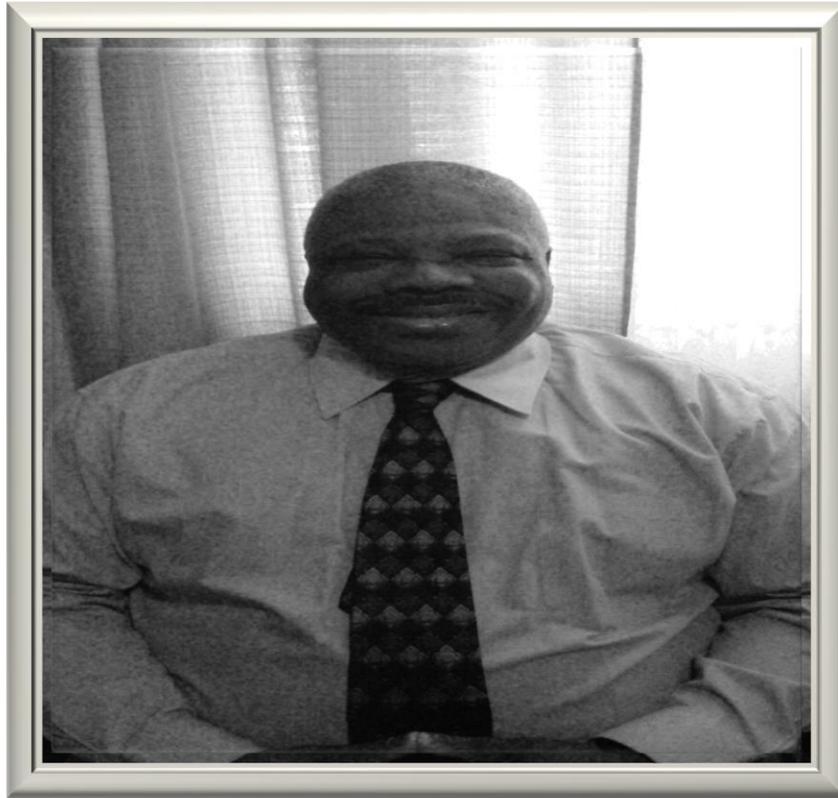




The Founder: Alfred Eugene Burley



In 1993 I was inspired to start this organization simply because there were no other programs available for homeless veterans at that time. Being a homeless veteran myself I sought out the assistance of four other homeless veterans in the same position as myself. We were all part of a program sponsored by the Veterans Administration (VA), which was only for ninety (90) days after which we were released to a shelter with no further assistance. Knowing this was a temporary fix to a problem that plagues Americans to this day, I came up with a concept in mind that could assist homeless veterans and their families at no cost to them.

After brainstorming we came up with a name for the organization which is now referred to as Veterans on the Rise (VOTR). At present I am the only active founder of the organization.

VOTR Mission: Is to provide housing, and supportive services that lead to the end of homelessness for the veterans and their families. VOTR uses a holistic approach to address the needs of homeless veterans who have lost their way by providing housing, skills building, mental health care, case management and employment services.



2018 Board of Directors – Biographies



Tamara Alston, Chairman, is Senior Policy Advisor at the U.S. Department of Education(ED). She's responsible for developing grant policies, guidance, procedures, and regulations to mitigate risk and foster effective Federal grant administration. She leads high-level work groups to develop strategies to strengthen adoption and management of internal controls. She has 15 years of federal experience as budget and policy analysts for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and ED. Prior professional experiences include, Grant Manager for a DC-funded grant program. Substance Abuse Counselor and member of the NY State-mandated Quality Assurance/ Utilization Review Committee at methadone and drug-free clinics in New York, NY.

Ms. Alston received Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Master in Public Administration from University of Memphis in TN.



