

**Recap of the Joint East Town Business Partnership-  
Minneapolis Downtown Council Business Forum  
Including One Another as Diverse Identities in the Workplace**  
(<https://easttownmpls.org/presentations-now-available-from-the-december-17-business-forum/>)  
**Tuesday, December 17, 2019, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**  
**Elliot Park Hotel, 823 5th Avenue South, Chestnut Studio**  
**Elliot Park Neighborhood of Minneapolis**

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Steve Cramer, President and CEO of the Minneapolis Downtown Council, welcomed the audience to the last shared forum with the East Town Business Partnership of 2019 and announced the following MDC events coming up in 2020:

- *Wednesday, January 22nd, 7:30-8:45 a.m.:* Member forum on *Emerging Trends in Cyber Security* on at Eide Bailly LLP, 800 Nicollet Mall, Suite 1300 (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/event/emerging-trends-in-cyber-security/>).
- *Thursday, February 20th, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.:* Joint forum with ETBP | *What You May Not Know About the Minneapolis Federal Reserve* (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/event/what-you-may-not-know-about-the-mpls-federal-reserve-with-east-town-business-partnership/>).
- *Wednesday, February 12th, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.:* MDC annual meeting with highlights of what transpired in 2019 at The Armory, 500 South 6th Street (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/event/2020annualmeeting/>).
- *Thursday-Sunday, December 19th-22nd:* Last 4 days of *Holidazzle* in Loring Park, 1382 Willow Street (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/holidazzle-launches-2019-season-in-loring-park-on-friday-november-29/>).
- *Wednesday, December 19, 2019-Monday, February 10, 2020:* Winter Warm-in U.S. Bank Stadium’s main and upper concourses for inline skating and indoor running ([https://www.usbankstadium.com/events/detail/winter-warm-up?fbclid=IwAR3Sp\\_r9XC8BPonZo8IWMSXb8LLZr-PUNvdOiFE5FZHDC06H6-Fn\\_qg-D\\_U](https://www.usbankstadium.com/events/detail/winter-warm-up?fbclid=IwAR3Sp_r9XC8BPonZo8IWMSXb8LLZr-PUNvdOiFE5FZHDC06H6-Fn_qg-D_U)).

Dan Collison, Executive Director of ETBP, thanked those who participate in both organizations and attend these shared forums which are uniquely strategized to meet the needs of each organization’s membership and focus on topics of concern to all layers of downtown. He also thanked Cramer and the MDC team and ETBP Executive Coordinator Christie Rock Hantge for their coordination and efforts to pull this forum together. Then he announced the following ETBP events.

- *Thursday, January 16th, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.:* Business forum on *The History of News Makers in East Town: The Star Tribune Story* at Wells Fargo Bank’s West Tower, 550 South 4th Street, Weatherball Room (<https://easttownmpls.org/etbp-january-16-business-forum-at-wells-fargo-in-the-weatherball-room-on-the-15th-floor/>).

As part of the ETBP’s 40th anniversary as an organization, which began in 1979 as the Elliot Park Business and Professional Association (EPBPA), it will highlight other organizations with a deep and rich history here and the Star Tribune epitomizes such organizations ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star\\_Tribune](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Tribune)).

- *Select Saturdays, January 4-April 18, 2020, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.:* Mill City Farmers Market Winter Indoor Market (<https://millcityfarmersmarket.org/visit/winter-market/>).
- See Winter Warm-up announced by Cramer above.
- *Wednesdays-Fridays, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.:* Holiday shop at Chameleon Shoppes at Gaviidae Common and IDS Center (<https://www.chameleonconsortium.com/shopping-sprees/>). Because the ETBP is

committed to small, emerging and diverse business growth, this has been an ideal partnership with the MDC to connect those businesses with vacant retail spaces in the CBD.

