

Denise Fairchild

President Emeritus,

ClimateBreakthrough 2021 Awardee

Denise Fairchild is president emeritus of Emerald Cities Collaborative and currently a ClimateBreakthrough 2021 Awardee, the largest individual award of its kind and only the second U.S. awardee to date. Her 3-year \$3 million grant focuses on designing a cultural response to the root cause of climate change – unsustainable economic growth – production and consumption policies and systems.

From 2010-2022 Dr. Fairchild served as the inaugural President and CEO of Emerald Cities Collaborative (ECC), a national non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C. with affiliates in major urban centers across the United States. She advanced ECC’s “high road” mission to green our cities, build resilient local economies and ensure equity and inclusion in both the process and the outcomes of a green and healthy economy. Dr. Fairchild focuses on building community-led partnerships with labor, environmental and business organizations to increase energy efficiency, clean energy, sustainable foods and clean water with a focus on low-income and communities of color.

Denise is nationally recognized and respected for her 40-year successful track record and innovative programs in sustainable and community economic development, domestically and internationally. In 1995 she founded and directed the Community and Economic Development (CED) Department at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, as well as an affiliated non-profit community development research and technical assistance organization, CDTech. She founded the Regional Economic Development Institute (REDI), an initiative of Los Angeles Trade-Technical College to provide inner city residents with career and technical education for high growth/high demand jobs in the L.A. region, with a focus on the green economy. From 1989-1995 she served as executive director of LISC-LA helping to build-out the region’s community development industry creating non-profit housing, jobs and businesses that strengthened and improved the health and environments of L.A.’s low-income, communities of color.

Denise received her B.A from Fisk in 1972, a masters in City Planning from the University of Pennsylvania and doctorate in urban planning from UCLA. She holds a number of academic distinctions, including serving as a senior fellow at M.I.T. and U.C.L.A., and serves on numerous national boards. Her recent publication is entitled: Energy Democracy: Equity Solutions to the Clean Economy. She has lived, worked and educated her sons in South Los Angeles since 1977.



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