

# Colleen James

*Regional Councillor. Entrepreneur. Equity and Inclusion Consultant*

## Colleen James' Biography

Colleen James, M.Ed., is a highly regarded equity and inclusion consultant, and the driving force behind Divonify Incorporated, demonstrating unwavering dedication to challenging traditional norms in the realms of racial equity and social justice.

Notably, Colleen achieved a significant milestone by being elected to the Regional Council, representing Kitchener residents on October 24, 2022.

With an extensive 20-year career, she collaborates with organizations to scrutinize inequities and cultivate environments that embrace diverse perspectives within their workforce. Recognizing the imperative need for systemic change to establish authentic spaces of belonging, Colleen has made it her mission to devise innovative solutions that address equity, diversity, and inclusion in workplaces and beyond.

She leads transformative discussions within organizations, challenging assumptions, and guiding leaders to deepen their understanding of power dynamics and privilege. This prompts them to rethink outdated business models and foster equitable opportunities within their organizations.

Colleen is a dynamic speaker who offers different perspectives on specific topics. She is available to deliver equity and inclusion workshops, facilitate debates and discussions, and be a guest lecturer or keynote speaker. Colleen has also been featured on media outlets such as CBC News, CTV News, CityNews, and more.

Colleen was honoured as one of the Top 100 Black Women to Watch in Canada in 2020 and recognized as a leading figure in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in 2021. She achieved another milestone in 2023 by receiving the Black Excellence in Leadership award from Laura Mae Lindo, former Member of Provincial Parliament for Kitchener Centre.



## Upbringing and Community Involvement

As a first-generation Canadian, Colleen's upbringing fostered a deep sense of pride in her Black identity. Her parents, emphasizing her right to belong in all spaces, empowered her to embrace and celebrate her heritage. Despite facing racism and stereotypical assumptions about her, Colleen's resilience fueled her commitment to systemic change, aiming to create authentic spaces of belonging. Her focus extends beyond workplaces, as she actively engages in solutions for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Colleen actively contributes to various committees and collaborative initiatives, including her participation in the Caribbean Canadian Association of Waterloo Region. Demonstrating her commitment, she established the James STEM scholarship award, furthering her dedication to educational empowerment. Her dedication to creating positive transformations transcends traditional boundaries.