

Women's History Month



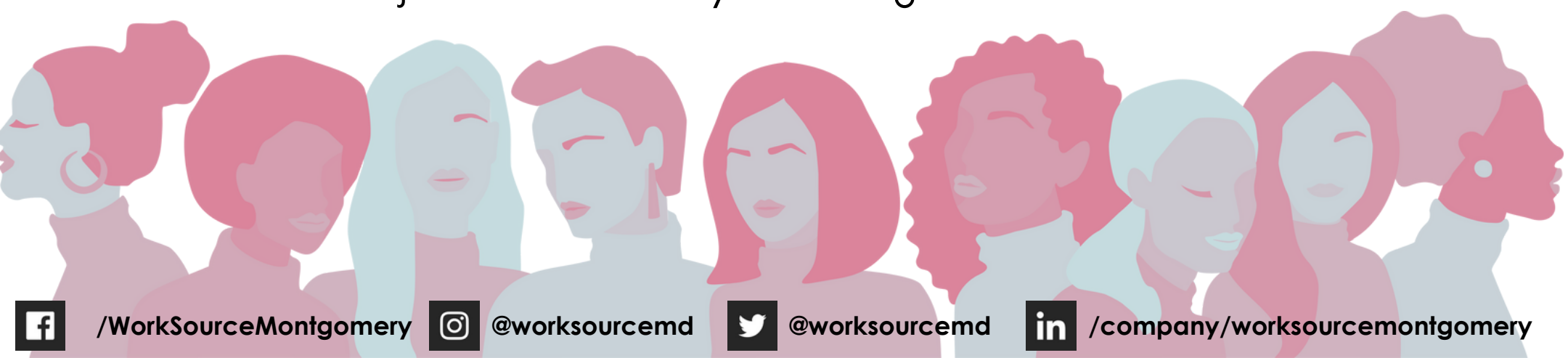
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A little about Dr. Bruton:

From the day she was brought into the world, Sonya Bruton was immersed in the community – whether it was family, summer camp, school, or work – it has shaped her from the very beginning. Born prematurely in Chapel Hill, NC, she spent the first five months of her life under the care of a community of healthcare professionals. She arrived home to a house full of family as her mom was one of six siblings. Her aunts, uncles, grandparents, and extended family were actively involved in raising her. “Being a part of a bigger whole and drawing upon those around me was all I’ve ever known – it’s shaped and formed me since the day I was born,” Bruton said.

Being from a college town had a big influence on her as well. She benefitted from all the public education and health programs that were deployed by the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill (UNC). So naturally, that’s where she planned to go for undergraduate studies. Her mother learned that the highest scholarship awarded to UNC students included a summer at the Outward Bound School. She wasn’t eligible for the scholarship, but she did end up attending Outward Bound during the summer between her junior and senior years in high school.



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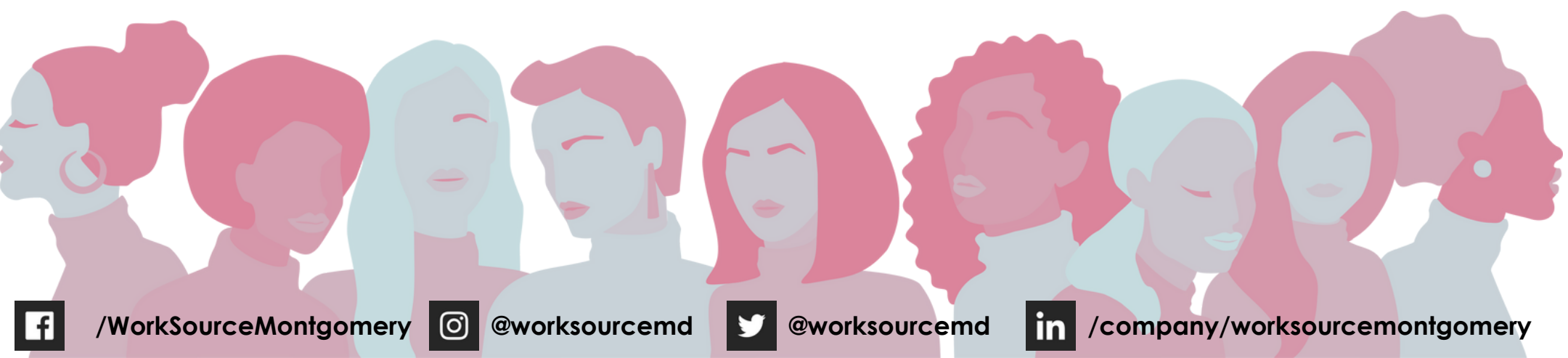
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DR. SONYA BRUTON

