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Urban Alchemy Hires Dr. Lisa De La Rue as Director of Training

Psychologist to oversee 1,100 employees and improve nonprofit's staff development

SAN FRANCISCO – Urban Alchemy is announcing that it has hired Dr. Lisa De La Rue to serve as Director of Training. Dr. De La Rue, who holds a PhD in counseling psychology, will be the first person to fulfill this important role. The nonprofit is an employment social enterprise that hires formerly incarcerated returning citizens to help address homelessness and the resulting chaos it causes for city neighborhoods.

“As Urban Alchemy continues to grow, so has our training program,” said Dr. Lena Miller, Urban Alchemy’s CEO. “Dr. De La Rue, with her background in trauma-response, mass incarceration, substance misuse and culturally responsive services has the perfect background to lead this department. We’re so happy to have her.”

Most recently, Dr. De La Rue was an associate professor of counseling psychology at the University of San Francisco. The focus of her research and clinical work has been on supporting people who have experienced violence and/or incarceration. Because Urban Alchemy’s workforce is 96% returning citizens, her background will enable her to implement a training program that both supports these employees and capitalizes on the skills and emotional intelligence they developed while incarcerated.

“I’m looking forward to strengthening Urban Alchemy’s already robust training program,” said Dr. De La Rue. “I want to support the staff in their return journeys and also ensure that they provide the best possible trauma-informed service to our unsheltered neighbors.”

As Director of Training, De La Rue will oversee and improve Urban Alchemy's training program, which helps prepare its staff for their work in cities like San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland and Austin.

Before beginning their jobs, each staff member undergoes an extensive training program that prepares them for interacting with unhoused individuals, many of whom have experienced extensive trauma and who may be experiencing mental health or addiction issues. The training team also provides frequent refreshers.

Another part of Dr. De La Rue's role will be to develop certification programs that can help employees demonstrate competence and improve their ability to advance their careers.

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About Urban Alchemy

Founded in 2018, Urban Alchemy brings a fresh approach to the problems of homelessness, crime, and challenging street conditions faced by communities throughout the nation. Currently operating in and around San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland, and Austin, Urban Alchemy's unique approach provides meaningful, well-paid jobs to the formerly incarcerated. These Practitioners leverage their emotional intelligence and leadership skills to empathize and de-escalate, helping create safe communities, clean communities, and housed communities.