

Defiant: An Interview with Wade Hudson and Panel Discussion Speaker Bios



Wade Hudson
Bestselling Author and Publisher
Just Us Books

Wade Hudson attended Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and during the late 1960s and early 1970s worked for a number of civil rights organizations. In addition to writing for children, Hudson has also worked as a news reporter, a sports writer, and a public relations specialist. Hudson's first book for young readers, a collaborative effort with Valerie Wilson Wesley, focused on a subject very important to him: role models for young African Americans. Since then, he has written several books in the Black Heroes series of profiles, as well as picture books, nonfiction, and plays. He has edited two critically acclaimed collections: *Pass It On: African-American Poetry for Children* and *How Sweet the Sound: African-American Songs for Children*.

Hudson lives in New Jersey with his wife and frequent collaborator, Cheryl Willis Hudson. Together they run a publishing company, Just Us Books, which they founded in order to provide African-American children with positive images of themselves in books and learning materials.



Sherea McKenzie, Esq.
Executive Director
Julia C. Hester House

Sherea McKenzie has over twenty (20) years of experience working with Harris County Precinct One, community and nonprofit organizations. Prior to accepting the role as Executive Director for Julia C. Hester House, Sherea McKenzie served as Director of Special Projects to Commissioner Rodney Ellis, Harris County Precinct One. In that capacity, she advised on general legal issues and policies impacting Precinct 1 constituents. She identified and encouraged best practices, collaboration and resource sharing within and outside of county departments.

Prior to assuming her role at Precinct One she served as the Executive Director of the Joint City County Commission on Children (JC4), a children's policy collaboration between the City of Houston and Harris County. The JC4 was comprised of 25 members who were jointly appointed by the City of Houston and Harris County. The goal was to increase the wellbeing of children and youth. Under Ms. McKenzie's leadership Houston/Harris County was recognized by the America's Promise Alliance's "100 Best Communities for Children" in multiple years.

Ms. McKenzie's distinct background, which includes practicing law, working with the office of the late George T. "Mickey" Leland, Congressman, 18th Congressional District and

serving as the director of a local charter school, which has enabled her to value the importance of children and family and the role of public service. Ms. McKenzie has served on numerous and varied nonprofits boards, both locally and nationally.

Sherea McKenzie received her Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration from Fisk University and a Juris Doctorate from the Texas Southern University, Thurgood Marshall School of Law. She is married to Carl Poston, III and has three adult children, Carl, IV, Kirkland and Madison.



Latham Williams *(Interviewer and Moderator)*
Senior Consultant
The Exeter Group and Equity Solutions, and
Founder
Headlights LLC

Mr. Williams has over twenty-five years of experience serving on boards and advising boards and senior leadership teams on a variety of issues including matters relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

He has engaged in executive recruiting and leadership assessment and development. He also is a member of the leadership team of Equity Solutions and The Exeter Group, both of which focus on DEI matters within organizations.

Mr. Williams participated throughout the years on numerous diversity-focused committees and task forces in various organizations and consults regularly on matters relating to DEI. He founded and led the Diversity Executive Search Practice at Hudson Global, Inc. He chaired the Illinois Task Force on Minorities and the Justice System. He is a member of the Advisory Board of the Institute for Inclusion in the Legal Profession. He is a past president and director of the Minority Legal Education Resources, Inc.

Mr. Williams served over eleven years as the chief legal officer and corporate secretary at Hudson Global, Inc. (“Hudson”), a publicly traded talent solutions company with business operations in over twenty-five countries. He also was a member of Hudson’s Global Leadership Team and served as a board director on approximately twenty foreign Hudson subsidiaries. Mr. Williams was an equity partner in the Chicago offices of Gardner, Carton & Douglas (now, Faegre Drinker) and Sidley Austin LLP.

He was a guest lecturer at the University of California-Berkeley (Haas Business School), Stanford Law School, Northwestern’s Kellogg School of Management, Chicago-Kent College of Law, the American Medical Association, and the American Dental Association.

Mr. Williams holds a bachelor’s degree in Psychology with honors from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, a master’s degree in business from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and a Juris Doctor degree from the Northwestern Pritzker School of Law where he currently is a member of its Law Board. He studied at the University of Ghana and participated in a foreign language study abroad program in Bogota, Colombia.

Mr. Williams is a fellow of the American Bar Foundation and a member of the Chicago Bar Association. He also is a fellow of Leadership Greater Chicago.

He is proficient in oral and written Spanish.



Collette Woghiren
Partner
Neal, Gerber & Eisenberg LLC

Collette Woghiren is a trial lawyer who represents clients in complex civil litigation matters impacting their businesses nationwide, including breach of contract, tort defense, business torts and products liability. She has served as co-first chair before state and federal courts and represents clients in all phases of litigation from inception through appeal.

Active in the legal community, Collette is deeply committed to pro bono service and has won numerous awards for her service to the profession. Collette is also devoted to improving diversity and inclusion in the legal profession and spends significant time mentoring diverse law students and attorneys as well as writing and speaking about diversity and inclusion issues.

Before attending law school, she was a high school English teacher.