

# BLACK LEADERSHIP AWARDS 2026

## NOMINATION FORM

\* Nomination investment will be returned if your candidate is not selected.



For more than two decades *Profiles in Leadership Journal*™ has showcased and honored individuals who have blazed new trails, led the way, mentored others, advanced inclusion in the workplace and the community, and excelled in their chosen fields. In the upcoming Fall issue, *PLJ* will recognize **Black Leaders** with our **Black Leadership Awards**.

*Profiles in Leadership Journal* is proud to honor these individuals who contribute to the success of your organization. We invite you to join us in this endeavor by nominating one or more members of your team who, through their advocacy, perseverance, legacy, or professional achievements, have triumphed to become Black Leaders.

Your nomination of a Black Leader, or multiple Black Leaders, affords you an important opportunity to recognize and showcase the talents, ambition, and achievements of these exceptional people.

### Who Are these Outstanding Individuals?

Nominated by employers or colleagues, Black Leaders are confident, determined, high-performing, purpose-driven professionals who create value for their coworkers, customers, community, and of course, the organizations where they contribute their talents.

Throughout its history, *Profiles in Leadership Journal* has recognized thousands of men and women from around the world who are making a difference. The profiles that will appear in the Fall issue will recognize and celebrate Black Leadership awardees, and enhance the reputations of the organizations that encourage, empower, and support these trailblazing individuals.

**DEADLINE for Nominations:**  
**August 14, 2026**

Questions? Contact James Rector *Publisher*

Email: publisher@leadershipjournal.com Office: 440-892-0444 Mobile: 440-662-9770



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## NOMINATION FORM

### Complete Your Nomination in 4 Steps

#### 1. Provide important nomination information on pages 3 – 5 of this document.

Nominations will be reviewed and judged based on the brief bio you provide, which may include contributions and achievements in support of Black colleagues, customers, or communities, and in other areas the nominator deems important:

- Professional Achievement
- Innovation
- Mentorship
- Community Involvement
- Leadership
- Pipeline development
- Legacy
- Economic development

#### 2. Complete the Nomination Processing Area on Page 5

There is a \$495 processing investment per nomination which must be received by the nomination deadline. *If your nominee is not selected, your nomination investment will be refunded.*

#### 3. Upload\* Your Completed Nomination document by August 14, 2026 at <https://leadershipjournal.com/bl-nomination-upload/>.

\* Nomination forms must be submitted/uploaded via *PLJ's* secure online portal  
Email submissions will not be accepted!

#### 4. Recognize Your Leaders with Confidence

We understand that today's communications require care and consideration. That's why *Profiles in Leadership Journal* offers all nominating organizations the opportunity to review and approve their award winner's profile prior to publication.

Your organization remains in full control of how your leadership is portrayed — we're your partner in celebrating excellence, not a source of concern.

### It's that Easy

If your nominee should be selected as a 2026 Black Leadership award recipient, we will notify both your successful nominee and the person who nominated him or her. We'll also send each nominee a Question & Answer packet. He or she will be asked to answer a few questions, write an optional brief essay, and provide a high-resolution photograph of him- or herself, as well as a digital version of your organization's logo. Each nominee's photograph, optional essay, and professional information will appear on a dedicated full page in our Fall issue. Just complete the Nomination area on pages 3 and 4. Links for upload and payment are on page 5.

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## NOMINATION FORM

*(Please fill in all form fields and be sure to save this file when completed)*

### Before You Begin

As part of our collaborative process, your organization will have the chance to review and approve the final profile of your award winner before publication. This ensures alignment with your internal messaging and gives your team full confidence to nominate with peace of mind.

### A. Nominee Information

Nominee's Name:  Mr.,  Ms.,  Mrs.,  Dr. \_\_\_\_\_  
(as it should appear in print and please check prefix that applies)

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Corporate Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact info for Nominee's  
Administrative Assistant: \_\_\_\_\_

### B. Nominated by:

*Note: The nominator must be the primary point of contact for all editorial communications. Using a company executive as the nominator will not increase a nominee's chances of selection. He or she will be evaluated on merit alone. Please ensure that the person whose information is entered below is available to manage all communications related to the nomination and award process.*

Nominator's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Corporate Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Secondary Contact Name & Email:** \_\_\_\_\_



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## NOMINATION FORM

### C. Tell Us Why You Chose this Nominee

Briefly explain why your nominee should be recognized as a 2026 Black Leadership awardee: (200 words max.)

Provide a brief bio that highlights your nominee's contributions and accomplishments, which may include examples of professional achievement, innovation, mentorship, community involvement, leadership, pipeline development, legacy, and economic development. (500 words max.)

### D. Final Profile Approval

Please confirm your preference regarding the final profile approval process:

- Yes**, we would like to review and approve the final profile before publication.
- No**, we trust the editorial process and do not require a final review.

Note: If "Yes" is selected, publication will not proceed without organizational approval.

