

Get to Know Kia Washington:

A Q&A with CMF's First Director of Member Engagement

What brings you to this new role at CMF?

I'm a nerd for philanthropy and have crossed the country listening and learning about what it means to different groups of people. I'm also an avid learner of people and hold many connections in the social sector that span a variety of focus areas. I like to keep my feet in two places at once, in community and in the board room, so that I can be a translator and bridge builder for groups that may not organically interact.

As Director of Member Engagement, how will you be working with and supporting CMF members?

The most important thing that I think I can do in this role is to listen. I am so excited to get to know all of the members across the state of Michigan, their "why," and their aspirations. I am also really excited about the opportunity to learn in other markets and bring new ideas to the state of Michigan to support our ever-growing philanthropic impact.

One of my special gifts is translating ideas across different lived experiences and different realities. I'm a big-picture thinker who can take nuanced and seemingly separate ideas and weave them into something that works for the collective. I look forward to modeling and building trust in my ability to take what I hear from members of our CMF community and turn our conversations into actionable progress through partnering closely and intentionally with my colleagues who lead our programmatic work.

I anticipate finding gems in uncovering the voices of those who are often the quietest in the room; by widening our scope of input, my aim is to bring new hues to our already colorful work. I find a lot of joy in building leaders and supporting others' growth, and I look forward to bringing this passion to my new role.

Reflecting upon CMF's four pillars of Equity, People, Policy and Practice, what resonates most with you?

I'm a strong practitioner of intersectionality and find great interest in exploring how each of the pillars layer on and interact with each other. Equity will always be a top priority for me, and how I believe we should all engage with the world. Putting people first and being in authentic relationships is the fuel to building the collective energy and trust needed for the progress we desire to see in this sector.

What excites you most about this role?

The potential. With this being a new role and with CMF moving into its next 50 years of service, I'm excited to understand how I can best serve our community and my colleagues from this seat and then work alongside my colleagues to create a roadmap that gets us there.

What do you anticipate will be most important as you begin this new role in engaging with our vibrant community of philanthropy?

Establishing and building deep, authentic relationships with members of our CMF community of philanthropy.

