

## **Tonya M. Matthews, Ph.D.**

### **Bio in Brief**

Tonya M. Matthews, Ph.D. is the Associate Provost for Inclusive Workforce Development and Director of the STEM Learning Innovation Center for Wayne State University. Known as a thought-leader and convener in STEM equity, education and engagement, her diverse background includes academic and professional work as an engineer, educator, volunteer, and “science and society” commentator.

Matthews is noted for her skill in bringing diverse voices into common conversation and has been recognized by Crain’s Business as one of Michigan’s 100 Most Influential Women.

Dr. Matthews is founder of The STEMinista Project, an initiative supporting middle schools girls in exploring tools and careers in STEM via collective impact program design, a global role model database, and access to 1000+ hours of STEM experiences for every participant every year. Matthews joined the Detroit community in 2013 as the inaugural President and CEO of the Michigan Science Center, leading its journey to reclaim Detroit’s science center legacy and become the STEM Hub for the state of Michigan. During her tenure, Dr. Matthews positioned the center as an epicenter of STEM and garnered national recognition by hosting the release of the first ever Nation’s Report Card on Technology and Engineering Literacy and by creating comprehensive STEM partnerships with Detroit Public Community Schools that adopted all students across entire grade levels.

Prior to her work in Detroit, Dr. Matthews served as the Vice President for Cincinnati Museum Center, directing the education, research and community engagement footprints of the \$20M multi-site museum and research institution. Matthews began her journey towards community-engaged science advocacy as a biomedical engineer for the Food and Drug Administration and as a biotechnology-biolab project manager for the Maryland Science Center.

Dr. Matthews received her Ph.D. in biomedical engineering from Johns Hopkins University and her B.S.E. in biomedical and electrical engineering from Duke University. Nominated under both Democratic and Republican administrations, she is currently serving her second federally-appointed term on the National Assessment Governing Board as its Vice-Chair. Matthews is also a member of the National Academy of Sciences Board on Science Education. She is the recipient of a Whitaker Foundation Award for Engineering Excellence and an alumni member of National Society of Black Engineers and Society for Women Engineers.

When exercising the other half of her brain, Dr. Matthews is an award-winning poet and spoken word artist whose most recent collaborations include working with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra to create *Symphony in D* – both the original symphony and the Emmy Award-winning documentary that tells a bit of Detroit’s story through music, sound, and Dr. Matthews’ poetry.