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## NOMINATION FORM

### E. Nomination Processing

NOMINATION INVESTMENT: \$495:

After uploading your Nomination form, please be sure to go to our secure payment portal where you can submit your entry payment. If your nominee is not selected, *PLJ* will refund your nomination investment.



Please upload this document **(do not email)**

at: <https://leadershipjournal.com/bl-nomination-upload/>



Submit \$495 nomination investment payment at:

<https://buy.stripe.com/28o8zm8hdggjgGAaEI>

**If you need an invoice for payment please email  
James Rector: [publisher@leadershipjournal.com](mailto:publisher@leadershipjournal.com)**

**Submitted nomination and fee must be received by August 14, 2026.**

*Emailed submissions will not be accepted!*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. Will our organization have the opportunity to review the award winner's profile before publication?**  
Yes. We offer every nominating organization the chance to review and approve the final profile of their award winner before publication. We understand the importance of alignment with internal communications and public messaging. Your team remains in full control of what is shared publicly.
- 2. Will the nomination investment be refunded if our candidate is not selected?**  
Your nomination investment will be returned in full if your candidate is not selected.
- 3. Is my organization allowed to nominate a candidate who has been named a Black Leader in the past?**  
Your nominees may include a candidate or candidates who have previously been named Black Leaders.
- 4. How will my organization be notified of our nominee's acceptance?**  
Confirmation that your organization's nominee has been accepted will be sent to the nominator and the award winner along with a Question & Answer Form.
- 5. Is purchasing an advertisement in the Fall issue of *PLJ* required if our nominee is accepted?**  
No advertising purchase is required.
- 6. Will we be able to receive PDFs of our nominee's profile layout?**  
If you wish to receive a **FREE PDF** of your nominees layout from the Fall issue, please email a request to [stevetoth@leadershipjournal.com](mailto:stevetoth@leadershipjournal.com) after the issue has been launched.
- 7. Will my organization have an opportunity to revise a profile after it appears in the Fall issue?**  
If you would like to make edits or changes to your page(s) after the issue is posted online, please email [stevetoth@leadershipjournal.com](mailto:stevetoth@leadershipjournal.com).

# Each Winner will receive a full-page in the Fall issue

Here are samples of some past winners' profile pages.



**Lori Clement Largie**  
Principal



**Education:** MBA, Columbia University; BS, Syracuse University

**Company Name:** DRG Talent

**Industry:** Nonprofit Talent

**Company CEO:** Dara Klarfeld

**Company Headquarters Location:** New Jersey

**Number of Employees:** 45

**Your Location:** Winston Salem, NC

**Words you live by:** Find the value and joy in every action and reside there

**Who is your personal hero?** There's no one more heroic than my mother and the example she gave me to live a life led by love, connection and steadfastness to your beliefs and goals.

**What book are you reading?** *Expect to Win* by Carla Harris

**What was your first job?** Cashier at McDonalds

**Favorite charity:** The East Durham Children's Initiative

**Interests/Hobbies:** Fiction writing, reading, karaoke and logic puzzles

**Family:** Three children, husband, two dogs, four cats and nine guinea fowl

## Talented, focused leader keeps this company soaring

As Principal, Client Engagement, Lori Clement Largie significantly enhanced the firm's marketing strategy and has made DRG one of the fastest growing organizations in the Northeast. It's no surprise that DRG won the American Business Awards as Company of the Year in 2024.

In 2024, her strategies have resulted in 28% more organizations interested in working with us, 25% more team members bringing in clients and the ability to build on the 95% of clients satisfied with our work and referring us to others. She was a significant contributor in growing our revenue to over \$9.5MM by 2023 from \$4.6MM in 2019. With Clement Largie's mentorship, 84% of the team is on track to meet sales goals, a growth of 27%. Through her leadership, Clement Largie continues to foster the firm's growth and impact.

She is a Principal at DRG specializing in client engagement and business development. Since 2021, Clement Largie has secured nearly \$2MM in business and helped increase firmwide revenue to \$9.5MM in 2023.

Under Clement Largie's leadership, the percentage of team members meeting their business development goals rose to 84% in 2024 from 57% in 2021. Her mentorship supported seven team members in creating and meeting business development goals for the very first time. Her expertise in strategy also bolstered the company's marketing efforts, growing its social media following by 179% and website traffic by 108% in one year.

She has also been named a Top 25 Brand Builder by Leading Women Entrepreneurs. Beyond her professional accomplishments, Clement Largie is a dedicated mother of three and has published five children's books.

Clement Largie's dedication to driving business success and fostering innovation has positioned her as a key force behind the company's growth and long-term success.