Stephen L. Reese, Vice Chairman, the Co-Director of the Danya Institute. The Danya Institute provides evidence-based training, leadership and organizational development to behavioral healthcare providers and consumers. Encompassing five states and the District of Columbia, Mr. Reese has been with Danya since 2015. He is a health care professional with over 20 years' experience in the field. He has designed, implemented, monitored, evaluated and assessed several SAMHSA, both CSAT and CSAP, programs designed to increase positive health outcomes and he is primarily responsible for all training and technical assistance needs.

Mr. Reese has Bachelor of Arts from Memphis State University, a Master in Public Administration from the University of Memphis, and Master of Medical Science from Hampton University.



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Richard D Banks, Jr., Treasurer is a Washington native with 35 years of accounting and business systems management experience. He is the Owner of R. Banks Group Consulting Service, which provides strategic planning, grant administration and accounting systems services to non-profits and small business primarily in the greater Washington area. He is an IRS-registered tax preparer; Trustee and Assistant Treasurer of Gethsemane Baptist Church; and serves on the Board of Directors of Nehemiah Ministries Child Development Center.

Mr. Banks, Jr. is a proud graduate of Florida A & M University School of Business.



Sherri Bradley is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker practicing in Washington, DC and Virginia. Ms. Bradley holds a Master of Social Work degree with a concentration in Mental Health from Howard University, and is an active member of the DC and Virginia chapters of the National Association of Social Workers. She has over ten years of experience providing mental health services in varied settings throughout the Metropolitan area, including private practice, health care facilities and outpatient treatment centers. She is currently employed with the District of Columbia Public School system, where she counsels school-aged and adolescent students along with their families, helping them identify existing strengths and challenges that aid or hinder their child's academic success. Ms. Bradley also provides therapeutic services and direct supervision to graduate interns and clinicians. She is a staunch advocate for the underserved and believes that change happens when you empower others to draw on personal strengths to live a fulfilling life.





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Derrick K. Davis is a native Washingtonian and a proud graduate of the DC Public School system. He has been a member of the Metropolitan Police Department for twenty eight (28) years. During his tenure, he has worked in several different areas of the department. He's also a union representative for the department. During the summer, he assists in organizing activities for summer camps that support underprivileged youth, and provides life skills training for juveniles enrolled in the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP).

Mr. Davis has a passion for working with and mentoring the youth of this great city.



Cecil Byrd has served on the Board of Directors for Veterans on the Rise, Inc. for more than four years. Cecil has over 45 years of experience working with the neediest of our nation's veterans working with homeless, disabled, unemployed, and those with mental health and addiction issues. After his discharge from the Army in 1972, he returned to The University of Alabama where he earned Master of Arts degree, completed doctoral course work, and led the Office of Veterans Affairs. In 1984, he became the Executive Director of National Association of Concerned Veterans (NACV) in Washington, DC. NACV has trained, housed and employed literally thousands of veterans. Today its major focus is a comprehensive pre-entry program model, "GREAT EXPECTATIONS".

Mr. Byrd has lived in DC since 1978 and has provided wrap-around and continuum of care services to veterans and their families while working with hospitals, core service agencies and veteran-serving organizations.





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Kenya Theus hails from Memphis, TN and is a multifaceted professional with more than 16 years of program administration and project management experience in community development, information technology, business process improvement, quality assurance, and investment management disciplines. Currently, she is a Program Manager and Advisor at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development where she focuses on implementing IT systems and conducting process improvement initiatives. Upon graduating from high school, she left to pursue educational endeavors at Jackson State University, garnering a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and Texas Southern University where she acquired a Master in Public Administration. After traveling and living in cities on each American coast, she settled in Washington, DC nine years ago and has completely fallen in love with the charm, hustle, and grit of the city and its surrounding communities. Kenya believes that everyone needs a helping hand at times, so when the opportunity presents itself, it's our God given duty to "Pay It Forward" and help others when we can.