- Neighborhood Association meetings:
  - For Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association Board and Land Use Committee meetings as well as other events, visit <http://www.thedmna.org/>.
  - For Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc., Building, Land Use and Housing (BLUH) meetings as well as other events, visit <https://www.elliottpark.org/>.
- Coffee with Council Member Steve Fletcher is held on *Wednesdays, 5:00-6:30 p.m.* at varying locations within Ward 3 (<https://www.facebook.com/pg/FletcherMpls/events/>).
- For help in navigating City Hall with your business questions, visit the Minneapolis Business Portal at <https://business.minneapolismn.gov/> which is designed to connect entrepreneurs and small business owners to the information and resources needed to plan, launch and grow a business.

Collison announced they are kicking off this year-long campaign today and encouraged everyone to be bold and introduce themselves to the Membership, Marketing and Communication Committee chaired by Chris Fleck.

## II. **Business Spotlight: Elliot Park Hotel Autograph Collection®**

After Collison thanked the EPH for its incredible investment in the neighborhood, hospitality and food, Troy Whelan, Director of Sales and Marketing, welcomed the audience and gave an overview of the Autograph Collection brand of Marriott hotels (<https://www.marriott.com/marriott-brands.mi>) and explained each AC hotel has its own distinctive mark and the one crafted for this property is the Danish concept of hygge (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hygge> and <https://www.elliottparkhotel.com/>) which comes through in its design, amenities and food program; a book of hygge is available in the Experience Shop on the lobby level. They try to make these moments of hygge unique for each guest, whether a business or leisure traveler or wedding party, and each guest upon arrival is greeted with a bite and a brew – a featured snack from their Italian restaurant and a brew from FINNEGANS next door; all are welcome to come any day to partake. He also offered to conduct tours of some of their 168 luxurious guestrooms immediately following the forum.

Jonathan Kobash, Executive Chef at Tavola Kitchen + Bar (<https://tavolampls.com/>), advised he began here in September and prior to then he spent 6 years at Brass Union in Somerville, MA. Since moving back he's been excited about Tavola and this neighborhood; both have great potential. The team was welcoming and they've just dropped a new menu on Wednesday that he welcomed all to try and provide feedback, especially the good kind.

For more information, visit <https://www.elliottparkhotel.com/the-hotel/>.

## III. **Including One Another as Diverse Identities in the Workplace**

Collison advised some in the audience where a part of the Inclusive Downtown Think Tank, a yearlong (March 2018-February 2019) guided learning, visioning and collective impact ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collective\\_impact](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collective_impact)) design process convened by the YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities and the MDC in partnership with the ETBP and NuLoop Partners at the Equity Innovation Center ([https://www.ymcamn.org/our\\_cause/social\\_responsibility/equity\\_innovation\\_center](https://www.ymcamn.org/our_cause/social_responsibility/equity_innovation_center)) in Gaviidae Common. They engaged over 70 private, public and nonprofit organizations on a monthly basis to help imagine, define and create an inclusive downtown that contributes to their vision of Minneapolis as one of the nation's best places to live, visit and do business, the results of which have been encapsulated in their 13-page Community Report and serves as the foundation for today's topic. Then he summarized the learnings, i.e., downtown is diverse but not inclusive. After defining diversity, inclusion and equity, they drafted a **Common Agenda:**

*We believe:  
All people belong downtown  
That an inclusive downtown is possible  
In the economic case for inclusion  
If we increase cultural competency, we will increase inclusion,  
In the values of equity and innovation*

**And Impact Statement:**

*Therefore, our work is to identify and address systemic barriers and redesign our systems to create a more inclusive Minneapolis downtown, led by culturally competent leaders who are committed to making a community that is an equitable place to live, work, and play and where all people have the opportunity to thrive, contribute, and belong.*

Collison noted he has personally benefited immensely by developing a wider range of relationships with individuals as today's panelists and extended regrets from Ann Dyste, Vice President of Business Integration, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at U.S. Bank (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/annkdyste>) who was unable to attend. Then he introduced the panelists by providing a brief biography:

- Philomena Morrissey Satre, Director of Diversity & Inclusion and Strategic External Partnerships at Land O' Lakes (<https://www.landolakesinc.com/Blog/December-2017/the-future-of-workplace-diversity-inclusion> and <https://www.linkedin.com/in/philomenamorrisseysatre>);
- Chester Cooper, Assistant County Administrator of Operations, Hennepin County (<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNHENNE/bulletins/1aea008>); and
- Kevin Lindsey, President and Chief Executive Officer, Minnesota Humanities Center (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/kevin-lindsey-3766698>), former Commissioner of Minnesota Department of Human Rights under Governor Mark Dayton (<https://spokesman-recorder.com/2019/06/06/former-mn-human-rights-commissioner-named-ceo-for-mn-humanities-center/>).

**A. Land O'Lakes** (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/LOL-DI-Read-Only.pdf>). Satre advised she's come from 29 years in financial services for the land of Ag and Dairy, has learned much over the last 2 years at LOL, and is the first person to be in a full-time role leading D&I. Then she provided some key statistics about her company. Besides butter and dairy which most people are aware, they also have seed; feed; SUSTAIN, a landmark sustainability initiative (<https://www.landolakesinc.com/Press/News/Corn-Sustainability-Initiative>); and Venture37 (<https://www.landolakesinc.com/Blog/August-2019/introducing-land-o-lakes-venture37>) that works with under-resourced countries around the world. Of the 10,000 employees in the U.S. and around the world, there are 2,000 in Arden Hills, Minnesota.

She loves the IDTT's Impact Statement. When she started out at LOL, they didn't have a message for why diversity and inclusion was of importance to their company, therefore it was one of the first things she and a fabulous team worked on. Because they're a member-owned agricultural cooperative, they work for farmers and wanted their D&I statement to express the values of their farmers, i.e., working together to discover, build and achieve feeding human progress. After they arrived at a mission, she next worked on the strategy to implement the mission through the:

- 1. Workforce.** The unemployment rate in the U.S. hovers around 3.6% so they must look at creative ways to build brand awareness. If you're in Ag & Dairy, you know LOL, but if recruiting for people in HR, finance, marketing, etc., may not be as familiar so they partner with Genesys Works (<https://genesysworks.org/twin-cities/>), Cristo Rey Jesuit High School Twin Cities (<http://www.cristoreytc.org/>), and a number of different colleges and universities such as MANRRS (<https://www.manrrs.org/>) which will hold its 35th Annual Career Fair and Training Conference in Minneapolis (<https://www.manrrs.org/manrrs35-conference-information>).

2. **Workplace.** When they talk about retention, their tag line is “How does it feel when you’re here?” Dan talked about how do we create a city where people want to stay, live, work and feel that sense of belonging in downtown Minneapolis, well it’s similar for LOL at their headquarters, in their plants and fields, and work on global assignments. There are many ways in which they accomplish this, e.g.: started an Executive D&I Council to engage leadership to focus on strategy; employee-driven Diversity Enrichment Council & Network and Women's Leadership Network (<https://www.diversity.com/Land-O-Lakes--Inc>); a 2-hour quarterly D&I Learning Series; piloted a production-focused Bite-Size training at dairy plant in California; 15-minute online learning; and bringing in local talent. She has asked people on the project team to send her messages when they see success. They’re trying to bridge the divide between corporate, plants, and fields.
3. **Marketplace.** To support small businesses, 2 years ago they began a Supplier Diversity Program (<http://diversity411.com/diversity/supplier-diversity-portals/land-olakes-inc-supplier-diversity-program/>); the Business Impact Board (BIB); to reach out to new markets they can get culture insights from their Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), e.g., they’re planning to market a new pudding called “Goya” to the Hispanic community so they reached out to the LOL Amigos Group to provide feedback on the campaign. All the ERGs help them with recruitment, retention and promotion, business insights, and community relations.

She loves working in Minnesota because it’s a super collaborative community. Being involved in and giving to the community is one of the core values of LOL and by request of the CEO to better support farmers this past May they hosted an event called “Harvesting Hope” in partnership with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) to leverage a three-step process to help prevent suicide (<https://www.landolakesinc.com/Blog/August-2019/Addressing-mental-health-in-ag-communities>).

