

**Commercial Directors Diversity Program Announces**

**50/50 Honorable Mentorship Program & Directors**

**LOS ANGELES, October XX, 2020** – Tamika Lamison, Executive Director of the Commercial Directors Diversity Program (CDDP), today announced the Program’s new initiative: the 50/50 Honorable Mentorship Program. This mentorship effort teamed 50+ emerging directors with 50+ commercial industry professionals who reviewed the directors work and then mentored them on a one-hour zoom call, offering advice, guidance, suggestions and possible next steps to move their career forward.

The aim of the 50/50 Honorable Mentorship Program is for the Directors to receive invaluable professional advice from advertising industry professionals that will inspire them as they continue building their careers.

“This new initiative was created out of a desire to give more opportunities to the incredibly talented pool of women and other under-represented directors that apply to the CDDP each year,” noted Lamison. “It’s an excruciating process of elimination when there are so many worthy directors. We hope this moves the needle. In addition, we wanted to give a viable avenue of making a difference to people in the commercial industry who have reached out to us with a sincere interest in supporting diversity and inclusion-- but more importantly representation and equity.”

The directors for this inaugural program were selected from previous CDDP Finalists, Semi-Finalists and by recommendation of the CDDP Advisory Committee.

“The response from both Industry Mentors and Director Mentees has been overwhelmingly positive”; here’s a sampling:

 *“The meeting was fantastic :) We talked for almost an hour and a half. It ended with them asking to see more of my shorts/work, and they were excited to bring me into their fold, and see if they can help me get my first gig.  It literally could not have gone better save them offering me a job on the spot. THANK YOU SO MUCH! You seemed to have picked the perfect people for me to be mentored by.”- Roberta Munroe, Director*

Mentor, Company Owner & Executive Producer, Rebecca Wray of Durable Goods, “*As an EP I'm always looking for the star player, who can rise me up, because that’s how I've been trained. What I’ve learned in the 50/50 program is that I should be looking for the diamonds in the rough who are just as good and with a little coaching can be great.* [*#believe*](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/believe?__eep__=6&__cft__%5B0%5D=AZW_5PkPLEDn3Bsnxn0ADckC2Wpug5VEFR5WES0mg42fSTFfuKpg0twcMpe0E5QNTzQmQru3O-bs47T6rXfBlkyIOP__-nG0u-dXzBOJbB1Tj_-iFHqZSmENEUxMCKS-r8k&__tn__=*NK-R)*”*

All participants, both mentors and mentees, received evaluations. The feedback and testimonials have underscored the importance of initiatives like these. And how they can truly impact the journey of these talented, directors.

Saatchi&Saatchi/LA has partnered with CDDP’s new Mentorship initiative, taking it one step farther by inviting some of their Mentees to shadow the production process on several new projects. This is in addition to their support of the Program in which they offer real client scripts for the directors’ spec spots.

Mentorship is such an important element in the development of directors new to the commercial space. And we are so grateful to all of the industry mentors who committed their time and guidance to this initiative. With such incredible feedback and committed support from the industry, we definitely plan to expand and grow this effort.

“*Yes, it's so true! Even one hour can open up a whole new world. I now feel like a career in commercial directing is really possible for me, and I'm deeply excited about that*. *My Mentor is amazing!!! I love her! She was so generous with her time and wisdom. I took copious notes and we're going to continue connecting. This may sound dramatic but I truly believe this was life-changing. I'm very excited to start acting on all of her advice. I cannot thank you enough for this incredible opportunity.*” – Director, Meredith Berg

The Following Directors were chosen to participate in the 2020 CDDP’s Honorable Mentorship Program:

Aemillia Scott

Anne Hollowday

Bobby Yan

Brian Tan

Camila Martens

Camilla Hall

Caralene Robinson

Carlos Hurtado

Corey Grant

Desha Dauchan

Devante Blackwell

Emmanuel Osei-Kuffour

Erika Bagnarello

Grace Kim

Iggi Ogard

Jayjit Dasgupta

Joab Carlos

Jose Ho Guanipo

Kellie Madison

Lara Everly

LeRon Lee

Li Lu

Maegan Houang

Mahesh Pailoor

Maja Fernqvist

Maria Burton

Mariette Monpierre

Mateen Kemet

Meredith Berg-Erwin

Michael Ray

Mitchel Dumlao

Mragendra Singh

Nanea Miyata

Neil Payne

Nicole Taylor Roberts

Pat Santana

Patrick 'Praheme' Ricks

Pedro Bermudez

Princess Monique

Puja Maewal

Rachel Knoll

Reynier Molenaar

Roberta Munroe

Rudy Gold

Ryan Brown

Sara Cross

Sarah Sellman

SJ Main-Munoz

Star Victoria

Suha Araj

Sylvia Saether

Tara Atashgah

Tatyana Kim

Temi Ojo

Tiffany Frances Wang

Toni Thai Sterrett

Tracey Aivaz

Varda Bar-Kar

Wanjiru M. Njendu

The CDDP recently announced five Fellows for the third cycle of the CDDP program to be held in 2021. Those directors will receive a stipend to create a spec commercial, participate in a workshop series and be paired with a mentoring production company who will produce their spec commercial. The program also announced 15 finalists who will be invited to attend the program’s workshop series.

For information on the program and how & when to apply visit: [www.cddprogram.com](http://www.cddprogram.com) or contact Tamika Lamison, the Program Director at: Tamika@cddprogram.org.

Created by the AICP and the Directors Guild of America (DGA), the CDDP reflects the commitment of both organizations to increase representation of women and other under-represented groups in the commercial directing ranks.

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**ABOUT CDDP**

Created by the AICP and the Directors Guild of America (DGA), the Commercial Directors Diversity Program (CDDP) reflects the commitment of both organizations to effect change and increase the representation of women directors and other under-represented directors specializing in commercials and marketing communications. The CDDP works to pair unsigned directors with production companies, and to increase the number of women and under-represented directors within the ranks of the DGA membership. To achieve this goal, the CDDP offers an intensive six month program that includes a grant to create a spec commercial, mentorships, shadowing, workshops, networking and more.