

# News Release

## Board of Commissioners honors five Oakland County residents with its 2023 Black Excellence Award

**February 17, 2023, OAKLAND COUNTY, MI.** – Five Oakland County residents received the Oakland County Board of Commissioners Black Excellence Award at last night's full Board meeting.

"There are a lot of unsung heroes in Oakland County, especially in the Black community," Commissioner **Angela Powell** (D-Pontiac) said. "Black History Month provides the perfect opportunity to lift up and recognize the stories and excellence that surround us all year."

The honorees were chosen for their notable achievements and the strides they have taken to improve the community. This year's Black Excellence Award winners are:

- **Ebony Bagley** – A resident of Novi and senior communications strategist for ActBlue, Ms. Bagley has dedicated the last decade to her community. She is the secretary and an executive committee member of the Oakland County Parks Commission, vice chair of the National Congress of Black Women - Oakland County, MI and a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®.
- **Tiffany Nicole Cartwright** – Previously an assistant attorney general and administrative law judge for the State of Michigan, Ms. Cartwright has shifted her focus and found her place as an entrepreneur. She is the founder of Amarra Products, which makes all-natural body scrubs without chemicals, additives, preservatives or animal testing. The Bloomfield Hills resident has appeared on "Shark Tank," and her G.L.A.M. organic body scrubs are available everywhere through her own website as well as Walmart.com and Target.com and in their retail stores.
- **Brigitte Hall** – For more than a decade, Ms. Hall has aimed to lead her Royal Oak Township community on a path of social justice and racial equity as president of Friends of Royal Oak Township, Inc. The non-profit, volunteer-driven organization's "The Truth Towards Reconciliation" campaign brings light to the systemic disenfranchisement of the Charter Township of Royal Oak. She is a lifelong resident of Royal Oak Township, and she has worked in the school district and served as an elected official on the township's library board. While on the board, Hall promoted literacy programs and attainment.

- Tameka Ramsey – Pontiac native Ms. Ramsey is the founder of T. Ramsey & Associates, a consulting firm that works primarily with nonprofit and micro-enterprises. She also serves as executive and co-director of regional and statewide social justice organizations, where she helps to reshape how civic and social justice organizations are managed. She is the convener for the Black Women’s Roundtable Metro Detroit, the founding director for the Michigan Coalition on Black Civic Participation and a member of the Pontiac Collective Impact Partnership’s executive council.
- Tia Marie Sanders – A resident of Novi, Ms. Sanders expanded the reach of her community’s Feed the Need program and guided it through the pandemic. Further, Ms. Sanders has helped organize and advocate for residents on the verge of losing their housing based on experience with her own struggles, and she fought for Michigan workers as a plaintiff on a landmark legal case that sought to raise the minimum wage and provide paid sick time. She has served as the vice president of the Novi Educational Foundation and as a board member of 29 organizations. Ms. Sanders also established the Tia Marie Sanders Foundation, a nonprofit that raises money to provide grants to strengthen grassroots organizations.

“This year’s honorees include business owners, activists, creatives and so many other titles that represent Black excellence,” Commissioner **Janet Jackson** (D-Southfield) said. “All of the honorees demonstrated great professional accomplishments, and the entrepreneurial spirit they exemplify is significant to the success and diversity of our region.”

The awardees were nominated by the public, and the program is just one of the ways commissioners are commemorating Black History Month.

“Bringing attention to the work of Black leaders in the area is extremely important,” Commissioner **Yolanda Smith Charles** (D-Southfield) said. “It was wonderful to meet this year’s honorees and learn more about Oakland County residents who are moving our communities forward.”

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