

TIFFANEY MCCLENDON

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EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Impactful leader with 18+ years of progressive leadership across education, revenue operations, engagement systems, and inclusive culture strategy within mission-driven institutions. Serve in dual capacity as Director of Learning & Engagement at Birmingham Zoo and Founder & CEO of R.I.S.E. Leadership, bridging institutional leadership with entrepreneurial advisory and executive coaching practice. National faculty member and industry speaker for the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, recognized for advancing leadership development, IDEA systems integration, and organizational culture transformation.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Strategic Leadership

- Organizational Strategy & Culture Development
- Inclusive Culture & IDEA Systems Integration
- Learning Systems Architecture
- Leadership Pipeline & Talent Development

Operational & Financial Leadership

- Multi-Program Budget Oversight (~\$575K annual operating budget)
- Revenue-Aligned Program Design
- Cross-Functional Team Leadership (4 managers; 12-person departmental team)
- Performance Systems & Accountability Structures

Executive Influence & Industry Engagement

- Executive Coaching & Advisory Services
- Public Speaking & Industry Facilitation
- Assessment Interpretation (DISC, 360)
- Board & Committee Leadership

SENIOR LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Birmingham Zoo

Director of Learning & Engagement | 2024–Present

- Provide strategic oversight for institutional learning systems, volunteer engagement infrastructure, and IDEA strategy integration within a public-serving institution exceeding 500,000 annual visitors.
- Lead revenue-generating and mission-aligned educational initiatives serving 5,000+ participants annually across on-site and community-based programs.
- Direct ~\$575K annual departmental budget with responsibility for forecasting, expense management, and alignment with institutional revenue and expense targets.
- Lead four direct-report managers overseeing a 12-person departmental team across education, interpretation, volunteer management, and inclusion functions.
- Serve as strategic partner to executive leadership in strengthening institutional culture, engagement systems, and professional development architecture.
- Advance institutional inclusion strategy through committee leadership, training design, and policy influence.

Promoted through four progressive leadership roles reflecting expanded scope across revenue operations, member engagement, and institutional inclusion strategy.

- Staff Learning & Inclusion Manager (2023–2024)
- Guest Services Programs Manager (2021–2023)
- Membership & Group Sales Manager (2018–2021)
- Membership & Group Sales Supervisor (2016–2018)

ENTREPRENEURIAL & CONSULTING LEADERSHIP

R.I.S.E. Leadership

Founder & CEO | Feb 2025–Present

- Lead executive coaching and leadership mentoring engagements serving leaders across nonprofit, conservation, and corporate sectors.
- Design and facilitate customized leadership development programs and individualized growth strategies for emerging and advancing leaders.
- Advise organizations on leadership infrastructure, culture strategy, and capacity development.
- Advise organizations on digital presence strategy, designing and launching mission-aligned websites that strengthen visibility, credibility, and stakeholder engagement.

Leadby

Strategic Advisor, Leadership Development | 2024–Present

- Design and deliver leadership development programming for the Aspiring Leaders Network.
- Deliver executive coaching informed by DISC and 360 assessment data to support participant growth and performance within contracted programs.

- Collaborate with program leadership to align curriculum, coaching, and assessment strategy with contracted organizational objectives.

INDUSTRY TEACHING & FACULTY ROLES

Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA)

Instructor | 2024–Present

- Facilitate week-long leadership programs serving professionals from AZA-accredited institutions worldwide.
- Develop and refine curriculum aligned with evolving leadership best practices and participant feedback.
- Facilitate interpretation and application of DISC and 360 assessments within cohort-based leadership development program.
- Guide participant capstone project development and implementation planning.

SELECTED SPEAKING & INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP

- AZA Conservation Education Committee Regional Conference, Moderator (2026)
- AZA Mid-Year Conference, Diversity Summit Planning Lead & Facilitator (2025)
- AZA Annual Conference, Moderator (2024)
- AZA Annual Conference, Panelist & Moderator (2023)
- Canopy Strategic Partners Community Conversations, Panelist (2022)

BOARD & PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Board of Directors, Minorities in Aquarium & Zoo Science (MIAZS), 2025–Present
- Chair, Professional Development Committee, MIAZS, 2025–Present
- Diversity Committee Member, Association of Zoos & Aquariums, 2024–Present
- Chair, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility Committee, Birmingham Zoo, 2024–Present

CERTIFICATIONS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Associate Certified Coach (ACC), International Coaching Federation – Anticipated 2026
- Certified Executive Coach, Symbiosis Coaching, 2025
- Certified Diversity Professional, National Diversity Council, 2023
- DEI in the Workplace, University of South Florida, 2022
- MPACT Manager Training, Personnel Board of Jefferson County, 2021
- Employee Engagement, Disney Institute, 2021
- Quality Service, Disney Institute, 2021