

ACTO Board Members 2023-2024



Virginia González-Vélez Valcarce – President

Woman white mother, a university graduate, Spanish, grew up in the Canary Islands from a peninsular family. She graduated from Madrid and settled there. She is an entrepreneur, non-conformist who seeks her own fulfillment and the people she interacts with through spiritual practice and coaching. She is a coach trainer.



Vikram Bhatt – Past President

Cisgender male, who identifies as an Indian, heterosexual and agnostic about religious affiliation. Among his core identities is that of a curious explorer, a father, and a person who has been in a spiritual partnership with his wife over the last 25 years. As a coach he embodies intuitive wisdom, and as a coach educator as well as a coach trainer he embodies the identity of a disruptor, who challenges the status quo and is invested in evolving coach training towards serving the consciousness shift on this planet. While proudly embracing his Indian identity, he claims his global citizenship with shyness and some nervousness, and he is learning to own those identities that are outside of his birth and his origin. What has helped him live in uncertain time is the value of friendship and learning.



Shareefah Sabur – Vice President

Black, US American (second generation born free), Female, Muslim; has a non-visible disability. Born in Ohio to working class parents of the Great Migration. Earned two Master's degrees and worked in healthcare for over 30 years, locally and internationally. Executive Director of the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland, certified diversity professional, coach educator, coach.



Jim Smith – Treasurer

Skinny white kid who grew up in an economically-challenged Catholic and ethnic suburban community where eight siblings and hand-me-downs was the norm and everyone’s grandparents were “from the old country.” Struggled with both depression and sexual identity. First in his family to graduate university, he built a multi-hued and international family through birth and adoption, learning along the way how to advocate for those with differing abilities. Proud that he has always sought to raise up strong women both in his sons/daughters and in the workplace. Situational vegan. Loves to dance, garden, and curate dark beers, owns 16 ways to make coffee, and loves to talk to strangers.



Sharon Brown – Secretary

Identifies as Black/African-American, cisgender, heterosexual female, with a partially visible disability. She is a mother, partner to her husband of nearly 41 years, grandmother, coach, coach educator, and people/plant/animal lover. Sharon is warm, compassionate, intuitive, and more spiritual than religious. She values social justice, social transformation, continuous learning, making coaching accessible, indigenous healing and wisdom traditions, plants as medicine and nutrition, deep connection, collaboration and co-creation. Sharon also values coaching as a support for those dealing with current-day, historical and generational trauma related to racism and other types of oppression. She grew up in a working-class home with parents who valued the higher education they didn’t have the opportunity to pursue. She lives in northern New Jersey, USA near where she was born and raised.



Steve Galloway

Steve is an organizational development consultant, executive/leadership coach, and believer in positive change with over 25 years’ experience across both the private and public sectors. Steve helps leaders and rising stars take a transformational approach to emerging change challenges and opportunities.

Currently Steve is a Partner with ChoicePoints Learning, an organizational and leadership development consultancy specializing in leading effective DEI & B strategic efforts.



Joanne Louis

Is a Black woman who is a coach, motivator and an arts lover. Joanne is a constant learner who is passionate about making coaching accessible to all. Joanne believes coaching is a way to achieve one's goals and living a purposeful life. Joanne is a life learner who values higher education, holds a BBA and a MBA along with numerous certifications. She has lived in the southern part of the United States for the last 30 years. Joanne is fluent in English, French and Haitian Creole. She enjoys spending time with friends and travelling and learning about different cultures.



Rei Perovic

Rei Perovic, PCC, CMC, is a Self Leadership Coach, Certified Mentor Coach, Coaching Instructor, and the Founder of Realign Project (realignproject.com). She is passionate about working with purpose-driven professionals in non-dominant groups, especially BIPOC, AAPI, immigrants, and women, to empower themselves as leaders at all levels to create a positive impact. Rei has coached over 1,500 clients internationally across industries to live and work from a resonant place of authenticity and alignment with their core values and vision. Originally from Tokyo, Japan, Rei moved to Massachusetts at the age of 15 by herself to attend High School for the Arts and has lived about two-thirds of her life in the US. She and her husband live in NYC with their beloved pitbull, Prince, and tuxedo cat, Zoe.



Sukari Pinnock Fitts

Sukari is a cisgender woman and a member of the African diaspora. She is a heterosexual Baby Boomer, living with a hidden disability and some degree of socio-economic privilege as a U.S. National. She has no religious affiliation, believing strongly that the "universe provides." She is the daughter of a Jamaican immigrant father and South Carolinian mother, and was raised with one sibling in a middle-class, multi-racial neighborhood in Los Angeles. Now residing on the tribal lands of the Nacotchtank, Sukari has been coaching leaders in all sectors for over 20 years, supporting clients in the U.S. and abroad. She is a devoted partner-spouse, a proud mom and a favorably biased "Nona" to three delightful grandsons.



Melanie Sanford

Melanie is recently rehabilitated “corpo.” An ex-pat of sorts who spent years in high-level organizational development and executive advisory roles, on staff and consulting for organizations.

Her curiosity and intuition called her to support humans versus systems, which brought her to coaching, and her practice evolved. She specializes in supporting people through intended and unintended transitions—coaching individuals and organizations who feel out of sync into greater alignment using a values-based, trauma-informed approach. Melanie integrates deep listening, intentional communication and anti-oppression practices in every space she serves.

She is also the mom of two feisty teens, a lover of humans (and solitude, almost equally), and a deep connector to feelings, words, the woods, the city, the winter, politics, dogs, and photography.