

IFUNANYA NWEKE

INweke@alumni.usc.edu • [Linkedin.com/in/ifunanyanweke/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ifunanyanweke/)

EDUCATION

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership with a Concentration in Educational Psychology, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA (2023)

Master of Arts in Nonprofit Leadership and Management, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA (2016)

Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology, University of California, Los Angeles, CA (2013)

CREDENTIALS

Certificate of Completion, USC Nonprofit Resilient Leaders and Capacity Building Program, USC Civic Engagement (2021)

Certificate in Community Employment With Concentration in Customized Employment, Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (2017)

CBEST, California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, *Credential ID 41640462* (2014)

INVITED AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Nweke, I. (2021). *20+ Lessons From My 20s*
<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B093B8H777>

Nweke, N. (2016). *Motivation Monday: Move Int(u)Action*
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/move-intuaction-noddy-nweke>

Nweke, N. (2016). *Motivation Monday: The Anthill*
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/motivation-monday-anthill-noddy-nweke>

Nweke, N. (2016). *Motivation Monday: Mission Statement*
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/motivation-monday-mission-statement-noddy-nweke>

Nweke, N. (2016). *Motivation Monday: Limber not Lumber*
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/motivation-monday-limber-lumber-noddy-nweke>

ACADEMIC CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS/ SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Grant Panelist, “Organizational Grant Program” (2024), Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, Los Angeles, CA

Panelist, “Neurodivergence In The Art Department” (2023), Art Directors Guild Local 800, Los Angeles, CA ([LINK](#))

Moderator, “Music Therapy - The Importance of Music on Mental Health”, GRAMMY In The Schools Fest (2023), The GRAMMY Museum, Los Angeles, CA ([LINK](#))

Keynote Speaker, "You Can't Have Inclusion Without Music: Creating More Access to Learning for Neurodivergent Learners", 36th Annual Supported Life Conference (2022), A Supported Life Institute, Sacramento, CA

Speaker, Trojans For Applied Behavior Analysis (TABAGA) Club Meeting (2022), Trojans For Applied Behavior Analysis, Los Angeles, CA

Speaker, "Its Ok to Not Be Ok: Black Mental Health Matters", AFRICON (2022), Amplify Africa, Los Angeles, CA

Speaker, "What is Diversity and Who's Been Left Out of That Definition?", USC Graduate School "Alumni Empowering Students" Speaker Series (2022), University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

Speaker, "Seen & Heard" Panel, Beau Monde Summit, Beau Monde Society, Virtual (2022).

Guest Speaker, Graduate nonprofit leadership and management class, USC Price School of Public Policy (2021-2022), University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

Presenter, "You Can't Have Inclusion Without The Arts" (2021) 8th Annual Inclusion Collaborative Conference, Inclusion Collaborative, Santa Clara County Office of Education, San Jose, CA

Guest Speaker, undergraduate nonprofit leadership and management class, USC Price School of Public Policy (2021), University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

Speaker, "Arts As Public Policy: Autism, Education, Research & Music" (2021), University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

Presenter, "LET'S TALK LD 2020 Fall College Planning and Transition Conference for Learners who Are Neurodiverse" (2020), Los Angeles, CA

Guest Speaker, several classes within the USC Master of Science in Social Entrepreneurship Program (2020-2021), University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

Panelist, "Nonprofit Panel" (2020) UC Womxn's Leadership Conference, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA

Panelist, "Music In Action- Amplifying Music's Reach" (2020) The GRAMMY Museum, Los Angeles, CA

Panelist, "A Panel on Mental Health" (2019) Umu Igbo Unite, Los Angeles Chapter, Los Angeles, CA

Panelist, "Nonprofit Panel" (2019) LEAN IN UC, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA

Panelist, "HR in Servant Leadership Organizations" (2017) Pepperdine Human Resources Club, Pepperdine University, Malibu, CA

Speaker, "Turning Passion Into Action" (2016) Coffee and Changemakers, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

Presenter, "From Crises To Crises" (2016) Global Policy Case Challenge, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

TEACHING / CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Teaching Music To Your Students Who may be Neurodivergent: A DEIA Training Program for Music Educators

