



Adriel Hilton

Professor • Author • Speaker

Dr. Adriel A. Hilton is a nationally recognized scholar, changemaker, and higher education leader with more than 23 years of experience advancing student success and institutional excellence. He currently serves as Vice President of Institutional Strategy & Chief of Staff at Columbia College Chicago, where he helps align strategic initiatives with the institution's mission to prepare students to shape culture and societal discourse.

SPEAKING TOPICS

Adriel A. Hilton is a dynamic and engaging speaker, renowned for his thought-provoking insights on higher education leadership, student success, and organizational development. With years of experience in academic administration and as a leading expert in student affairs, Dr. Hilton captivates audiences with powerful stories, practical strategies, and actionable advice that inspire change and drive meaningful progress.

- Access and Achievement in Higher Education
- Recruitment and Retention of Students of Color in Higher Education
- Race Neutral Admission Policies
- African American Male Achievement
- Support of Affirmative Action
- Relevance of Historically Black Colleges and Universities

TESTIMONIALS

"Adriel is a phenomenal presenter and thought leader around issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. He facilitated a workshop for our university's leadership team, it was an impactful, meaningful experience.

He masterfully led us through 2 days of difficult conversations, strategic visioning and ultimately to an action plan that will make systemic change on our campus."

Tyvi Small, PhD

Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Engagement
University of Tennessee

"His ability for critical thinking related to...complex issues is impressive and indicative of his attitude toward tackling and resolving some of the difficult issues of our day."

Earl S. Richardson, Ed.D.

President Emeritus
Morgan State University

"Dr. Hilton is a highly competent and personable individual and brings a great work ethic to his professional endeavors and builds trust among those with whom he interacts."

Patricia Green-Powell, PhD

Professor of Educational Leadership
Florida A&M University

BOOKING INFORMATION

Contact: Brod Boyd

E-mail: brod@abramleslie.com

Phone: (850) 508-0883

Fax: (888) 909-8997

Web: www.adrielhilton.com

Please contact for information on booking fees.



In this executive role, Dr. Hilton fosters cross-campus collaboration, oversees high-level communications, and represents the college across a variety of institutional and public forums.

Dr. Hilton has held senior leadership roles across higher education and public service. As Director of Programs, Transition, and Youth Success Planning at the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families, he led statewide efforts to support young people and families through critical life transitions. Before that, he was Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and Associate Professor of Education at Southern University at New Orleans, where he collaborated on strategies to improve enrollment, student engagement, and retention.

His career includes key leadership positions at Seton Hill University (Dean of Students and Diversity Officer), Webster University (Campus Director of the Myrtle Beach Metropolitan Campus), Grambling State University (Chief of Staff & Executive Assistant to the President), Western Carolina University (Assistant Professor and Director of the Higher Education Student Affairs Program), Grand Valley State University (Assistant Vice President for Inclusion Initiatives), Upper Iowa University (Executive Assistant to the President, Chief Diversity Officer, & Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees), and Clarion University of Pennsylvania (Frederick Douglass Teaching Scholar). Across each role, Dr. Hilton has played a central role in driving student-centered initiatives and strengthening institutional effectiveness.

An accomplished scholar, Dr. Hilton has published widely in respected academic journals including *Teachers College Record*, *Journal of College Student Development*, *Community College Review*, and *Journal of Applied Research in the Community College*. He is a member of the editorial board for the *Journal of Negro Education* and is recognized for his contributions to research on student development and leadership in higher education.

Dr. Hilton's influence also extends into civic engagement and public policy. As the inaugural Public Policy Fellow at the Greater Baltimore Committee, he worked with civic and business leaders to advance solutions to regional challenges such as healthcare access and economic opportunity.

He holds a BA in Business Administration (Finance) from Morehouse College, a Master of Applied Social Science in Public Administration from Florida A&M University, an MBA from Webster University, and a PhD in Higher Education Administration from Morgan State University.

Throughout his distinguished career, Dr. Hilton has demonstrated a strong commitment to academic excellence, student achievement, and forward-looking institutional leadership. His work continues to shape the future of higher education and inspire the next generation of professionals and scholars.

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Dr. Hilton, an experienced panelist and engaging lecturer, also provides informative workshops on the following topics:

ACCESS TO AND ACHIEVEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Addressing access and achievement in the higher education context is complex. Dr. Hilton, a published author on these subjects, describes how colleges and universities unintentionally create barriers to access and undermine student achievement.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

A seasoned administrator and prolific researcher, Dr. Hilton provides valuable insights on the effective recruitment of students of color, particularly males, and identifies factors correlated with their successful retention.

RACE NEUTRAL ADMISSION POLICIES

What is the overall effect of substituting affirmative action admission policies with race neutral ones? Dr. Hilton shares his research and analysis of this subject. Government leaders as well as colleges and universities will want to better understand the impact of this trend, which is proliferating throughout the United States.

AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE ACHIEVEMENT

The achievement gap between students of color and their counterparts is a disturbing and persistent aspect of higher education in the United States. Dr. Hilton identifies the many variables at play which impact the gap, particularly for African American males, and brings a fresh perspective to addressing this problematic issue.

SUPPORT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Dr. Hilton is an expert on affirmative action, the fair treatment of minorities and other underrepresented populations, in the higher education context.

