



STEWARD SPEAKERS

Whitley Yates is an award-winning publicist, entrepreneur, and political power player currently serving as the Director of Diversity and Engagement at the Indiana Republican Party, the first person to hold the position. Her political experience began in college at Indiana University, where she served as the president of her residence hall for four years. Following her passion for politics, she successfully managed a campaign to elect the third Black student body president in the university's history. Using this experience as a springboard, she furthered her political skills by managing her first major campaign in Los Angeles, serving as a consultant for mayoral candidate Marc Little.

Returning home to Indiana, Whitley began organizing in her community, focusing on communicating conservative principles to the Black community. She hosted a community show titled Yeah, I Said It, which garnered thousands of views, uncovered local political corruption, and won the “Best News Podcast” award from PopCon.

In her role as the Director of Diversity and Engagement at the Indiana Republican Party, Whitley launched the Indiana Republican Diversity Leadership Series, a seminar and leadership training program that aims to attract, train, and support minority Republicans across Indiana. She has placed an emphasis on creating coalitions and building authentic relationships, leading the program to become nationally recognized and successful at all levels of Republican politics in Indiana. Her program is being used as a prototype and national model for political diversity initiatives and engagement for the GOP.

Whitley is the founder and owner of The Niche Agency, a public relations and advertising firm specializing in multicultural marketing and storytelling. Over the past decade, she has helped shape the identity of major brands across the fashion and entertainment industries. Whitley has worked with Motions Hair Care, launched a national campaign in Macy's, and executed the cover of



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Essence Magazine in 2019, which featured Sean “P. Diddy” Combs. Whitley’s approach is unique, deviating from traditional media and focusing on strategic, creative concepts. Whitley has built a career in creating culture-shifting moments. In February of 2022, her photoshoot – which honors the legacy of Madam C.J. Walker – went viral, garnering millions of views and being amplified by celebrities such as Viola Davis, India Arie, and Megan Good. Prior to joining the Indiana Republican Party, Whitley worked in new development real estate, overseeing multi-million-dollar construction endeavors.

Yates was named one of the 2023 top 40 professionals under 40 years of age by the Indianapolis Business Journal. Yates was awarded the 2022 Black Rising Star award by Innopower & JP Morgan Chase. Whitley also received the 2022 RNC emerging leader award and is also an inductee to the Young Republican Federation 1856 Society. She is also a 2020 RNC Rising Star and an AEI Leadership Network member. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in liberal studies and a minor in legal studies from Indiana University Bloomington and is currently an Indiana University McKinney School of Law J.D. candidate. Whitley is an alumnus of the Indiana Leadership Forum and is active in her community as a board member of the Indianapolis Black Chamber of Commerce, American Marketing Association, as well as a member of the Public Relations Society of America.