Jazz Hands For Autism, 2023

Professional Development For the Musician with Autism

Jazz Hands For Autism

The Jazz Hands Musicians Academy, 2015-present

Navigating Social Dynamics As a Musician with Autism

Jazz Hands For Autism

The Jazz Hands Musicians Academy, 2015-present

Industry Specific Training For the Musician with Autism

Jazz Hands For Autism

The Jazz Hands Musicians Academy, 2015-present

COMMUNITY SERVICE

MEMBER, THE RECORDING ACADEMY, LOS ANGELES CHAPTER, FOUNDATIONS COMMITTEE, SANTA MONICA, CA (2023-2024)

SERVING, ALONGSIDE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT THE RECORDING ACADEMY'S FOUNDATIONS - MUSI CARES AND THE GRAMMY MUSEUM FOUNDATION - ON BEHALF OF ACADEMY MEMBER VOICES AND IN SUPPORT OF THOSE ORGANIZATION'S ANNUAL CAMPAIGNS AND INITIATIVES.

MEMBER-AT-LARGE (SEAT 1), CULVER CITY EQUITY & HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE, CULVER CITY, CA (2023-2027)

SERVING THE CITY OF CULVER CITY, ALONGSIDE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE TO RECOMMEND PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE POSITIVE HUMAN RELATIONS AND EQUITABLE OUTCOMES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN ALL ASPECTS OF COMMUNITY LIFE. PARTICIPATED IN BOTH THE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND DIVERSITY AWARENESS PROJECTS AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES.

MENTOR, GRAMMYU, THE RECORDING ACADEMY, LOS ANGELES CHAPTER, LOS ANGELES, CA (2023-2023)

SET UP AND ADHERED TO A WEEKLY CHECK IN AND STRATEGY MENTORING SCHEDULE WITH UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS LOOKING TO ENTER THE MUSIC INDUSTRY..

PROFESSIONAL MEMBER, THE RECORDING ACADEMY, LOS ANGELES CHAPTER, LOS ANGELES, CA (2022-2027)

SERVING THE MUSIC MAKING COMMUNITY AND BUILDING A STRONGER FUTURE FOR ALL MUSIC MAKERS BY EXERCISING THE UNIQUE POWER TO REPRESENT, ADVOCATE FOR, AND SUPPORT FELLOW CREATORS AND PROFESSIONALS YEAR-ROUND AND MOVE THE MUSIC INDUSTRY FORWARD.

MENTOR, USC NONPROFIT RESILIENT LEADERS AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM MENTORSHIP INITIATIVE, LOS ANGELES
(2022-2024)

SET UP AND ADHERED TO A MONTHLY CHECK IN AND STRATEGY MENTORING SCHEDULE WITH PARTICIPANTS OF THE USC NONPROFIT RESILIENT LEADERS AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM MENTORSHIP INITIATIVE.

GUEST JUDGE, ACADEMIES FOR SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP, LOS ANGELES
(2022)

REVIEWED AND PROVIDED FEEDBACK ON STUDENT BUSINESS PLANS AT SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PITCH COMPETITION

CO-CHAIR, CURRICULUM & CONTINUING EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE, DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION STANDING COMMITTEE, USC SOL PRICE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, LOS ANGELES
(2021-2022)

PARTICIPATING ON A SCHOOL-WIDE COMMITTEE TO CONTINUE AND EXPAND ONGOING EFFORTS TO SUPPORT EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY AND WORKING ALONGSIDE FACULTY, STAFF, ALUMNI AND STUDENTS TO INFUSE THESE PRINCIPLES INTO CURRICULA, STAFF TRAINING, STUDENT RECRUITMENT, RESEARCH EFFORTS, OUTREACH AND PRACTICE AT THE SOL PRICE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY

MEMBER, PLANNING COMMITTEE, 2021 USC ALUMNI LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, LOS ANGELES
(2021)

PARTICIPATING ON A SUBCOMMITTEE TO HELP ORGANIZE SESSIONS DURING THE CONFERENCE AND SELECT HONOREES FOR THE VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION AWARDS DINNER

CURRICULUM DEVELOPER, HOPEKIDZ SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY, CENTER OF HOPE CHURCH, LOS ANGELES
(2020)

CREATED MUSIC BASED EDUCATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL VIDEOS CATERED TOWARDS THE SPECIAL NEEDS COMMUNITY AT THE CENTER OF HOPE HOPEKIDZ CHILDREN'S MINISTRY.

