

## Accelerate Community: Systemic Investments in Equity, Talent, and Tech

### Speaker Biographies



#### **Claude Wade, Managing Director, Global Head of the Client Experience Platform, Head of BlackRock Atlanta Innovation Hub**

**Claude Wade, Managing Director**, is the Global Head of the Client Experience Platform and leads the BlackRock Atlanta Innovation Hub. He is a member of BlackRock's Human Capital Committee.

Claude was formerly the Global Chief Operating Officer of BlackRock's Institutional Client Business. After joining BlackRock from Marsh & McLennan Company where he was the Chief Operating Officer of Marsh's Global Risk Practices and Specialties Division. In that role he oversaw operations, technology, and program management across the division. Claude also led efforts to establish alignment, consistency, and efficiencies across the portfolio of diverse businesses and technologies.

Previously at Marsh, Claude was Chief Operating Officer for US and Canada, where he focused on strategic, financial, and operational initiatives. In this capacity, Claude led the implementation of an industry leading solution for small and medium sized enterprises (*SMEs*) clients.

Prior to joining Marsh McLennan Company, Claude was Senior Vice President of Mortgage Backed Securitization for Fannie Mae where he implemented a multi-year strategy for post-regulatory reform mortgage backed securitization. He was also Chief Risk Officer for PNC Financial's PFPC Unit, and served as Senior Vice President and Director of Strategic Initiatives for Prudential Financial, where he led the team that was awarded the 2000 Technology Managers Forum Award for Business Process Improvement in Financial Services. Claude began his career in the operations function at Dean Witter Reynolds where he eventually rose to the position of Vice President of Compliance.

Claude received a B.A. in Finance from Pace University and an M.B.A. from New York University's Stern School of Business and is both a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and Certified SCRUM Master. Claude is also team Leader/inventor of Registered U.S. Patent entitled "System and Method for Comparing Information in a Process for Issuing Insurance Policies", and the sole holder of Registered U.S. Patent entitled "Method and apparatus for a Processing Risk Assessment and Operational Oversight Framework".



**Antoinette Torres, Director of Strategic Initiatives and Institutional Effectiveness, The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art**

**“Toni” Torres** joined The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in August, 2017. As director of strategic initiatives and institutional effectiveness, she reports directly to the president on development; assessment; and / or evaluation of initiatives that support Cooper Union priorities in service to access; diversity and excellence in the schools of Engineering; Architecture and Art; student scholarship; interdisciplinary curriculum with a focus on social justice; and a path to free tuition. She is also responsible for institutional research and assessment; the development of pipeline and community based programs; continuing education and certificate programs; diversity and inclusion.

This position, and the opportunity to support diversity and access at a highly selective institution, is in Toni’s estimation, her “opus”.

Prior to joining The Cooper Union, Toni was Associate Vice Provost for 15 years, to support diversity and excellence at Drexel University with oversight responsibility for the quality of academic advising in the University’s colleges and schools; academic policy development, implementation and operations; retention analysis and programming with the colleges and schools; pedagogical innovation in first year curriculum and inclusion. While at Drexel University, Toni fostered the development and implementation of initiatives that address differences in student preparation and learning experience and style, with dedicated focus on improving learning outcomes in the critical first two years, particularly in STEM. In collaboration with college associate deans, department heads and faculty, she implemented pedagogical policies and practices including:

- Refined math course placement cut scores and mathematics curriculum and instructional support models resulting in: 1) more normalized courses; 2) a significant drop in math failure rates; and 3) development of new mathematics courses tailored to student mastery levels.
- A TOEFL sub-score analysis, undertaken with the University’s English Language Center and validated by ETS, that was foundational to the development of customized and holistic placement and program planning strategies for large numbers of international students with moderate fluency in the English language.
- Instructional support models that expanded perspective and pedagogical approaches regarding learning, incorporating non-cognitive behavioral and social strategies that build critical reasoning and problem solving capabilities, enhancing student potential for course progression and successful degree completion.

She has spearheaded policies, practices and programs to support student development including skills assessment, planning rubrics and placement standards; curriculum and support strategies that develop academic and executive functioning skills; coaching and mentoring intakes and standards that foster goal setting, self-regulation and accountability; and experiential learning activities to motivate students’ connection and engagement in the workforce. In 2010 she was appointed co-chair of the Philadelphia Mayor’s Office to leverage these data-driven approaches among Philadelphia region universities, colleges and community colleges.