



PRESS RELEASE

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation • Each Depositor insured to at least \$250,000

February 17, 2021

Media Contact:
Julianne Breitbeil
202-898-6895
jbraitbeil@fdic.gov

FDIC Announces Personnel Changes

WASHINGTON — The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) today announced the appointments of Arleas Upton Kea as Deputy to the Chairman for External Affairs and Nikita Pearson as Director of the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion (OMWI). As members of Chairman Jelena McWilliams's senior leadership team, Ms. Kea and Ms. Pearson will spearhead the agency's efforts to expand stakeholder engagement and advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within the FDIC and across the financial sector.

"Arleas and Nikita are proven leaders who will drive positive change inside and outside the FDIC while enabling the agency to maintain stability and public confidence in the nation's financial system," said Chairman McWilliams. "Arleas' career at the FDIC transcends her many titles and is a testament to her perseverance, intellect and work ethic. I have found in Arleas an excellent ambassador for the agency and am excited to see her build upon our existing stakeholder engagement," added Chairman McWilliams. "Nikita's professional journey from an examiner in rural Georgia to a highly respected executive manager provides her with a unique perspective that will not only help us build a more inclusive FDIC, but a more inclusive financial system," concluded Chairman McWilliams.

Ms. Kea has held numerous leadership roles during her 36-year career at the agency. She began her career at the FDIC in 1985 as a staff attorney, and held several positions of successive leadership within the agency's Legal Division before becoming Acting Deputy General Counsel. In 1996, she was appointed the FDIC's second Ombudsman and then the Director of the Division of Administration (DOA) in 1999. In 2018, Chairman McWilliams appointed Ms. Kea Deputy to the Chairman and Chief Operating Officer.



Congress created the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation in 1933 to restore public confidence in the nation's banking system. It promotes the safety and soundness of these institutions by identifying, monitoring and addressing risks to which they are exposed. The FDIC receives no federal tax dollars — insured financial institutions fund its operations.

FDIC press releases and other information are available on the Internet at www.fdic.gov, by subscription electronically (go to www.fdic.gov/about/subscriptions/index.html) and may also be obtained through the FDIC's Public Information Center (877-275-3342 or 703-562-2200). PR-10-2021

As Deputy to the Chairman for External Affairs, Ms. Kea will oversee the agency's Office of Communications, Office of the Ombudsman, and the work of several committees: the Advisory Committee on Community Banking (CBAC), the Advisory Committee of State Regulators, and the Minority Depository Institutions Subcommittee of the CBAC. Ms. Kea received a Juris Doctor from the University of Texas Law School and a Bachelor of Arts with honors from the University of Texas. She is also a recipient of the university's 2020 Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Ms. Pearson has more than 22 years of bank supervision experience and has held numerous leadership roles over the course of her career. She serves on several of the FDIC's executive committees, including co-Chair of the Executive Steering Committee for Entry-Level Examiner Hiring, Chair of the Executive Task Force to promote DEI within the bank examiner workforce, and voting member on the council that advises the Chief Information Officer. Ms. Pearson began her career at the FDIC in 1998 as a bank examiner in the Division of Risk Management Supervision (RMS). Since that time, she has held progressively more responsible positions in RMS, including case manager, acting supervisory examiner, and Assistant Regional Director in three of the FDIC's six regions. In 2015, she joined the Division of Depositor and Consumer Protection (DCP) in Washington, D.C. as Deputy Director for Administrative Management, Operations, and Budget.

Ms. Pearson has been serving as Acting OMWI Director since August 2020. As Acting OMWI Director, she led a barrier analysis to help identify potential root causes to diversity challenges at the FDIC and has helped develop the agency's 2021 *DEI Strategic Plan*, including new programs and concrete solutions to further the agency's DEI goals. Last year, Ms. Pearson testified before the U.S. House Financial Services Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee to discuss the agency's efforts to enhance diversity and inclusion in the FDIC's workforce and contracting, and to promote financial inclusion.

Ms. Pearson holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in accounting from Savannah State University, Savannah, Georgia, where she graduated magna cum laude. She is also a graduate of the Graduate School of Banking at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and the Senior Managers in Government Program at Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.



Congress created the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation in 1933 to restore public confidence in the nation's banking system. It promotes the safety and soundness of these institutions by identifying, monitoring and addressing risks to which they are exposed. The FDIC receives no federal tax dollars — insured financial institutions fund its operations.

FDIC press releases and other information are available on the Internet at www.fdic.gov, by subscription electronically (go to www.fdic.gov/about/subscriptions/index.html) and may also be obtained through the FDIC's Public Information Center (877-275-3342 or 703-562-2200). PR-10-2021