



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

09.11.2024

CONTACT:

Taylor Koopman, PIO

tpkoop@kalamazoo.org

269-383-8651

Kalamazoo County Taps Dell Darnell as DE&I Director

KALAMAZOO, Mich. – Kalamazoo County Government is excited to announce the appointment of Dell Darnell as the new Director of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Department.

“Dell’s extensive experience and deep expertise in diversity, equity, and inclusion will be invaluable as we work towards creating a more inclusive community,” said Kevin A. Catlin, Kalamazoo County Administrator/Controller. “We are very fortunate to have someone of Dell’s caliber join us.”

Darnell comes to Kalamazoo County with a strong background in DE&I, having served as Director of Services at OutFront Kalamazoo for the past two years. There, they designed and led DE&I training for over 50 organizations across Southwest Michigan, including the County, the City of Kalamazoo, Bronson, Pfizer, and Stryker. Their impactful work earned them the 2024 DEI Leader award from the National Diversity Council.

“I am deeply honored to step into the role of DE&I Director for Kalamazoo County,” Darnell said.

“Kalamazoo holds a special place in my heart, and as a trans member of the LGBTQ+ community, I am passionately committed to anti-racism, equity, accessibility, and creating safe, affirming, and inclusive policies and practices for all. I look forward to collaborating with my colleagues and the community to cultivate a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive culture throughout the County.”

Darnell holds a bachelor’s degree in sociology and psychology from Saginaw Valley State University, with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. They also earned a master’s degree in international development administration from Western Michigan University, concentrating on non-profit management, program monitoring and evaluation, and governance.

In addition to their new role, Darnell serves on the boards and DE&I committees of the YMCA of Greater Kalamazoo and Equality Michigan, and co-chairs the board of the Rooted Enrichment Center. Their dedication to professional development is evident in their participation in various training programs, including Trauma Responsive Care, Ableism 101, LGBT Awareness for Law Enforcement, and the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety’s Citizens Academy, among others.

Kalamazoo County looks forward to the positive impact Darnell will bring as they lead the DE&I Department in fostering a more inclusive and equitable community.

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