

CYNTHIA MITCHELL-HEARD

PRESIDENT & CEO



Cynthia Mitchell-Heard holds the esteemed position of President & CEO at the Los Angeles Urban League. Her tenure is marked by groundbreaking achievements: Cynthia is the organization's first female Chief Operating Officer and, notably, the first woman in more than 90 years to lead as President & CEO. Her leadership is instrumental as LAUL enters its second century, continuing its mission to serve Los Angeles' underserved communities.

Appointed to her current role in 2023, Cynthia has 25 years of experience in nonprofit management, government, philanthropy, community, and corporate engagement. She has been an intricate partner in the field as a nationally acclaimed social impact strategist, coalition builder, and philanthropic change agent. As a strong executive leader, Cynthia has worked to develop exemplary models to break through economic barriers to create systemic change for marginalized communities both locally, nationally, and internationally.

Under Cynthia's leadership, LAUL has introduced innovative initiatives, including the State of Black L.A. conference series, a groundbreaking platform that examines racial equity benchmarks across health, housing, education, economic development, and other critical areas. Additionally, she formed a significant partnership with Intuit to launch the IDEAS program, which fosters financial literacy, economic empowerment, and entrepreneurship in underserved communities.

In 2020-2021, Cynthia worked diligently to secure a call to action that resulted in record-breaking funding in response to extraordinary economic, healthcare, housing, educational, and food insecurity demands precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In response to the catastrophic Eaton Canyon wildfires in Altadena, Cynthia led the Los Angeles Urban League in swiftly deploying resources to assist survivors. The organization partnered with FEMA and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to assess and strategize comprehensive disaster recovery efforts.

Recognizing the critical role of small businesses in community resilience, LAUL engaged with the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) and formed coalitions with local organizations to support the recovery and rebuilding of minority-owned businesses. The League directly served over 4,000 affected residents, distributing Grab-and-Go meals and essential supplies, and expanded its service area to include displaced residents in San Gabriel, Palmdale, and the Inland Empire.

Prior to the Urban League, she served as the Vice President of Business Development for the YWCA of Greater Los Angeles. Cynthia developed a myriad of public/private, state, local, and federal partnerships to fund "state of the art" program services and operations throughout Los Angeles County. Those efforts assisted with promoting economic stability through social services, including workforce development and community engagement, to improve our most vulnerable at-risk communities—more importantly, increasing visibility, sustainability, and advocacy through both public/private partnerships and stakeholders.

Passionate about numerous causes internationally, Cynthia has helped to build and secure funding for acclaimed collaborative initiatives, public/private partnerships, educational partnerships, and innovative programs focusing on at-risk and foster youth throughout Los Angeles,



as well as in women and children-centric economic, health, and educational programs in Belize, Bermuda, and the Bahamas.

A coalition builder, Cynthia has worked across party lines using legislative advocacy to focus on new avenues to break down the barriers of injustice that surround at-risk youth and families in poverty.

Cynthia has worked in various senior executive roles with Children Uniting Nations, Weingart Center, and the City of Long Beach. Her community advocacy, leadership, and tenacious spirit lead her to establish community advocacy, national agendas/strategies, social services collaborative partnerships, and programmatic support for at-risk individuals and communities in America and internationally. As a strong leader, Cynthia has provided guidance to our local and national political leaders and corporate executives to focus and design fundamental concepts and strategies that focus on changes for communities, children, and families who live in disadvantaged neighborhoods throughout the country.

She received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Southern California and went on to pursue her Master's degree from Howard University. Cynthia continues to work diligently to facilitate social and economic changes within at-risk communities throughout Los Angeles County and across America.

In 2018, she joined the New Strategies Global Social Enterprise Initiative Team. Cynthia currently serves as a Board Member on the California League of Women Voters, International Black Women's Public Policy Institute (IBWPPI), University of Southern California Black Alumni Association, and the KIS Foundation for Sickle Cell Disease, as well as many advisory roles for youth organizations.

Cynthia Mitchell-Heard's commitment to fostering equity and opportunity continues to inspire transformative change in Los Angeles and beyond.