Lakesha is a deeply respected leader in Western North Carolina with 25 years of leadership experience in equity, diversity and inclusion; strategic human resource management; and leadership development. Her areas of expertise include a demonstrated ability to build trusted collaboration and partnerships with community members, government officials, education and executive leaders, and grass-roots organizations.

She most recently served as the Equity Officer at the Dogwood Health Trust and worked for Mission Health for more than 20 years. She obtained a bachelor’s degree in Interdisciplinary Studies from UNC Asheville, a post-graduate certificate in Innovation Management from Western Carolina University and is a Nationally Certified Diversity Professional through the Society for Diversity and National Institute for Diversity and Health Equity. She is also a certified national training facilitator in many areas of Human Resources, Leadership Coaching, Professional Development and Organizational Communication.

Lakesha has won numerous awards including the UNC Asheville Order of Pisgah Alumni Award in 2016; LINKS Health and Human Services Award in 2018, I’ll Raise My Voice Award from the United Way of Asheville & Buncombe County in 2020; and holds certifications from the National Curriculum & Training Institute, Institute for Diversity and has chaired the Western North Carolina Diversity Engagement Coalition. She has also served on numerous Boards including The United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County, UNC Asheville Foundation Board, a Board of Trustees member at Carolina Day School, and a mentor for both the UNC Asheville Leader for Leaders program and the City of Asheville Youth Leadership Academy.

She will be joining the senior leadership team at her alma mater as the Executive Director of Governmental & Community Relations in July. She is an Asheville native (a self-proclaimed unicorn), wife, mom, loves sports (especially football), and huge Carolina Panthers fan.