid to Albany, Westchester County and New York City, her expertise includes government and legislative relations, campaign strategy and management, coalition building, grassroots engagement, advocacy, and more.

She is currently the Chief of Staff in the New York Department of State, where she serves as a resource, advisor, and strategic partner to the Secretary of State on programmatic, policy, and operational matters, and supports the implementation of the Secretary's priorities through coordination with the executive team and key stakeholders.



# COURTNEY MOORE

is running for a seat on the

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

and for the position of

## PRESIDENT

Courtney is a manager with an aeronautical & mechanical engineering degree from RPI who is passionate about serving her community and encouraging young people to pursue careers in technical fields. Courtney lives in Cohoes with her fiancé, Matt (an avid traveler who gives Courtney opportunities to tag along on exciting trips), and Miss Penelope (a spoiled and adorable 14-year old cat).

Courtney volunteers through Rotary and serves as the President Elect on the Glenville board, is an enthusiastic board member at the Schenectady Salvation Army, and thoroughly enjoys taking care of the kitties at the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society.



# DEBORAH NAZON

is running for the position of

# MEMBER AT LARGE

Deborah Nazon, Ph.D., is an Urban Equity Strategist and the Founder & President of EcoDiverCities, LLC, a heart-centered, research centric consulting business committed to being a co-creator of sustainable and generational wealth in urban communities. Using a systems approach, we focus on the New Urban Innovation Economy by employing the AGILE ECOSYSTEMS Methodology.

Dr. Nazon began her career as a science teacher in the Philadelphia Public School System. She also served as an instructor at Siena College teaching microeconomics. As the former Assistant Provost for Institute Diversity at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), she spearheaded Black Family Technology Awareness Day, an outreach program to encourage middle and high school students, families and educators to explore opportunities in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Dr. Nazon received her Ph.D. in Ecological Economics and MS in Geology from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and her BS in Biology Education from Cheyney University of Pennsylvania.

# JESSICA OTITIGBE

is running for a seat on the

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Jessica Otitigbe is a uniquely talented and versatile communications leader, professor, and business storytelling strategist with over nearly 25 years of experience in the areas of higher education, community relations, corporate communications, public relations, media project management, and media event planning. As the President and Founder for her newly formed company, Creative Collaborations, LLC, her areas of focus will include providing focused engagement communications, progressive branding, and experiential communications for start-ups, small businesses, and not-for-profits.

Jessica received her Bachelor's degree in English from the University at Albany, and a Master of Science degree in Broadcast Journalism from Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. Jessica has been teaching a series of courses in advertising, marketing, public relations, and strategic communication at the College of Saint Rose, which present opportunities to demonstrate commitment to student achievement, equity access, and the education profession.



# DYLAN THIES

is running for a seat on the

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

and for the position of

## MEMBER AT LARGE

Dylan has been a maker at TVCOG for several years, and has served as the 3D Printing Zone coordinator for most of them. By trade, he is a software engineer.

He has been on the Board of Directors for Troy Bike Rescue, and has served as the Leadership Development Coordinator for Alpha Phi Omega, covering NY, PA, and DE.