



## **Ovell Barbee Jr.**

**HR Strategist, DEI Advocate, Author, Speaker**

**AskOvell.com**

Owner/Principal of Ovell Rome & Associates, Ovell Barbee Jr., is a renowned, visionary human resources leader, consultant and speaker with a passion for diversity, equity, and inclusion. He's held executive leadership roles at Fortune 500 companies in an array of industries including Motorola, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, General Motors/OnStar, Spectrum Health (now Corewell Health) and Indiana University Health.

In these roles, he drove sustained cultural change and reduced barriers for diverse populations with a "human-centered" approach that encouraged team members to use their voices as a catalyst for understanding and change. He implemented policies and practices addressing systemic and unconscious barriers and bias to allow everyone opportunities to thrive within a corporate culture.

With his rare blend of experience and expertise in Human Resources and DEI, Ovell is an accomplished and sought-after speaker who chaired the National HR Healthcare Conference in 2022. He's presented at the Healthcare HR Management Institute's National Forum, the Becker's Healthcare Annual Meeting, the National Diversity Council's National Black Men in Leadership Summit and many other local, state and national meetings. He's been featured in webinars, podcasts, and news articles on Human Resources and DEI topics. He offers guidance and advice on HR and DEI topics through his website, AskOvell.com.

Growing up in Grand Rapids, Michigan in a single-parent family that instilled the importance of hard work and education, Ovell began working as a newspaper carrier at age 12. He earned a bachelor's degree in communications, and a master's in social work from the University of Michigan, then attended Michigan State University for a second master's degree in HR and labor relations.

He shares his life story, and lessons learned as an African American C-suite executive, in a best-selling book titled, "The Big House: A Human-Centered & Progressive Approach to DEI and Positive Workplace Engagement."