



Contemporary
Arts
Center

WOKE DREAMS AT THE CAC - JANUARY 20, 2020

PANELIST BIOS

[Alanah Odoms Hebert, Executive Director, ACLU](#)

Alanah Odoms Hebert, a leading civil rights attorney, is the first African American woman to be named executive director of the ACLU of Louisiana. She is committed to the priorities of reducing mass incarceration and furthering racial justice in Louisiana, as well as expanding the ACLU's collaboration with marginalized communities. Current initiatives under her leadership include: the campaign to end non-unanimous jury verdicts, a destructive legacy of Louisiana's Jim Crow history, and a comprehensive statewide assessment of Louisiana's prolific pretrial detainee population.

Odoms Hebert previously served as the director of the division of children and families and deputy general counsel of the Louisiana Supreme Court. Odoms Hebert also worked as special counsel to Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice, Bernette J. Johnson. Her work has included advocacy to support the establishment of a truancy center in Orleans Parish, the campaign to end indiscriminate shackling of juveniles in court, and the revision of the Louisiana Code of Criminal Procedure Articles on post conviction relief. Alanah also co-chaired the statewide effort to reduce incarceration of children through the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI).

In 2016, Odoms Hebert was appointed to serve as special counsel to the Louisiana Justice Reinvestment Task Force, a bipartisan team of experts that developed the policy recommendations behind Louisiana's historic package of criminal justice reforms passed the following year. Recognizing the need to have directly impacted community members at the table, she was the architect of a series of listening sessions which allowed Louisiana citizens to address members of the task force. In just one year, Louisiana has saved 12.2M and no longer holds the title of top incarcerator in the world.

In July 2018, Alanah graduated from the prestigious Presidential Leadership Scholars Program, a partnership between the George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, Lyndon Johnson, and George Bush presidential centers. She is one of 59 national up- and-coming leaders recognized for her commitment to solving some of our nation's most pressing problems.

Alanah currently teaches at Tulane Law School, as an adjunct lecturer in Negotiation and Mediation Advocacy. Odoms Hebert is a graduate of Rutgers School of Law- Newark and a Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Rutgers College in New Jersey.

Stephanie McKee-Anderson, Executive Artistic Director of Junebug Productions

Stephanie McKee-Anderson is a performer, choreographer, educator, facilitator and cultural organizer born in Picayune, MS and raised in New Orleans.

She is the founder of Moving Stories Dance Project, an organization committed to dance education that provides opportunities for dancers and choreographers to showcase their talents. In 2007, she was awarded The Academy of Educational Development/New Voices Fellowship, an award for emerging leaders.

For the past 20 years, Stephanie has been involved with Junebug Productions as an artist and educator. Most recently she served as Associate Artistic Director of the first annual Homecoming Project 2011, a place-based performance project that addresses the Right of Return and what home means to communities in post-Katrina New Orleans. In 2006, Stephanie was one of ten artists who collaborated to create the original production, "UPROOTED: The Katrina Project," co-produced by Junebug Productions.

As an artist and cultural organizer, Stephanie is deeply committed to creating work that supports social justice and aligns with the FST and Junebug legacy.

Ranord J. Darensburg JD, RSW- Judicial Administrator, Orleans Parish Juvenile Court

Ranord J. Darensburg is both a licensed attorney and licensed social worker. He has been a practicing attorney for over 25 years representing clients including corporations, municipalities and agencies. He has written and lectured on legal issues including juvenile justice reform, adoption and business development. Mr. Darensburg is subject matter expert and certified trainer in Mental Health and Juvenile Justice.

A native of New Orleans, Mr. Darensburg obtained graduate degrees in law and social work

from Loyola University College of Law (JD) and Tulane University School of Social Work (MSW). He earned his undergraduate degree (BS) from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Mr. Darensburg currently serves as Judicial Administrator for Orleans Parish Juvenile Court where he oversees all non-judicial functions of the court. As Judicial Administrator, Mr. Darensburg also works to eliminate barriers to justice for the youth and families serviced by the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court. He works proactively to cultivate relationships with vital stakeholders to improve the operations, effectiveness and sustainability of the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court. Mr. Darensburg is instrumental in creating programming to address the behavioral and mental health challenges of court involved youth and families. Mr. Darensburg currently serves as Chair of Regional Advisory Council for Metropolitan Human Services District.

