

# Angela Nicole Spranger Recognized by Influential Women in 2025

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Influential Women is proud to recognize Dr. Angela Nicole Spranger as part of its 2025 Honorees, celebrating her trailblazing leadership, deep commitment to equity, and transformational impact across sectors. Dr. Angela Nicole Spranger is a visionary leader in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and human resources strategy, recognized for her ability to align people, systems, and culture in ways that foster transformation and long-term success. With more than two decades of experience across higher education, nonprofit, and corporate sectors, she has built a career defined by courage, clarity, and care. As

Founder of Chandler Henley Consulting

LLC, Dr. Spranger partners with executive leaders to architect inclusive systems, stabilize organizational culture, and drive equity-centered change that lasts.



Her expertise stems from a powerful combination of rigorous academic training and lived experience. Dr. Spranger earned her BA from Duke University, an MBA from Virginia Commonwealth University, and a Master of Arts in Education from The George Washington University. She later completed her Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership at Regent University. This academic foundation, coupled with her perspective as a Black woman who has not only navigated but reshaped predominantly White institutional spaces, equips her to lead transformative change with both precision and empathy.

Throughout her career, Dr. Spranger has guided institutions and organizations through

moments of significant evolution. At the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management, she founded the Center for Inclusive Excellence, securing inaugural funding and developing partnerships that expanded equity and access. At Christopher Newport University, she served as Institutional Representative to the Virginia Women's Network and went on to establish the Collegiate Women's Network, a program that embodied her philosophy of "leaving the ladder down" to ensure that others have the opportunity to lead. These initiatives reflect her lifelong commitment to opening doors and creating pathways for others.

Central to Dr. Spranger's methodology is her strategic framework, the Five Pillars of Inclusive Excellence, and her proprietary 5Cs of Organizational Behavior® model: Communication, Collaboration, Culture, Change, and Conflict. These systems-focused tools offer organizations a clear blueprint for embedding equity and inclusion into the very fabric of their operations. Her leadership is marked by a trauma-informed approach to organizational development, ensuring that workplaces are not only high-performing but also psychologically safe for all employees, particularly those from marginalized and minoritized backgrounds.

In addition to her consulting work, Dr. Spranger is a respected executive coach, speaker, and facilitator. She is frequently called upon to lead dialogues on race, power, justice, and leadership in business contexts. Her ability to create environments where difficult conversations lead to growth and progress makes her a sought-after advisor for organizations navigating disruption or transformation. Her service extends beyond the workplace to her role on the board of the ACLU of Minnesota, where she advocates for civil rights and economic empowerment at the community level.

When asked what she attributes her success to, Dr. Spranger points to curiosity—both intellectual and relational. She describes curiosity as the catalyst that has helped her create safe spaces for learning and growth, even in the midst of conflict and change. She also acknowledges the role of mentors and leaders who poured into her journey. From her mother, who instilled in her the confidence to pursue academic and professional excellence, to role models like Delores McQuinn, Patrese Pruden, Dean Caroline Lattimore, Patricia Lancaster, and Dr. Renee Escoffery-Torres, she was shown that true success comes from leveraging resources, collaborating effectively, and lifting others along the way.

The best career advice Dr. Spranger ever received came in the form of a challenge: "What would happen if you stopped trying to prove you belonged?" That simple yet profound question shifted the trajectory of her leadership. It revealed how much of her ambition had been rooted in survival—earning degrees to be "twice as good," overperforming to silence doubters, sacrificing herself to gain proximity to power. The advice liberated her to lead from authenticity rather than performance, to live into her purpose without bending to others' expectations. Along the way,

Dr. Spranger also embraced practical wisdom: to “plan your work and work your plan,” to recognize that “rest is not a reward” but a necessity, and to model sustainable leadership by refusing to sacrifice her well-being for success.

Her guidance to young women entering the DEI and HR fields reflects both candor and encouragement. Dr. Spranger advises them not to confuse access with acceptance or mistake survival for success. “This industry will offer you rooms before it offers you respect—walk in anyway, but bring your boundaries with you,” she counsels. Her words underscore the importance of knowing one’s identity before others attempt to define it, staying rooted in faith, and surrounding oneself with people who will support, challenge, and uplift. She reminds emerging leaders to “leave the ladder down” for others, to prioritize rest as resistance, and to embrace joy as a deliberate strategy for resilience.

When discussing the current landscape of HR and DEI, Dr. Spranger acknowledges the duality of challenge and opportunity. She observes that political pressures have led some organizations to retreat, rebrand, or abandon equity efforts altogether. Yet she sees this as a pivotal moment to deepen the work—moving beyond performative gestures to embed equity into systems, policies, and culture. The demand now is for consultants who can bring clarity, courage, and strategy to the table, using data with integrity while ensuring workplaces remain humane in the face of technological acceleration.

Dr. Spranger identifies other critical challenges as well, including weak leadership pipelines, outdated succession models, and the failure of many transformation initiatives that address technical processes while ignoring human systems. In her view, this opens a massive opportunity for customized, systems-based approaches that integrate trauma-informed organizational development. Companies that prioritize psychological safety and design frameworks where people can navigate change together, she notes, will be the ones that achieve sustainable transformation and industry leadership.

Values serve as the bedrock of Dr. Spranger’s professional and personal life. Integrity, courage, and perseverance guide her decisions and sustain her through adversity. For her, integrity means ensuring that beliefs, words, and actions remain aligned across every sphere of life—from boardrooms to classrooms to personal spaces. Dr. Spranger values courage, not only the boldness to speak truth with love, but also the strength to stand firm when compromise would be easier. Perseverance, rooted in her faith, is the sacred act of rising again after setbacks, choosing purpose over bitterness, and showing up consistently even when the cost is high.

Her values manifest in her outreach and educational efforts, whether advancing equity in

organizations, contributing to nonprofit work, or fostering a deeper understanding of history and justice in the communities she serves. Compassion and discernment guide Dr. Spranger's leadership, alongside an unshakable belief in the possibility of transformation. She holds firm to her faith as both anchor and compass, a source of hope and strength that enables her to stand steady when the world attempts to wear her down.

Dr. Angela Nicole Spranger's career reflects an unwavering commitment to inclusive excellence, systems thinking, and values-driven leadership. Whether designing frameworks that reimagine organizational culture, guiding executives through strategic HR challenges, or mentoring the next generation of leaders, she brings both intellectual rigor and human compassion to every endeavor. At the heart of her work is a belief that better is not only possible but necessary—and that lasting transformation is achieved when people, systems, and culture are aligned with clarity, accountability, and care.

Outside of her professional impact, Angela is a woman who loves music and dancing, finds herself rendered awestruck in libraries and museums, and seeks out bodies of water for peaceful restoration and reset.

Learn More about Dr. Angela Nicole Spranger:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/profile/angela-spranger> or through her website, <https://www.chandlerhenley.com/>

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