

GET TO KNOW THE PANEL



EVENT FACILITATOR

Chandra Thomas Whitfield is the co-host and producer of Colorado Matters, a daily public affairs show on Colorado Public Radio. An award-winning journalist, her work has appeared in outlets like The New York Times, The Washington Post and NPR.org. In 2020, she completed a Leonard C. Goodman Fellowship with In These Times magazine, where she produced In The Gap, a podcast on pay inequity and Black women and winner of a 2021 Clarion Award. Chandra has received numerous accolades, including the 2024 Colorado Association of Black Journalists' "Journalist of the Year" and the Denver Public Library's Juanita Gray Community Service Award. Her reporting has earned recognition from the Colorado Broadcasters Association, the Colorado chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists and the Atlanta Press Club. A New Orleans native and Clark Atlanta University graduate, Chandra is also an alum of the Teds Scripps Fellowship in Environmental Journalism at the University of Colorado Boulder.



Dr. Trudi Michelle Morrison is a member of a Colorado territorial family, her family having settled in 1874, two years before Colorado statehood. She holds four degrees, including a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. Dr. Morrison has held senior roles across all three branches of the U.S. government, including as associate director of the White House Office of Public Liaison, chief operating officer of the U.S. Senate, and senior legal advisor at the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. In these roles, she was praised for her leadership, consensus building and advocacy for diversity in the judiciary. Dr. Morrison retired in 2014, with tributes from U.S. presidents and senate leaders recognizing her impactful legacy.

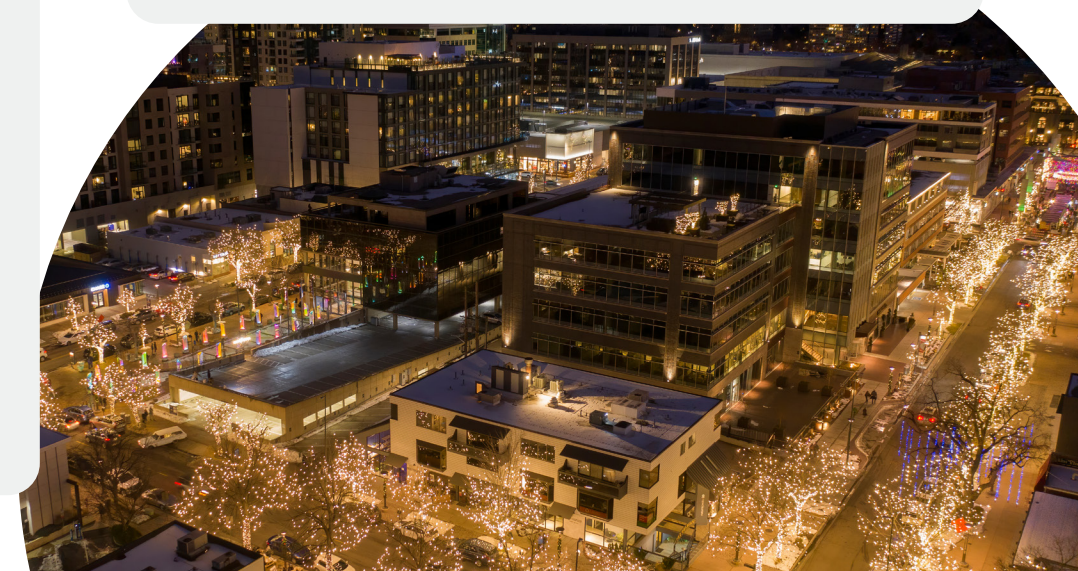
Dr. Morrison is involved in the #BlackWomenLead movement and serves as a tutor for adult literacy. She has received numerous honors, including commendations from four U.S. presidents and an unprecedented invitation to deliver the New Testament reading at the 1987 National Prayer Breakfast. She was the first recipient of the William E. Morgan Alumni Achievement Award from Colorado State University in 1984.



Cleo Parker Robinson is the founder and artistic director of Cleo Parker Robinson Dance (CPRD), a 54-year-old Denver-based institution that includes a professional Ensemble, Cleo II, a Youth Ensemble, an Academy of Dance and various community outreach programs. A master teacher, choreographer and cultural ambassador, she has led CPRD on tours to Europe, the Caribbean, Asia and Africa, with recent tours to Colombia and Mexico.