Lastly, Satre advised she tries to keep her three children and husband focused with positive messaging which she provided for today’s audience:

*“Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.”* By Desmond Tutu

- B. **Hennepin County** (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Hennepin-County-disparity-reduction-visuals.pdf>). Cooper advised he just started his 35th year with HC and he has an amazing boss named David Hough, County Administrator. In 2015, Hough took on an amazing challenge, i.e., how can they reduce the disparities in HC. There are several disparities they can work on and it’s a heavy lift. Hough brought in a consultant to gather information from all their leaders about what they were doing and then he took this information and presented it to the HC Board to make their business case. Two things resonated with Cooper: (1) they had the business case for reducing disparities; and more importantly for him (2) they’re going to move forward with doing the work.

Because they believe they’re One Hennepin whose mission is to serve the 1.2 million residents, in 2017 they did an environmental scan to determine what are some of the disparities they’re working on as an organization and came up with the following domains: (1) education; (2) income; (3) employment; (4) housing; (5) transportation; (6) health; and (7) justice.

They believe if they can turn the first three domains, which are a little larger than the other four, in a positive way it will positively help the other four. With the oversight of the Governance Board, they were able to narrow down and become laser focused on the work they’re doing in each domain – reference the highlighted areas on the 2019-2021 Disparities Reduction Priorities chart they’ll tackle in 2020 and then move on to the other priorities.

Because there’s a tsunami approaching – large number of employees who’ll be retiring whose spots will need to be filled and many companies seeking talent out of state – they’ve been working with the MDC as they believe the talent is right here in HC. For example, there are 30,000 people in Corrections on

probation, and 300,000 cases open in Human Services and Public Health which they spent millions of dollars on the backend that they could start developing as the workforce to fill some of those spots in downtown. They went to the HC Board and told the Commissioners they'd like to invest upfront, no additional funding, to provide education, income and employment for people they work with every day some of whom are clients; because it's taxpayers' money they'll want to know what's the return on investment.

With their work with the MDC and a number of partners in similar situations, at the end of 2018 they were able to hire over 400 people who in the past were receiving backend services; a return on their investment after 3 years and they'll continue to improve that area. He thanked the MDC for helping them with that work.

Additionally, in 2018 they decided to add equity to their diversity and inclusion work and elevated it from a manager to the Department of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; and just this year he was given oversight of a new line of business the HC Board voted on in September, i.e., disparity reduction (<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNHENNE/bulletins/25fdb45>) which has a number of departments that report to this line of business.

- C. **Minnesota Humanities Center and Minnesota Department of Human Rights.** Lindsey gave an overview of the MHC (<https://mnhum.org/about/>) which was founded in 1971 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities. Every state has one and six territories in the U.S. have one. They explore the question what it means to be human but more importantly the storytelling, creating family connections, connecting us to our world, and educating us through literature, history, religion and a wide variety of academic disciplines. Specifically, *Why Treaties Matters* (<http://treatiesmatter.org/exhibit/>) is an exhibit MHC created with 11 federally-recognized tribes in Minnesota that's being shown at the Minnesota State Capitol; and *We Are Water* (<https://mnhum.org/we-are-water-mn/>) is a traveling exhibit created in partnership with six state partners and local host communities to connect people to water in Minnesota.

The MHC conducts approximately 370 events and more than 10,000 people go through annually in their St. Paul location near Lake Phalen. If we're looking for a retreat and deep reflection, please think of them.

The Minnesota Department of Human Rights (<https://mn.gov/mdhr/>) was founded in 1967 to succeed the State Commission Against Discrimination, and has been a member of the Governor's Cabinet (<https://mn.gov/governor/administration/>) ever since. MDHR educates people about the Minnesota Human Rights Act (<https://mn.gov/mdhr/yourrights/mhra/>) and investigates a wide variety of claims of discrimination but you do not have to file with them to proceed with a claim. During his tenure as its Commissioner, they investigated more than 4,500 claims of discrimination in a wide variety of areas, the most common being employment (60-65%), followed by education, housing, public services and accommodations.

