



## PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

~ Tony Willis ~



As the Chief Equity Development Officer for LEAP, Tony leads initiatives aimed at establishing and expanding programs that support equitable economic development throughout the Lansing region. His goal is to create a stronger, more competitive economy that works for everyone by dismantling barriers and expanding opportunities for low-income individuals, communities of color, and other underrepresented groups. Tony began his journey at LEAP as the Business Acceleration Manager and later became the VP of Entrepreneurship and Innovation before being promoted to his current role.

Throughout his time at LEAP, Tony has created, developed, and implemented several key programs. These include the PROTO Accelerator, the region's first corporate innovation platform and Michigan's only accelerator with a focus on InsurTech; One and All, an IEDC Gold Award-winning entrepreneurial program that supports entrepreneurs within the ALICE threshold with mentorship, educational curriculum, and seed funding; and Elevate, the region's first small business accelerator focused on Black entrepreneurs and enterprises, aiming to enhance revenue, profitability, and prominence.

A proud Spartan, Tony earned a BA in Communications with a specialization in Public Relations from Michigan State University, having also attended Lansing Community College before transferring. Outside of work, he is an active community member, serving on various boards and advisory groups, including All of the Above, the JUSTICE League of Greater Lansing, MSU's Center of Community Economic Development, and LCC's Alumni Committee.

1760 Abbey Rd, 2nd Floor Suite 200, East Lansing, Michigan 48823

Office Phone: 517.305.2470; Cell/WhatsApp: 561-635-8121

Email: [Connect@empoweringthroughlove.org](mailto:Connect@empoweringthroughlove.org); Website: [www.empoweringthroughlove.org](http://www.empoweringthroughlove.org)