

# Introduction to Equity Hiring Panel: Barriers and Solutions in the EE Workforce

October 1, 2020 SAG Meeting: Joint with Income Qualified North and  
Income Qualified South EE Advisory Committees

# Introduction to Equity Hiring Panelists



**Delmar Gillus,  
Elevate Energy**



**Holly Spears, SEEL**



**Carla Walker-Miller,  
Walker-Miller Energy  
Services**



**Nick Dreher,  
Midwest Energy  
Efficiency Alliance**

# Introduction to Equity Hiring Panelists

## Delmar Gillus

- ▶ *COO, Elevate Energy*
- ▶ Leads Elevate's core operational functions and also supports business development, program design, project coordination, and contract management for Elevate's diverse EE and growing renewable energy programs
- ▶ Supports Elevate's work in increasing contractor diversity and launching energy assistance, community solar, and smart grid programs for Illinois utility consumers
- ▶ Manages efforts to implement new business strategies and solutions, such as supporting job creating workforce development programs that focus on underserved, environmental justice communities across the state

## Holly Spears

- ▶ *Account/Client Relations Manager, Business Development, SEEL*
- ▶ Using her background in Marketing, Sales and Business development, Holly acts as a liaison between clients and SEEL to ensure a seamless program launch, reporting, and compliancy
- ▶ Oversees program launches with 'boots on the ground' to train and transition hires
- ▶ Assesses, troubleshoots and provides solutions to assure exceptional program implementation

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## Carla Walker-Miller

- ▶ *CEO, Walker-Miller Energy Services*
- ▶ Founded Walker-Miller Energy Services, one of the largest African American and woman owned energy waste reduction companies in the country
- ▶ Champions diversity, inclusion and equity in the energy industry by aggressively recruiting and training a workforce that reflects the rich diversity of the communities her company serves
- ▶ Among many company and personal rewards, in 2019 Carla received the Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion's Humanitarian of the Year award

## Nick Dreher

- ▶ *Policy Director, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA)*
- ▶ Oversees MEEA's policy and advocacy operations
- ▶ Committed to increasing awareness and impact of energy efficiency policies throughout the Midwest, with a special focus on energy equity and inclusion, industrial policy and energy efficiency's economic and societal benefits
- ▶ Areas of expertise include: affordable multifamily energy efficiency, industrial energy efficiency, integrated resource planning, energy efficiency resource standards and cost-effectiveness testing

# Panelist Energy Efficiency Highlights

## Elevate Energy

- ▶ Energy Efficiency in Public Housing - <https://www.elevateenergy.org/who-we-serve/government-public-agencies/energy-efficiency-public-housing/>
- ▶ Multifamily Energy Efficiency - <https://www.elevateenergy.org/programs/multifamily-energy-efficiency/>
- ▶ Nonprofit Energy Efficiency - <https://www.elevateenergy.org/who-we-serve/nonprofits/>
- ▶ Water Efficiency - <https://www.elevateenergy.org/programs/water-programs/water-efficiency/>

## SEEL

- ▶ Operates the Ameren IL residential Appliance Recycling Initiative. Eligible customers can receive a rebate by recycling older refrigerators and freezers, saving customers money and reducing energy use by removing old high usage appliances off the grid.
- ▶ Our recycling facility in Decatur reuses the metal, glass and plastic parts from the old fridge or freezer. These parts are recycled and made into brand new products. ARI serves the entire Ameren Illinois service territory, 4900 + square miles. As a value add and to optimize additional savings per visit SEEL also distributes home energy-efficiency kits to eligible customers. The ARI is a hallmark program because the savings it garners have a very long measure life (WAML).
- ▶ As part of local economic development and support, we have a total of 8 onsite employees, all of whom are local, and we are a current member of the Greater Decatur Black Chamber of Commerce and Decatur Chamber of Commerce.

# Panelist Energy Efficiency Highlights

## Walker-Miller Energy Services

- ▶ Delivers a robust set of energy efficiency services for Ameren Illinois income qualified programs, including:
  - ▶ Home energy audits and the installation of free energy-saving products such as LED light bulbs, faucet aerators, showerheads, smart power strips, and pipe wrap
  - ▶ Offers incentives for insulation, air sealing and installation of efficient heating and cooling equipment
  - ▶ Supports the Market Development Initiative
  - ▶ Designs and implements programs to assist Ameren Illinois increase its EE contractor diverse spend
- ▶ Partners with ComEd on its Diverse EE Service Provider (EESP) Incubator Program

## Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance

- ▶ A collaborative network advancing EE in the Midwest for sustainable economic development and environmental stewardship
  - ▶ Oversees a 13-state region including Ohio, Kentucky, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas, including tracking EE policies
  - ▶ Goal to develop, support and promote innovative and impactful policies and actions to strengthen the EE industry by prioritizing equity, inclusion, access and diversity
  - ▶ Regional coordinator for Building Operator Certification Training
  - ▶ Partners with IL utilities and Resource Innovations on Midwest Market Transformation Collaborative
  - ▶ Building policy team works on adoption of and compliance with building codes, building performance standards and benchmarking

## *Panelist Question 1*

- ▶ **Defining Equity Hiring:** What does equity hiring mean to you? How does your company or organization define equity hiring or diverse hiring?

## *Panelist Question 2*

- ▶ **Business Goals:** Does your company or organization have equity or diversity business goals or targets? If so, please explain.



## *Panelist Question 3*

- ▶ **Barriers:** What are 2-3 barriers that currently exist in equity hiring or diverse hiring from an implementation contractor perspective, either with utilities or within other key players in the EE industry?

## *Panelist Question 4*

- ▶ **Solutions:** What are potential solutions to overcome existing barriers?

## *Panelist Question 5*

- ▶ **Business Opportunities:** How can the EE industry further support equity hiring and diverse hiring?

## *Panelist Question 6*

- ▶ **Success Stories:** Can you share a success story that you have experienced as a diverse supplier [or in equity hiring]?

## *Panelist Question 7*

- ▶ **Future of Equity Hiring for EE in Illinois:** Do you have a recommendation or a best practice to share on equity hiring that should be considered for the 2022-2025 EE Portfolios in Illinois?