

Cornell Center for Health Equity

HEALTH EQUITY *Seminar Series*

FRIDAY, JULY 9, 2021 | 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM

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Health Equity in the South Bronx

ABOUT THE SPEAKER:

Davon Russell is a lifelong educator and mentor who believes in the transformative power of early childhood and youth education and the arts. In his work, he is a dedicated fighter for equity and opportunity for communities of color, and a thoughtful leader of a talented and committed staff that serves families and communities across the city.

Born in Jamaica to a single mother, Davon excelled early on as a scholar and athlete at the prestigious Kingston College high school and was recruited by the University of Oregon on a full track scholarship. While in Eugene, he also discovered a love of the theater as an outlet for personal expression and persuasion. After earning his BA in Humanities and his MA in Journalism and Theater, he worked as a professional actor with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

Prior to becoming WHEDco's President in 2017, Davon had long combined his love for the arts with support, guidance, mentoring and educating for youth. He began his career at [WHEDco](#) in 1997 as a part-time after school teacher and steadily rose through the organization over 20 years, serving as Executive Vice President since 2010. Under Davon's leadership, WHEDco's youth programs—serving infants, toddlers, school-age youth, and teens— have helped tens of thousands of young people build their skills, access resources, develop their creative and innovative potential, and become leaders.

Davon is the co-founder and Board Chair of the South Bronx Early College Academy Charter School and serves on the Boards of Bronx Lacrosse and DreamYard. He is a Captain in the founding coalition of the Bronx Community Relief Effort. He is also a member of the Racial Justice and Equity Task Force for the Weill Cornell Department of Medicine, as well as the Lehman College School of Education Professional Education Advisory Committee. He previously served on the Board of Grace Church School and was appointed by two consecutive Bronx Borough Presidents – Adolfo Carrión Jr. and Ruben Diaz Jr. – to serve eight years on the New York City Department of Education's Community Education Council.

