



BLACK EXCELLENCE ALUMNI NETWORK

James McKim '79



James McKim is a trailblazer whose journey through education and technology has left an indelible mark. A 1979 graduate of Porter-Gaud, James was among the first African American students during a pivotal time in Charleston. His parents, both educators, recognized the value of an exceptional education and chose Porter-Gaud to ensure he was prepared for success.

Starting in the fifth grade, James immersed himself in school life. He participated in Porter-Gaud's first musicals, including *The Boy Friend* and *Guys and Dolls*, and was a dedicated member of the school's singing groups through graduation. During this time, he also competed on the basketball and track teams. These experiences enriched his education and helped him develop a well-rounded skill set.

At Porter-Gaud, James discovered a passion for technology that would shape his future. An early computer programming class with Wayne Murrah sparked an interest that led him to Dartmouth College, where he earned degrees in computer science and philosophy. He was part of a pioneering generation of African American students in higher education, navigating spaces that were not always welcoming yet continually striving for excellence.

James built a professional career that reflects both expertise and versatility. He worked with leading technology companies such as Digital Equipment Corporation and Hewlett-Packard, holding key leadership roles including chief information officer and chief of staff. He also founded and helped launch several technology companies, serving as chair of the Software Association of New Hampshire. His work in technology was complemented by a deep philosophical approach to understanding human complexity, making him a uniquely valuable asset in every organization he served.

Building on his leadership experience in technology, James later extended his talents to service in the Episcopal Church. Appointed by his bishop in 2012, James transformed the Diocesan Anti-Racism Committee into a more inclusive Diversity Committee, demonstrating his commitment to equity and

inclusion. His leadership and vision led him to serve as chair of the Episcopal Church's National Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism and Reconciliation for nine years. His work in this area is guided by his belief in the "platinum rule": treating others the way they want to be treated. James emphasizes the importance of understanding individual perspectives and celebrating the multidimensional nature of human experience.

Through his work, James demonstrates a steadfast commitment to breaking down barriers, fostering understanding, and promoting excellence beyond racial boundaries. His journey is not just about personal achievement but about inspiring others to reach their full potential and find their own path to success.