

# AYA Foundation Announces New CEO

*Lynnette White-Colin to Lead AYA Foundation into Next Chapter of Impact*

DENVER, CO, UNITED STATES, July 17, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [AYA Foundation](#) is pleased to announce the appointment of Lynnette White-Colin as its new Chief Executive Officer, effective July 16, 2025. After a comprehensive, several-month national search, White-Colin, an experienced leader with a strong background in nonprofit management, entrepreneurship, and community development, will be taking the helm at Colorado's premier, Black-led community foundation.



Lynnette White-Colin

**A Strong Vision for the Future**  
White-Colin's appointment marks a new chapter for the AYA Foundation, which is dedicated to supporting and growing Black entrepreneurs and business owners in Colorado. She brings a wealth of expertise to the organization, having previously served as Interim CEO and Senior Vice President for Business Growth and Strategy at the New Orleans Business Alliance and as a leader in revitalizing New Orleans' historic cultural corridors.

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*Jice Johnson*

“I am beyond thrilled to join the AYA Foundation at such an exciting time in its journey,” said White-Colin. “What drew me to this position was the chance to lead an organization with such a bold mission—one that focuses on ensuring Black entrepreneurs thrive. The work Benny Samuels has done in building the foundation from the ground up is nothing short of extraordinary, and I am committed to accelerating AYA's impact and expanding its reach to support even more entrepreneurs in the years to come.”

## A Legacy of Impact and Leadership

Outgoing CEO Benny Samuels is retiring in December 2025, having served as the foundation's founding leader since 2020. Under her leadership, AYA has grown into a critical force for equity in the philanthropic and entrepreneurial landscape.

Jice Johnson, AYA Foundation Founder and Board Chair, shared, "Benny's leadership laid a firm foundation for AYA. We are deeply grateful for her tireless efforts in bringing the vision for this organization to life. Benny was the right leader to begin this journey, and we are confident that Lynnette is the right leader to guide AYA into its next phase of growth and long-term impact.

"We were drawn to Lynnette for her passion for AYA's mission and her extensive experience in scaling initiatives under challenging conditions. She understands the challenges Black businesses face and the importance of AYA's growth. Lynnette brings actionable ideas, deep knowledge, and a willingness to learn. This is a pivotal moment for AYA, and we are excited to move forward with her as our CEO. We also thank the Board and its search committee for their commitment to finding a visionary leader for AYA."

## About Lynnette White-Colin

Lynnette White-Colin brings over 20 years of leadership experience in economic development and business growth, with a focus on supporting underrepresented communities. She has dedicated her career to helping Black entrepreneurs access contract opportunities and capital to accelerate growth in their businesses. White-Colin's past work includes successfully leading a consortium of community development financial institutions and a group of 25 procurement professionals, resulting in \$43 million in capital and \$199 million in procurement contracts for small business owners of color in New Orleans.

"I've spent my career working alongside entrepreneurs in New Orleans and beyond to help them break through barriers," said White-Colin. "Now, I'm eager to bring that experience to AYA and work with Colorado's Black entrepreneurs to build generational wealth, create jobs, and generate economic opportunities. Together, we can make a lasting impact on Black communities across Colorado."

For additional information or media inquiries, please contact Angelle C. Fother, Kindred Communications, at [angelle@kindredcommunications.net](mailto:angelle@kindredcommunications.net) or 303-868-1796.

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## About the AYA Foundation

The AYA Foundation is a Black-led community foundation dedicated to supporting Black entrepreneurs and organizations that serve Black communities. Its mission is to provide the resources, programming, and support systems necessary to help Black business owners thrive, grow generational wealth, and contribute to a more equitable society. AYA's programs include business coaching, capital access, educational resources, and mentorship — all designed to foster entrepreneurship, economic self-sufficiency, and empowerment. To learn more, visit

ayafoundation.org.

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