GUEST JUDGE, HIRE LA YOUTH, LOS ANGELES
(2020)

REVIEWED AND PROVIDED FEEDBACK ON STUDENT BUSINESS PLANS AT SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PITCH COMPETITION

MENTOR, USC BLACK ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, LOS ANGELES
(2019-2022)

SET UP AND ADHERED TO A WEEKLY CHECK IN AND STRATEGY MENTORING SCHEDULE WITH SEVERAL USC UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS FROM COMMUNITIES OF COLOR.

WELCOME TEAM MEMBER, DEEPLY ROOTED YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (FAITHFUL CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH), LOS ANGELES
(2018-2019)

GREETED AND WELCOMED CONGREGATION AT THE WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY CHURCH SERVICE

VOLUNTEER, AUTISM SOCIETY, LOS ANGELES
(2014-2015)

ASSISTED WITH LOGISTICS SURROUNDING THE PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF THE SELF-DETERMINATION CONFERENCE.

VOLUNTEER, UCLA SEMEL INSTITUTE, ECPHP
(2012-2013)

PARTICIPATED IN A DAY TREATMENT PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM, TUTORED CHILDREN DURING LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND ASSISTED WITH LUNCHTIME ACTIVITIES.

VOLUNTEER, ACTIVE MINDS, UCLA CHAPTER
(2009-2010)

ORGANIZED AND OVERSAW ON CAMPUS OUTREACH EVENTS THAT: (1) PROVIDED INFORMATION ON MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES, (2) SPREAD AWARENESS ON MENTAL ILLNESS, AND (3) ADVOCATED FOR BETTER MENTAL HEALTH CARE ON CAMPUS.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Co-Executive Chair, Price Social Innovation, University of Southern California (2015-2016 academic year)

Spearheaded the launch of a student organization that provided resources and programming for students across the USC campus to discover local social enterprises and learn about socially beneficial innovation and social entrepreneurship.

Research Assistant, Brain and Creativity Institute, University of Southern (2015-2016 academic year)

Coordinated studies with participants of various ages and backgrounds and assisted with data collection within the Brain & Music research project.

Research Assistant, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs (2012)

Distributed surveys to individuals at various Check Cashing locations and compiled data for a graduate student project that evaluated Policy Options for Financial Access Initiatives Aimed at Low-Income Consumers: How to Increase Low-Income Consumer Welfare

Research Assistant, UCLA Department of Psychology (2011)

Assisted graduate students in compiling and summarizing data on the effects of childhood stress on psyche.

PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

SPACESHIP RECORDS, Hollywood Bowl, Los Angeles, CA (October 2021)

Talent Orchestrator, Burna Boy's Los Angeles Angels

Recruiting, directing and organizing a 15 person choir and 8 piece orchestra for historical afrobeats show at the Hollywood Bowl.

JAZZ HANDS FOR AUTISM, Los Angeles, CA (February 2014-Present)

Founder & Executive Director

Leading and overseeing a team of 25 in all aspects of day-to-day operations, program development, execution of mission, partnership development, fundraising and expansion of an innovative tech-infused 501(c)(3) organization with a budget of \$1M and a mission to leverage the power of music to create employment and community opportunities for Neurodivergent learners.

F.A.C.T FAMILY, ADULT, CHILDREN THERAPIES, Los Angeles, CA (2013-2016)

Behavior Intervention Specialist

Working in groups and one-on-one in school and home settings to monitor behavior, develop and execute intervention plans and assess effectiveness of interventions for individuals with autism of all ages.

Y-PIANO, Los Angeles, CA (2013-2015)

Vocal Coach and Piano Teacher

Developing lesson plans and teaching beginner's piano and vocal lessons to individuals with mild to severe autism in a one-on-one setting.