RELEVANCE OF HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Dr. Hilton has experienced, first-hand, the effectiveness of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in developing and graduating students who are competitive in all sectors of the U.S. economy. His research explores the factors in creating successful higher educational experiences for students of color.

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Hilton Consulting Group delivers expert, customized consulting services designed specifically for higher education institutions. Led by Dr. Adriel A. Hilton, our team partners with colleges and universities to strengthen institutional effectiveness, improve student outcomes, and drive sustainable organizational growth. With a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing higher education today, we offer strategic guidance and hands-on support across a wide range of critical operational and academic areas.

Our services include:

Academic & Student Affairs

- Curricula Development
- Faculty Recruitment and Retention Services
- Residential Life Consulting and Training
- Student Recruitment and Retention Services
- Student Recruitment Strategies and Recruitment Plans
- Student Retention Consulting and Analysis
- Assessment Support

Institutional Strategy & Governance

- Strategic Planning
- Policy Development
- Board Governance and Training
- Higher Education Governance
- Enrollment Management Organizational Reviews
- Admissions and Financial Aid Operational Reviews

Diversity, Inclusion & Development

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training
- Staff Training and Development

Engagement & Advancement

- Fundraising Services
- Event Management
- Conference Planning



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Contribution to Higher Education

Award,

ACPA, 2025

Diamond Honoree,

ACPA, 2025

Professional Achievement Award,

National Association of Presidential Assistants in Higher Education, 2025

Dr. Carlos J. Vallejo Memorial Award for Lifetime Scholarship,

American Educational Research Association, Multicultural/Multi-ethnic Special Interest Group, 2024

Erica J. Holloman Award,

PAN African Network, 2024

Literati Award Recipient for Outstanding Author Contribution,

Emerald Publishing 2022

Ten HBCU And PBI Alumni In Leadership That You Should Know,

HBCU Campaign, 2022

30 Under 40 Award Recipient,

Pan African Network, ACPA 2021

40 Under 40 Award Recipient,

The Pittsburgh Magazine, 2020

BE Modern Man of Distinction,

Black Enterprise Magazine, 2019

Fab 40 Award,

The New Pittsburgh Courier, 2019

Outstanding Contribution to the Profession Award,

Pennsylvania College Personnel Association, 2019

40 Under Forty Achievement Award,

The Network Journal, 2018

Champion of Diversity

Individual Award,

Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, 2018

Top 20 Under 40,

South Carolina Black Pages, 2017

Hilda F. Owens Contribution to Knowledge in the Field Award,

South Carolina College Personnel Association, 2016

Harry Canon Outstanding Professional Award,

ACPA Coalition on Men & Masculinities, 2016

Newly Published Research Award,

NASPA Men and Masculinities Knowledge Community, 2016

Melvane Draheim Hardee Award,

Southern Association for College Student Affairs, 2015

Sadie M. Yancey Professional

Service Award,

National Association of Student Affairs Professionals, 2015

Outstanding Professional Contribution & Distinguished Scholar Award,

North Carolina College Personnel Association, 2015

Michael A. Powell, Esq. Service Award,

National Black Graduate Student Association, 2013

Joseph H. Silver, Sr., Leadership and Mentoring Initiative Alumni Award,

American Association of Blacks in Higher Education, 2013

Outstanding Alumni of the Quasquicentennial Award,

Florida A&M University, 2012

Dr. Carlos J. Vallejo Memorial Award for Exemplary Scholarship,

American Educational Research Association, Multicultural/Multi-ethnic Special Interest Group, 2010

Outstanding Research Award,

American College Personnel Association Standing Committee for Men, 2009

Top Young Leaders Under 30,

Ebony magazine, 2009

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Patricia Green-Powell, PhD

Professor of Educational Leadership
Florida A&M University

"Dr. Hilton is not just an accomplished scholar; he is also a seasoned administrator and passionate educator. He continues to greatly impact his university community, the broader higher education community, and beyond."

Donald Mitchell, Jr., PhD

Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer & Professor of Education
Bellarmine University

"I have known Dr. Hilton for quite some time. Since the first time that I first met him, he has always demonstrated himself to be a distinguished administrator and professor. Wise beyond his years, Dr. Hilton is one of the young preeminent scholars in the field of education who is dedicated to advancing Black education. Without reservation, I would recommend him as a consultant, leader, and scholar and I am confident in his abilities to lead and effect positive change."

Sydney Freeman, Jr., PhD

Professor of Adult, Organizational Learning and Leadership
The University of Idaho

"Dr. Hilton has an excellent combination of self-motivation and the ability to function effectively as a senior level administrator in the academy."

Alan G. Walker, PhD

Past President

Sierra Nevada College & Upper Iowa University

"Dr. Adriel Hilton is definitely making his mark in the world of academe. His intentionality to advancing the body of knowledge surrounding students of colors' success is so significant and necessary. Adriel, continue to make a positive difference in the lives of others!"

Robert L. Canida, II, PhD

Vice President for Inclusive Excellence
University of Lynchburg

"Dr. Adriel Hilton is an inspiring, compassionate, and student centered professional who speaks with incredible confidence and authority. To miss Adriel speaking is to miss an opportunity to grow both professionally and personally. He is a dynamic keynote speaker!"

Crystal Bryant, PhD

Coordinator, Academic Programming & Accountability
Florida A&M University

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