

For Immediate Release

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Dr. Eric Anthony Johnson receives national Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) Rubinger Fellowship

LISC Rubinger Fellowship program works to break down barriers within local communities.

Twin Cities (Nov 26, 2019)—Dr. Eric Anthony Johnson, Community Development Director for the City of Bloomington, was awarded a national LISC Rubinger Fellowship for 2020. As part of its work to fuel broadly shared prosperity throughout American communities, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) named Dr. Johnson as one of 10 leaders from across the country as winners of the Rubinger Community Fellowship award, an annual program that invests in talent and new ideas to advance economic opportunity and strengthen communities.

LISC will award \$40,000 to each fellow, who will spend the year modeling programs and researching new ideas focused on a wide range of local issues like gentrification, generational wealth transfer, cooperative business development, housing and employment.

“The Rubinger Fellows are innovators who are willing to test new ideas and build replicable models that will have an impact well beyond the year of their fellowship,” said Maurice A. Jones, LISC president and CEO. “Our hope is to energize these leaders for the work of 21st century community development and catalyze opportunities for thousands of people across the country that have not been able to fully participate in our national economic growth.”

Dr. Johnson’s focus for the LISC fellowship will be conducting research and developing a guidance tool that will integrate a “shared values” framework into city development plans to help mitigate economic inequality.

“Dr. Johnson is out to change how cities think about their role in addressing their changing housing and economic conditions. Leading by example, he is reimagining the possibilities of how the public and private sectors can collaborate, inspiring us to move boldly forward. LISC Twin Cities is honored to have Dr. Johnson represent the innovative and creative mind-set that our region is known for on this national platform,” said Gretchen Nicholls, Program Officer at the LISC Twin Cities office.



“I am particularly pleased by Dr. Johnson’s leadership in creating models for the suburbs. As low income people and people of color live increasingly in our suburbs, it is essential that we create and nurture strategies that work there. Dr. Johnson is doing just that!” Peter McLaughlin, Executive Director of LISC Twin Cities, added.

The Rubinger Fellowship program is named in honor of Michael Rubinger, LISC's long-time CEO, who pioneered new approaches to revitalizing communities throughout his 40-year career. One of LISC's first employees at its founding, he stepped down in 2016 after 17 years at the organization's helm.

"It is critical that local expertise and engagement are not just quietly nurtured but actively and persistently supported," Rubinger said. "This group of 10 local leaders has demonstrated an ability to lead and, just as importantly, the capacity to push the boundaries of the community development field so it can do more, do it faster and do it better."

Jones said the fellowship recognizes the talent of individuals to drive lasting change, while at the same time serving as an investment in communities and the field of community development as a whole. Previous Rubinger fellows have taken on such diverse challenges and opportunities as disaster recovery in Puerto Rico, the affordable housing crisis in California, financial stability for domestic violence survivors, and out-of-school-time services for youth, to name just a few.

"These folks are already breaking down barriers and blazing new trails," Jones said. "With this fellowship, as well as with LISC's broad efforts on health, housing, economic development, safety and jobs, we want to help them do more. "

Support for the Rubinger Fellowship is provided by Lisa & Dick Cashin and LISC Chairman Robert E. Rubin, with additional support from Nancy and George Walker; Bank of America; Citi Foundation; Ford Foundation; The Kresge Foundation; John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; MetLife Foundation; Morgan Stanley; State Farm; The Greater Milwaukee Community Foundation; and New Jersey Governor Philip D. Murphy.

Find more information on the 2020 Rubinger Fellows [here](#).

About LISC

With residents and partners, LISC forges resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity – great places to live, work, visit, do business and raise families. Since 1988, Twin Cities LISC has invested \$734 million to build or rehab 17,404 affordable homes and apartments, develop 2.4 million square feet of retail, community and educational space, and serve over 7,500 families at Financial Opportunity Centers. To learn more, visit www.tclisc.org.

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