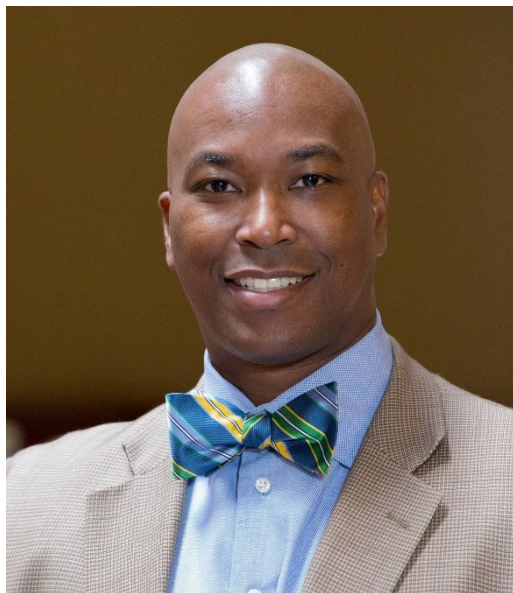




## Meet the 2021 First Term Trustee Nominees

**Avery Gaddis** has been advising and assisting the small business community for more than 20 years, specializing in entrepreneurship, business growth and development and strategic planning.

Avery has a degree in Political Science from Central Connecticut State University and an MBA from the University of New Haven. His professional



experience includes finance, commercial lending, asset management, internal auditing, regulatory compliance and corporate governance.

Avery is Chairman of the Board of Directors for Hartford Behavioral Health, Inc. and serves as a Board member for Waterbury Opportunities and Industrial Center (WOIC), where he heads-up its Strategic Planning Committee. Throughout the years, Avery has served on various nonprofit boards, including Dreams Empower, Inc., Hartford VNA Healthcare and Waterbury Youth Services.

Avery is a former member of the Connecticut Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission of Civil Rights, current member of Connecticut's Minority Business Initiative Advisory Board and serves on the Commission on Racial Ethnic Disparity in the criminal justice system.

In 2015, Avery was named as one of the "100 Men of Color" and in both 2015 and 2018 was designated by the NAACP as one of Connecticut's "100 Most Influential Blacks." He is a member of the Association of Accredited Small Business Consultants (AASBC) and a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., where he served as Chapter President of Beta Sigma Lambda from 2010-2015.

Avery enjoys spending time with family, reading, golfing and watching the Green Packers.

**Tomas Olivo** was born in the Dominican Republic and lived in Puerto Rico until he was 9 years old. His family relocated to the United States in 2005 and he has been living in Waterbury since 2008.

Tomas graduated from Hartford Public High School and attended UCONN Waterbury branch where he earned a Bachelor's degree in Arts and Science, with a double major in Urban & Community Studies and Human Development & Families Studies and a minor in Psychology. Tomas is a first-generation college graduate, made possible by many different people encouraging and helping him in his high school years, as well as his mother who pushed him to challenge himself and attend college.



Tomas began his professional career in 2012 at Catholic Charities in Waterbury, serving the community through various programs including Fatherhood services, Child Removal Preventive Services, Family Education, Eviction Prevention, and a Basic Needs Program. Over the course of almost 8 years with Catholic Charities, Tomas worked hard to help many families in the Waterbury community. His work did not go unnoticed, and he was promoted internally, receiving recognition and awards for his commitment to help the community.

Currently, Tomas serves the community through the Working Cities Challenge initiative, focused on removing barriers the Waterbury community, and particularly the South End community, faces towards finding sustainable employment. This initiative also focuses on systems change and promoting equitable access, with a focus to lower the unemployment rate in the South End neighborhood by 10% over a 10-year period.

Tomas volunteers with other committees that serve the Waterbury community, including the Foundation's Grassroots Leaders Grant Committee. Tomas has participated, supported and volunteered with a variety of community projects and events. During his free time, Tomas enjoys playing softball in a local team, powerlifting, and spending time with family.

"I love working to better our community, because I am part of it, and we are all in this together!" – Tomas Olivo

**Saran D. White** is a mission-driven strategist with over twenty years of experience strengthening the capacity of organizations and systems that increase equity, access and justice in under-resourced communities. With an impressive background in philanthropy, K-12 education, civic engagement and organizational effectiveness, Saran has worked with renowned nonprofits, foundations and thought leaders to effectively implement innovative strategies through collaborative projects and grantmaking.

As a leader in change-management and the inaugural chief executive of the Leever Foundation—a nineteen-year-old foundation doing place-based grantmaking in Waterbury, Connecticut—Saran works in collaboration with the Board of Trustees to design, structure and implement a more intentional, vision-aligned, equity-driven and community-informed agenda. Likewise, she partners with both traditional and nontraditional community leaders to assess needs and make recommendations in service of the foundation's revised strategy.

Prior to her leadership at the Leever Foundation, Saran was the Washington, DC Program Director for the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), where she directed a multi-million-dollar portfolio focused on anti-poverty initiatives. Saran also directed strategic transformation projects for the DC public school system, served as the executive director of a family foundation working to improve the foster care system. During her time in California, Saran developed and led a groundbreaking, statewide civic engagement initiative in collaboration with the James Irvine Foundation.

An avid lifelong learner, Saran has completed several post-graduate fellowships, including the American Express Leadership Academy, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation entrepreneurship training and the Coro Fellows Program in Public Affairs.

Saran holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Wesleyan University and a Master of Public Administration degree from CUNY Baruch School of Public and International Affairs. Saran enjoys hiking, volunteering, B&W photography and exploring cultures through music, art, writings, ceremony, food and dance.



**Jean Solomon** has over 35 years of experience as a Senior Real Estate executive in large-scale property developments and in major management positions. She has been recognized for her unique combination of project management, financial and relationship management skills.



Throughout her career, Jean has managed the development of commercial, residential, senior housing, retail, hospitality and special use projects in the US, the UK, Spain, and China—working with diverse groups to produce focused results and creative solutions to complex problems.

Jean serves on the Board of the Gunn Memorial Library in Washington, as an Advisory Committee Member of Riverfront Revitalization in New Milford, and on the Foundation's Building Equitable Outcomes Committee. Jean worked with Neighborhood

Housing Services of Waterbury (NHSW) to conduct an evaluation of Parks and Recreation Space needs in Waterbury neighborhoods. Recommendations were implemented by City Parks and Recreation agencies. She also served on NHSW's Design Challenge Committee. Previously, Jean was a Board Member of Brass City Harvest in Waterbury and volunteered her skills as Washington's St. John's Episcopal Church worked to replace its historic 100-year old slate roof.

Jean is a member of the Urban Land Institute and WX, Inc. (Women Executives in Real Estate). She has been a member of various professional organizations as well as boards and bureaus focused on business improvement and community development. She was a recipient of the Clarisa Award (to help feed NYC's hungry) and Women of Achievement Award (for Professional Women in Construction).

Jean holds a BA degree from Cornell University and a Master of Science in Architecture and Urban Design from Columbia University. Jean completed Citibank's Credit Analysis Training Program. While there, she completed an internal anti redlining study for the Community of Flatbush, Brooklyn for its Citicorp Community Development Department.