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CEO OF THE YEAR WINNER 2022

Tamara Craver Advocates for First Generation College Students

PHILANTHROPY: Reality Changers CEO Is a Collaborator; Insists on Education Equity

BY KAREN PEARLMAN

Tamara Y. Craver is president and CEO of Reality Changers. She joined the group in 2019 and has more than 20 years of experience in nonprofit management, executive leadership and youth development.

Craver is a passionate advocate for first-generation college students as well as education equity.

As the leader at Reality Changers, Craver has steered the group through the COVID-19 pandemic, transitioning it to and from virtual distance learning. She has also overseen the creation of a five-year strategic plan and established an endowment for the organization.

Programs have grown under her leadership, with the implementation of new partnerships to expand reach and a concerted effort to serve more program graduates through the alumni network. Alumni engagement has tripled during her time with the organization.

Reality Changers was named 2021 Outstanding Organization for Diversity and Inclusion by AFP San Diego.

Over the past year, Craver has increased the number of students served by the organization, developed innovative new partnerships, strengthened governance and board development and provided exceptional direction that enabled the organization to further integrate workforce development opportunities into its college readiness programs.

Before Reality Changers, Craver served as director of The Posse Foundation, was director of development and communications for the Torrance South Bay YMCA and was director of social markets for the American Heart Association, Western States affiliates.

Her commitment to education has found her recognized by the Los Angeles Business Journal, the Black Women's Lawyers Association of Los Angeles and the San Diego Business Journal.

Craver is involved in the community, serving on the boards of LEAD San Diego and San Diego Squared as well as the

advisory council for San Diego Foundation's Black Community Investment Fund.

Craver is a member of the San Diego Rotary Club #33 and is executive committee chairperson for the Hoover Community Collaborative.

She developed the Trauma-Resilient Educational

Communities organization, advancing individual and organizational health through trauma-informed education.

Craver also has built upon Reality Changers' partnerships with local groups that offer students support and professional opportunities, expanded its board leadership to include a human resources expert, a finance expert and a program graduate. She also established a "give-get" policy for the board and recruited board members, which has indirectly helped the group financially.

The nonprofit's relationships with partners like Centro Fox, the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, San Diego Unified School District, David's Harp Foundation, Junior Achievement, UC San Diego Extension, SD2, Robolink and others have provided resources to meet students' needs now and in the future.

Craver was responsible for holding Reality Changers' first "Over The Edge" event, which raised \$80,000.

In the San Diego region -- and beyond -- Craver is a highly sought influential voice in the college access and education equity fields.

Because of her expertise, she is frequently invited to contribute to and moderate panel discussions, convene diverse stakeholders and serve on advisory boards. Craver is known as a bridge-builder who not only works with local partners in the non-profit space but also understands that larger, systemic issues in education equity can only be solved by bringing together key players from a variety of sectors.

Craver recently facilitated a LEAD San Diego panel of four local university presidents, helping industry leaders gain a deeper understanding of how higher education institutions serve our community. ■



IN HER OWN WORDS

"When I was young, there were adults in my life that didn't believe in me. They didn't think I could make it in college and never would have even conceived of me as CEO of the Year. I'm proud to be a different kind of leader for today's youth. That's what Reality Changers is all about. We KNOW that young people can achieve their dreams and we tell them that every day! This is truly my HEART work"

The Computers 2 Kids community congratulates

Chéri Pierre
Computers 2 Kids CEO

For being selected as a finalist in the SDBJ CEO Of the year 2022 award



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