



Meet LaNesha!

LaNesha DeBardelaben is a skilled public historian with over 20 years experience leading African American museums. Most recently she served as President & CEO of the Northwest African American Museum where she led strategic planning, record-setting fundraising, and innovative programming, including creating the nation's first museum choir and distributing 25,000 free, new African American children's books to youth as part of her Knowledge is Power initiative. LaNesha is Past National President of the Association of African American Museums Board of Directors, only the sixth woman in U.S. history to serve in that capacity. A member of the International Council of Museums, she has studied museums globally in Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, England, Germany, and Israel.

An ordained clergy, LaNesha is Assistant Pastor at the historic New Hope Missionary Baptist Church in Seattle's Central District and Executive Administrator of the New Hope Community Development Institute, which is focused on building affordable housing for people of color.

Never forgetting her roots or the many mentors that shaped her life, she now has three master's degrees and is currently pursuing a PhD at the University of Washington where she teaches and researches African American educational history. She's a mentor, educator, trained librarian, and advocate, leading initiatives to support Black women and voter education.

LaNesha is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and The Links, Incorporated where she served as former national assistant director of the Links Arts Committee. She has served on numerous boards, including Cascade PBS, Visit Seattle, Seattle Chamber of Commerce, and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History national executive council. She has been widely recognized for her visionary leadership, including twice named a Top 40 Under 40 awardee, a Top 50 Woman Leader in Washington State, a Puget Sound Business Journal Woman of Influence, WNBA Inspiring Women awardee, and Michigan Chronicle's Women of Excellence honoree. Most of all, she empowers others and is striving to let her light so shine in service to others.