ANKARA FESTIVAL LA, Los Angeles, CA (2013-2014)

Director of Music

Organizing and overseeing artists' accommodation and directing "ebb and flow" of performances.

UCLA CLICC, Los Angeles, CA (2012-2013)

Student Consultant

Addressed customer (students) queries, maintained professional environment, and facilitated renting transactions

CONSULTING ENGAGEMENTS

Neurodiversity Training For Music Educators

Elemental Music School. Facilitated the “Teaching Music To Your Students Who may be Neurodivergent: A DEIA Training Program for Music Educators” music educator training program for Elemental Music Staff. Santa Monica, CA, 2023.

Start-Up And Program Development

blüm Lounge. Worked with client in constructing and executing organizational structure and program design for innovative section 501(c)(3) organization with a mission of providing access to sensory-friendly beauty services and vocational training + placement for the special needs community. Los Angeles, CA, 2019.

BeneFoundation. Worked with client in constructing and executing organizational structure and program design for innovative section 170(b)(1)(a)(vi) donor-advised organization with a mission of redefining the way charitable donations are made by repurposing underutilized luxury assets and monetizing them for the benefit of Not-For-Profit organizations. Los Angeles, CA, 2017.

CANVASS-LA. Worked with client in constructing and executing organizational structure and program design for innovative section 501(c)(3) organization with a mission of promoting healthy sex education for young adults with developmental disabilities. Los Angeles, CA, 2017.

Luminous Elite. Worked with client in constructing and executing organizational structure and program design for innovative section 501(c)(3) organization with a mission of utilizing sports as a bridge to promote academic, community, and self-serving advancements for underserved youth. Los Angeles, CA, 2017.

Organizational Development and Effectiveness

Exceptional Minds. Worked with client to assess organizational strengths and deficiencies relating to diversity and cultural competence in teaching approaches. Provide action plans for increased (sustainable) diversity in faculty and student body. Sherman Oaks, CA, 2020.

National Foster Youth Institute. Worked with client to assess organizational strengths and deficiencies. Provide action plans for greater organizational success and effectiveness. Los Angeles , CA, 2016.

HONORS, AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

Nominee, Inspirational Women Leadership Awards 2023, Los Angeles Times B2B Publishing, Los Angeles, CA, USA 2023

Nominee, Leaders of Influence: Nonprofit & Philanthropy Awards 2023, Los Angeles Business Journal, Los Angeles, CA, USA 2023 ([LINK](#))

Silver Winner (Jazz Hands For Autism), 2023 Anthem Awards, Product, Innovation, or Service Category, 2023 ([LINK](#))

Nominee, 7th Annual Women in Business Leadership Awards 2022, Culver City Chamber of Commerce, Culver City, CA, USA 2022

Finalist (Jazz Hands For Autism), Nonprofit of the Year Midsize Category, Nonprofit & Corporate Citizenship Awards 2022, Los Angeles Business Journal, Los Angeles, CA, USA 2022 ([LINK](#))

Nominee (Jazz Hands For Autism), Nonprofit Team of the Year, Nonprofit & Corporate Citizenship Awards 2022, Los Angeles Business Journal, Los Angeles, CA, USA 2022

Nominee (Jazz Hands For Autism), Diversity, Equity + Inclusion Awards 2022, Los Angeles Business Journal, Los Angeles, CA, USA 2022

Resident Entrepreneur, Grid110 Residency Program, Summer 2021 Cohort, Los Angeles, CA, USA, 2021

Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition, Member of Congress (Rep. Karen Bass), United States, 2020

Honoree, 40 Emerging Civic Leaders Under 40, Empowerment Congress, 2019

Certificate of Appreciation, George L. Graadio School of Business and Management, Pepperdine University, 2016

Certificate of Recognition, California State Assembly, Assemblyman Mike Gatto, 43rd District, 2016

Scholarship Recognition Award, University of California, Los Angeles, 2009

MEDIA COVERAGE

Los Angeles Business Journal, Feature, 2023

<https://labusinessjournal.com/custom-content/leaders-of-influence-nonprofit-philanthropy-2023-ifunanya-nweke/>

Small & Gutsy Podcast, Guest, 2023

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/small-gutsy/id1548212585?i=1000607344438>