Parker Robinson's honors include the Colorado Governor's Award, induction into the Colorado Women's Hall of Fame and multiple honorary doctorates. She co-founded the National Bahamian Dance Company and was instrumental in establishing the Denver School of the Arts. In 2017, she received the Dance/USA Honor Award and the Randy Weeks Community Arts Leadership Award. In 2023, she was honored at the White House as part of the International Association of Blacks in Dance's receipt of the National Medal of the Arts.

Parker Robinson has served on several prestigious arts panels, including the National Council on the Arts, appointed by President Clinton in 1999. As a choreographer, her recent works include Dreamcatchers: The Untold Stories of the Americas, Romeo and Juliet with the Colorado Symphony and On the Edge... Reaching to a Higher Ground. She continues to create and present new work, blending the traditions and legacy of the Diaspora and Black Dance in America with both iconic and cutting-edge compositions.

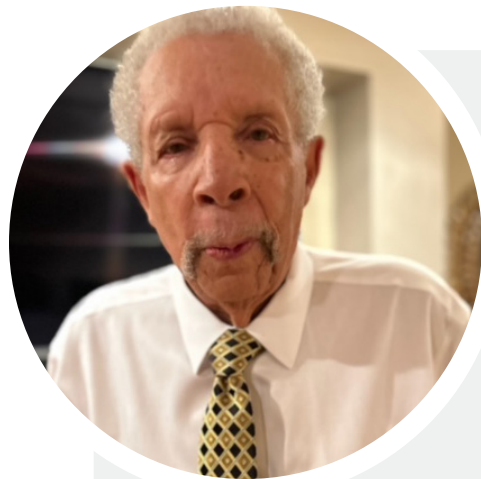


The Hon. Gary M. Jackson, senior judge (ret.), Denver County Court, has been recognized with several prestigious honors, including induction into the National Bar Association Fred David Gray Hall of Fame, the Denver Public Library Blacks in Colorado Hall of Fame and the Dr. Rachel Noel Hope for the Future Award from Metropolitan State University.

Jackson is one of only 246 members of the National Bar Association's Hall of Fame, alongside late Colorado attorneys Irving Andrews and William "Sonny" Flowers. A graduate of the University of Colorado Boulder, Jackson served as chief trial deputy district attorney and assistant U.S. attorney before co-founding the law firm Di Manna & Jackson. Over a 37-year career, he excelled in criminal defense, personal injury and ethical misconduct cases. He played a key role in acquiring the land for Coors Field, home of the Colorado Rockies. Appointed to the Denver County Court in 2013, Jackson retired in 2020 and now holds senior status.

A co-founder of the Sam Cary Bar Association, Jackson has led efforts to support Black law students and promote judicial diversity. He was instrumental in increasing the number of Black state judges in Colorado from one in 2019 to 17 in 2024. He has also served on various judicial nominating commissions and bar associations.

Jackson has contributed significantly to his community, including serving as chair of the Delta Eta Boulé Foundation, which has awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars to Black students since 1998. His numerous honors include the National Bar Association's Wiley Branton Award, the CU George Norlin Award and being named a Colorado Super Lawyer.



Warren Scott delivered the Rocky Mountain News to 385 customers in the Cherry Creek and Hilltop neighborhoods from ages 13 to 16. He later retired as the U.S. Post Office station manager in Park Hill and worked as a residential real estate salesperson.

Scott attended Denver East High School, Gove Junior High School and Steck Elementary School. He earned an athletic scholarship in track and field at the University of Denver, where he excelled in the sport, winning first place in the 800-yard run at the Denver City Track Meet in 1951 and placing second in the Colorado state track meet. In 1953, he was drafted into the U.S. Army during the Korean War, serving as a staff sergeant in the 510th Field Artillery Battalion in Salzburg, Austria, and was honorably discharged in 1954.

In retirement, he enjoyed shopping at Cherry Creek Mall with his first wife, Joan, and vacationing with his second wife, Sandra, while attending National Black Journalist Association events. He also cherished spending time with his dog, Kenji, riding his electric trike, and relaxing at the family cabin, Zephyr View, in Lincoln Hills. He is a Life Member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