**Vincent McKnight**  
Co-Vice Chairman,  
Sanford Heisler Sharp McKnight



**Education:** JD, University of Pennsylvania; BA, Brown University

**Company Name:** Sanford Heisler Sharp McKnight

**Industry:** Law

**Company CEO:** David Sanford, Chairman Company

**Headquarters Location:** New York

**Number of Employees:** 100 Plus

**Your Location:** Washington, DC

**Words you live by:** "It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it." – Aristotle

**Who is your personal hero?** My Dad: Herbert Vincent McKnight, MD (1919 - 1980)

**What book are you reading?** *Sag Harbor* by Colson Whitehead

**What was your first job?** Camp counselor for the Sundial Program in the DC Recreation Department

**Favorite charity:** NAACP Legal Defense Fund

**Interests/Hobbies:** Jazz Guitar, French

**Family:** Wife: Cynthia, three sons: John, Devin, Connor



## A surprising career in representing whistleblowers – and a fulfilling one

I never imagined as a young attorney that I would eventually specialize in representing whistleblowers exposing various forms of corporate fraud and shenanigans. Yet here I am – collaborating with the Department of Justice, Security Exchange Commission, the Commodities Futures Trading Commission, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and other government stakeholders to capture corporate wrongdoers who engage in procurement fraud or violate the securities and banking laws.

And I love it.

I started my legal career representing clients in personal injury cases and employment discrimination matters. Then one day, serendipity brought me a case where a whistleblower alleged that the contract to

build the Acela train set for Amtrak was tarnished by fraud and bid-rigging. I accepted the case, and my life was changed forever.

I have nothing against corporations, nor do I think that capitalism is inherently corrupt. Indeed, American business ingenuity propels our standard of living forward by creating amazing technologies and scientific breakthroughs. We all benefit.

But I believe that everyone should play by the rules of the game. Play to win but play fair. Don't bribe government contracting officers to get contracts – just write the best proposal. Don't overstate your capacity to deliver or inflate the value of your deliverables. Tell the truth.

In this age, where Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

technologies give certain companies structural advantages over other businesses and customers, they shouldn't leverage their asymmetric power to steal millions of dollars from the weak and unwary. Rather, they should use their new technology or device for the good of mankind.

I believe that smart businesses can make plenty of money the old-fashioned way – just earn it. In fact, most businesses do make an honest buck through simple hard work. However, a small but influential number of businesses lie, cheat, and steal for profit. They have made it an art form. It is my honor and privilege to represent the courageous whistleblowers who bravely step forward with evidence to bring these thieves to justice.

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**Questions?** Contact James Rector *Publisher*

**Email:** publisher@leadershipjournal.com **Office:** 440-892-0444 **Mobile:** 440-662-9770

BLNOM26



**Education:** JD, Columbia Law School; MPH, Mailman School of Public Health; BA, Human Biology, Stanford University

**Company Name:** Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP

**Industry:** Legal

**Company CEO:** Anjan Sahni

**Company Headquarters Location:** Boston, MA

**Number of Employees:** 1,100

**Your Location:** Los Angeles, CA

**Words you live by:** "The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any." – Alice Walker

**Who is your personal hero?** Mae Jemison

**What book are you reading?** *The World Wasn't Ready for You: Stories* by Justin C. Key

**What was your first job?** Sales Associate at Borders bookstore

**Favorite charity:** NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund

**Interests/Hobbies:** Playing tennis, watching Los Angeles sports

**Family:** Husband: Axel; children: Jemi & Kwame

## An outstanding lawyer in her field works to create a better future for all

Nana Wilberforce deserves recognition as a Black Leadership awardee due to her outstanding work in antitrust law, her exemplary leadership, and her active community engagement. As a partner at WilmerHale, she has been instrumental in high-profile investigations and mergers in cutting edge areas of antitrust law including as no-poach labor agreements, ESG, algorithmic price fixing, and cannabis transactions. Her commitment to public service is evident by her robust pro bono practice including work with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and The Legal Aid Society. She is also dedicated to mentoring young and diverse lawyers and expanding opportunities for Black antitrust lawyers further highlighting her leadership and impact in the legal community.

Wilberforce is a key member of WilmerHale's Antitrust Practice. Her expertise covers cartel investigations, merger clearance, litigation, and business counseling making her a highly versatile thought leader in the industry.

Wilberforce is also deeply committed to public service and pro bono work. She works with the NAACP LDF and ACLU Georgia to combat voter suppression laws and with The Legal Aid Society on wrongful conviction matters. Her commitment to mentoring upcoming lawyers and engaging in diversity initiatives, such as the Black Women's Lawyer Association of Los Angeles and the Military Spouse JD Network, underscores her leadership and influence.

Wilberforce has built a reputation as a thought leader through her writing and speaking engagements, including at the 2022 and 2023 Annual Spring Meetings of the ABA Section of Antitrust Law. At the last two Spring Meetings, Wilberforce highlighted Black antitrust lawyers by spearheading the Black Antitrust Lawyers and Friends reception, attended by key leaders such as FTC Chair Lina Khan and DOJ AAG Jonathan Kanter. She is also an active member in Corporate Counsel Women of Color, moderating a panel on First Generation lawyers in 2021 and speaking about client service in 2024.

Wilberforce's significant contributions to the legal profession and her unwavering dedication to promoting diversity and inclusion distinguish her as an exemplary leader worthy of recognition.