Former Governor Mark Dayton's first Executive Order was to have MDHR create the Diversity and Inclusion Council ([https://mn.gov/admin/assets/2016\\_02\\_19\\_diversity\\_and\\_inclusion\\_report\\_tcm36-242691.pdf](https://mn.gov/admin/assets/2016_02_19_diversity_and_inclusion_report_tcm36-242691.pdf)); Linsey was tasked with the responsibility, along with Micah Hines (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/micah-mitchell-hines-648b844>), to craft the DIC and its framework for success within the state agencies. What Satre said about leadership being clear is critically important. For those of you who are starting on the DEI journey, it's critically important to have a clear statement from top leadership. When Governor Dayton stepped into a space with 120 folks and said this is what we're going to do in 2014, it was a lot easier to align all the pieces underneath. There also must be a lot of energy which Satre has; it's important to have folks with a lot of energy to put behind it because there'll be times when they won't hear the responses they way. Acknowledgement of the people who are trying to make the way, as Satre also said, is an important piece; it's a powerful multiplier in your DEI efforts. He cannot tell how much significant progress he was able to see when he saw a fellow Commissioner publicly acknowledge

someone who's trying to change what was going on within their agency and the ripple effect it had across their agency and statewide enterprise.

Lastly, Lindsey noted if we can be bold and innovative and think differently like Hennepin County and Land O'Lakes, we won't just win as a region and state for the next 10-20 years, we win for the next 100 years, we just need to lean in and do this work in order to be successful. Then he thanked Collision for all the work he does.

Collision then distributed and described a 2-sided document and card with information about the YMCA's Equity Innovation Center of Excellence ([https://www.ymcamn.org/our\\_cause/social\\_responsibility/equity\\_innovation\\_center](https://www.ymcamn.org/our_cause/social_responsibility/equity_innovation_center)) and the Equity Leadership Institute's 2020 Cohorts ([https://www.ymcamn.org/our\\_cause/social\\_responsibility/equity\\_innovation\\_center/cohorts/equity](https://www.ymcamn.org/our_cause/social_responsibility/equity_innovation_center/cohorts/equity)) designed for DEI narratives in Minnesota. It's an investment typically of HR functions, and members of the MDC receive a \$100 discount.

Lastly, since typically DEI conflicts come into workspaces, Collision conducted a brief lightning round with the panelists on specific physical abilities, cultural, sexual and identity conversations they've had at their places of work. Responses included:

- At HC in 2019, all 9,000 employees had to go through mandatory training on advancing racial equity (<https://www.racialequityalliance.org/jurisdictions/hennepin-county-minnesota/>) and as of today 90% have completed it.
- At LOL in 2019, they created spaces for people to have conversations, e.g., the Aging Successfully ERG held a session on Disrupt Aging (<https://www.aarp.org/disrupt-aging/>) with AARP and participants ranging in age from 21 to over 50. Beyond education, they bring volunteer opportunities inhouse, e.g., had LGBTQ youth share their experiences of being homeless, coming out to parents about their sexuality and being kicked out. LOL prepared hygiene kits to take back to the center; it created powerful awareness.
- At MHC in 2019, they also created spaces for people to have conversations, get away from their particular building; being able to think differently is powerful, e.g., offered Bdote Field Trips (<https://mnhum.org/k12/professional-development-educators/learning-from-place-bdote/>).

#### **IV. Closing Remarks**

Collision thanked EPH for hosting, the panelists for their amazing overviews of DEI, Steve Cramer and the MDC staff, ETBP Executive Coordinator Christie Rock Hantge, and a special thank you to the audience for the wealth of wisdom they carry to help downtown and Minnesota thrive.

The panelists remained to answer questions from the audience while others in the audience joined the tour of the EPH.