Wellspring Word Podcast, Interviewee, 2023

<https://www.wellspringwords.love/podcast/the-best-things-happen-when-we-surrender-with-ifunanya>

NPR Morning Edition, Interviewee, 2023

<https://www.npr.org/2023/02/06/1154739459/how-a-young-musician-inspired-jazz-hands-for-autism-nearly-a-decade-ago>

USCPrice News, Interviewee, 2023

<https://priceschool.usc.edu/news/jazz-hands-autism-ifunanya-nweke-usc-price/>

Spectrum 1 News, Interviewee, 2022

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJXWnNrMiJQ>

Los Angeles Business Journal, 2022

<https://labusinessjournal.com/business-journal-events/2022-nonprofit-corporate-citizenship-awards-finalists/>

Music Connection Magazine, Interviewee, 2022

<https://www.musicconnection.com/industry-profile-jazz-hands-for-autism/>

Music Connection Magazine, Press Release, 2022

<https://www.musicconnection.com/jazz-hands-for-autism-launches-music-library-featuring-neurodivergent-composers/>

Billboard Magazine, Interviewee, 2022

<https://www.billboard.com/music/music-news/jazz-hands-for-autism-neurodivergent-composers-library-inclusion-diversity-1235050521/>

LA Parent Magazine, Meet The Founder Spotlight, 2022

<http://www.mirabelsmagazinecentral.com/DigitalEdition/index.html?id=f78100c9-4819-4277-a9f5-3452df30d93d&pn=18&pv=s>

MeTV, California & Me Segment, Guest, 2022

<https://www.metv.com/videos/local-california-and-me/jazz-hands-for-autism>

GRID110, Founder Spotlight, 2021

<https://medium.com/grid110/jazz-hands-for-autism-a-new-approach-to-employment-for-individuals-on-the-autism-spectrum-6d78b736286>

3 Minutes with Ifu, Host, 2021

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLGI_gXgDEufXyeY55s7dPef_doImqtyr9

Radio Disney, Guest, 2021

Link TBD

GRAMMY.com, Panelist, 2020

<https://www.grammy.com/news/amplifying-musics-reach-grammy-week-panel-discusses-human-connection-musicares>

Hollywood Reporter, 2020

<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/gallery/grammy-awards-parties-inside-weekends-events-photos-1272044/6-john-mckenna-harry-grammer-ifunanya-nweke-erica-krusen-and-victoria-stevens/>

Autisable Dads Podcast, Guest Speaker, 2019

<https://autisable.com/2019/12/30/podcast-season-2-episode-16-jazz-hands-for-autism/>

Podcast for the Special Needs Community, Guest Speaker, 2019

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/jazz-hands-for-28945912>

Xceptional Leaders Podcast, Guest Speaker, 2019

<https://xceptionaled.com/jazz-autism-and-life-skills-with-ifunanya-nweke/>

Baldwin Crenshaw TV, Interviewee, 2019

<https://youtu.be/SGITqfeLze4>

Culver City News, 2019

<https://www.culvercitynews.org/jhfa-hits-the-heart-notes-just-right/>

KCAL 9/ CBS 2 News, 2018

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=E--eH14u984>

Inspire Africa LA Webshow, 2017

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFSRwGommvo>

Voyage LA Magazine, 2017

<http://voyagela.com/interview/meet-ifunanya-nweke-jazz-hands-autism-westwood/>

Pierson to Person Podcast, 2016

<http://piersontoperson.libsyn.com/the-beat-of-a-different-drum>

University of Southern California News, 2016

<https://news.usc.edu/101858/students-with-autism-explore-their-musical-talents>

KIIS FM Community Council, Guest Speaker, 2015

<http://kiisfm.iheart.com/onair/kiis-cares-54184/community-council-jazz-hands-for-autism-13890910>

AutismLive, Guest Speaker, 2014, 2017, 2019, 2020

<https://youtu.be/R6HDENqd5M0>

<https://youtu.be/14Bka1iLUA>

<https://youtu.be/aFdGMifGF3E>

<https://youtu.be/v4EqmvmnQFc0>