Charles W. Avery, Executive Director, is responsible for overall operations, asset protection and marketing/public relations for VOTR. He oversees all accounting functions including those necessary for auditing, budgeting, financial analysis, capital asset and property management and payroll. He is responsible for grants and contracts management including negotiating agreement terms that reflect the needs of VOTR; coordinates with legal advisors to finalize agreement terms; monitors progress of agreements and maintains agreement documentation to ensure fulfillment of agreement terms including receipt and expenditure of funds. He also establishes plans to achieve goals set by the Board of Directors and implements policies, subject to approval by the Board of Directors. He has over 30 years of experience in behavioral health treatment in private, non-profit and public areas with focus on program management and development, clinical supervision, and contract administration.

Mr. Avery is a licensed clinical social worker with degrees in Psychology from the University of Virginia and Howard University.





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Robyn Marbray is a licensed Certified Public Accountant and Real Estate Broker with more than 15 years' experience providing accounting and auditing, property and asset management, and management consulting services for public and private entities. Her professional career began performing financial and compliance audits, for state & local governments and non-profit organizations, while working as an Auditor for Deloitte & Touche, LLP. Currently, she serves as the President and Principal Broker of Marbray & Co. Realty, LLC, a boutique real estate firm that owns and manages a multi-million dollar residential real estate portfolio in Maryland and the District of Columbia.



Rafe Reginald (Reggie) Ellison has been a resident of Prince George's County for 13 years and contributes to the community as a member of condominium boards of directors. Reggie is the President of Carrollan Gardens Condominium Association in New Carrollton, Maryland and is a past president of Lake Pointe at Town Center Condominium Association in Largo, Maryland. In these positions, he has focused on improving governance, promoting transparency, and encouraging sound fiscal stewardship.

In addition to his condominium board leadership experience, Reggie has gained extensive experience working on various federal mortgage and housing programs and policies in federal agencies. During his career, he has worked on the Federal Housing Administration and Rural Housing Service multifamily programs, Federal Home Loan Bank regulations, multifamily and affordable housing policy of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac initiatives, and banking regulations related to affordable housing and community development.

Reggie has built his career upon a solid academic foundation. Reggie has earned a Master in Public Affairs from Princeton University where he focused on domestic politics from an economic perspective. Reggie has earned a Master of Science in Real Estate from Johns Hopkins University where he received an award for his thesis. He also holds a Bachelor's of Arts in Economics with a minor in mathematics from the University at Buffalo, and an Associate's of Arts from Monroe Community College.





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Dr. Peter Matlon has pursued a career in international development, with a particular focus on African agriculture. He was privileged to live and work in Africa and Asia for more than 25 years. His work included university teaching, research and research management within international agricultural research centers, directing food security activities for the United Nations Development Program, and serving as Managing Director for Africa Programs of the Rockefeller Foundation from which he retired in 2007. Before his retirement Matlon was also a member of two global advisory panels and chaired a UN inter-agency working group on food security. Since his retirement he has been a member and chair of numerous boards for both US-based and African based organizations. For three years Matlon also led the Board Orientation Program for the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) which was responsible for training new board members of the CGIAR's 15 international agricultural research centers on good practice in organizational governance. He is currently an adjunct professor of Applied Economics and Management in Cornell University's Dyson School.

Matlon earned a PhD in agricultural economics from Cornell University in 1977, a MPA from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University in 1971, and a BSFS degree from the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University in 1967.

Matlon's commitment to improving the lives and livelihoods of homeless veterans is driven in part by his service in the US Army during 1968-1970. He served in Vietnam for 15 months, including 10 months with the First Infantry Division where he obtained a rank of Sergeant E-5 and was awarded a Bronze Star.



Andrea McCombs has a lifelong career of producing results in the public sector. As Staff Director of the DC City Council Education Committee, she helped to win increased funding to key DC Education agencies. Her work in Congressional offices on the Hill and Detroit created a more robust response to constituent needs and services. Her advocate strategies at DOE and NIH procurement offices, brought significant expansion of multi million dollars in contract awards to small and disadvantaged businesses. As a former investigative journalist (NBC News/WRC), her reports on a heroine epidemic in DC, helped transform funding to DC drug treatment centers. At Detroit Public Schools, she helped raise awareness of the lax enforcement of the Student Code of Conduct



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