Mr. Darensburg has served in numerous and varied capacities during his career, including Judge Pro Tempore, Ad Hoc Judge, Clerk of Juvenile Court, Outreach Coordinator Multi-Service Center for the Homeless, Code Enforcement Hearing Officer and General Counsel at Transit Management of Southeast Louisiana. Ranord can be reached by email at contact@ranord.com or www.ranord.com

Dr. David W. Robinson-Morris, Founding Director of The Center for Equity, Justice, and the Human Spirit at Xavier University of Louisiana

David W. Robinson-Morris, Ph.D. is the founding Director of The Center for Equity, Justice, and the Human Spirit at Xavier University of Louisiana, Assistant Professor in the Division of Education and Counseling, and serves the university's Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations. He holds a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Research with a dual concentration in Higher Education Administration and Curriculum Theory, and an Education Specialist (Ed. S.) Certificate in Educational Leadership with a focus on applied research, measurement, and evaluation both from Louisiana State University ([LSU](http://lsu.edu)).

Kathy Randels, ArtSpot Productions, Founding Artistic Director

Kathy Randels is ArtSpot's founding artistic director. She has written, performed in, and directed numerous original solo and ensemble works for professional, prison and student ensembles throughout the world. She has received OBIE, Big Easy and Storer Boone awards, as well as Louisiana and NEA/TCG Theatre Fellowships.

Jose Cotto, Artist - Activation Statement from Jose Cotto

cultivating history, documenting dreams.

All of us have been to the places our lives are meant to touch. we know this because we can close our eyes and envision ourselves there. we can hear the sounds carried by the breeze, smell the roses given to us by loved ones, see the spirits that guided our paths, taste the recipes of our truth, and touch the hearts of those present.

Through intimate one on one portrait sittings, i aim to create a space that allows us to strip away our layers, feel intentionally, and expose our true selves. the sittings will end with a prompt that asks each individual to close their eyes and place themselves *there* — at their dream. to document it, to feel the energy, to be in it. to take in the whole story, so they know what they need to cultivate in the days to come. once they are ready to return, i will humbly create a portrait of the moment; a blueprint to their being.

Bio: Jose Cotto was born and raised in great brook valley, a housing project in worcester, massachusetts. the son of a single mother raising four kids, he often found himself being pulled between the streets and his desire to create — art was always a means to escape, a means to forget, and a means to remember.

Prior to joining the small center as the collaborative design project manager, jose worked at the arts council new orleans as the design director, spearheading the organization's youth design + build program, placemaking initiatives, and in house graphic design & branding needs. with over a decade of experience in community engagement and youth development, jose leverages his technical skills and artistic vision, to help propel ideas and projects forward that aim to shift the consciousness of communities.

Jose maintains a freelance photography and design practice that continues to explore the relationships between people, place, and time. he is currently working on a photography book that will span the last 10 years of his practice and serve as a blueprint for future explorations. He holds a masters in architecture from Tulane University and a bachelors in architecture & design from the university of massachusetts amherst.

[DJ Raj Smoove:](#)

Raj Smoove, "The Greatest DJ in the World" as claimed by Lil Wayne, is the premier DJ in the New Orleans Metropolitan area. Currently Raj Smoove holds residencies at the Foundation Room at House of Blues New Orleans and on the air every Saturday night on 98.5 WYLD's Saturday Night Live. Raj Smoove is featured in the regular rotation of Guest DJ appearances at Masquerade at Harrah's Casino, The New Orleans Pelican's franchised events and other

legendary New Orleans Nightlife spots such as the Metropolitan Night Club. He is also a staple at major city wide festivals such as Essence Festival and The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival.

Raj Smoove is praised by club owners and promoters for his ability to read and engage crowds of any age or demographic and keep them on the dance floor buying drinks and elevating the energy of the club or festival to ensure epic experiences.

Spinning since the age of 13, Raj broke onto the club and production scenes during his college years at Dillard University and quickly became an icon in the Southeast region.

In 2000, Raj Smoove launched into the nation's view when he deejayed for Cash Money Records during the 2000 Cash Money/Ruff Ryder Tour. He appeared on BET's Rap City: Tha Bassment three times as a featured DJ and also deejayed for the airing of the 106 & Park Top 10 Count Down: Super Bowl XXXVI edition in New Orleans. In '02, '03, and '06 Raj Smoove was featured as a Superlounge artist at the Essence Music Festival.