**Chief Executive Officer & President, CCSI Services
Clinical Psychiatrist, Author & WSM Board Member**

The Outward Bound experience was challenging but highly rewarding. It required three weeks of outdoor exploring which included hiking, rafting, and rock climbing – all things she had not done before. Challenges were completed by teams but solo missions were also required. It was a time of self-discovery and awareness for her saying, “I learned that I had been limiting myself. Couldn’t, wouldn’t, and didn’t were just words. If I just changed the words, I slowly began to realize that I could do anything I decided to do. It was truly a life-enhancing experience and so many lessons stay with me today.”

She attended UNC-Chapel Hill on need and merit-based scholarships where she studied journalism excelling in writing. Upon graduation, she immediately entered a training program at Knight-Ridder Newspapers or future publishers. It required her to be part of a business culture that she was not familiar or comfortable with. She ultimately left journalism, returned to North Carolina to earned a Master’s Degree in Public Administration from NC State University and immediately entered a PhD program for Economic Development. A year and a half into the program she began to dread every class and after becoming a mother herself, she walked away from her studies. “I didn’t like that it was only about the numbers, and not about people,” she said.



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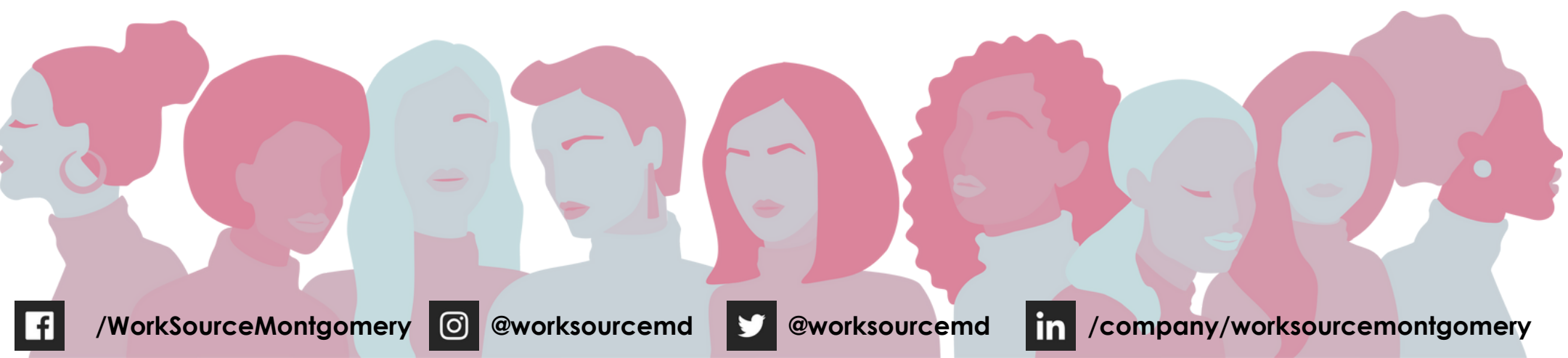
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Sonya found a way to blend public administration and economic development by joining the NC Community Health Center Association staff to provide the financial analysis needed for health centers to secure lines of credit from local banks. Nine months into that work, she became CEO and focused her efforts on strengthening health centers throughout the state. "I loved everything about making communities healthy," she said. After doing that for ten years, she decided to relocate to the DC area and ultimately decided to become a clinical psychologist. Years ago, her experience at Outward Bound taught her that she could do anything, so that's exactly what she did. She is now Dr. Sonya Bruton, a clinical psychologist with a specialization in neuropsychology.

Sonya began consulting with CCI Health Services in 2009 and joined the staff in 2016 as their Chief Operating Officer and Associate CEO. She assumed the role of CEO in March 2020. CCI was founded in 1972 in Rockville as a free clinic primarily serving homeless youth. Today, CCI has nine locations in Montgomery County and three in Prince George's County that provide a variety of services including medical, dental, behavioral health, and Maryland WIC. Any county resident can use CCI services regardless of financial, medical insurance, or immigration status. "In our practices, you will see the full spectrum of the Montgomery County community, Dr. Bruton said. We exist to mirror and meet the health needs of everyone." In 2022, CCI served nearly 19,000 Montgomery County residents with the majority being women or Medicaid recipients.



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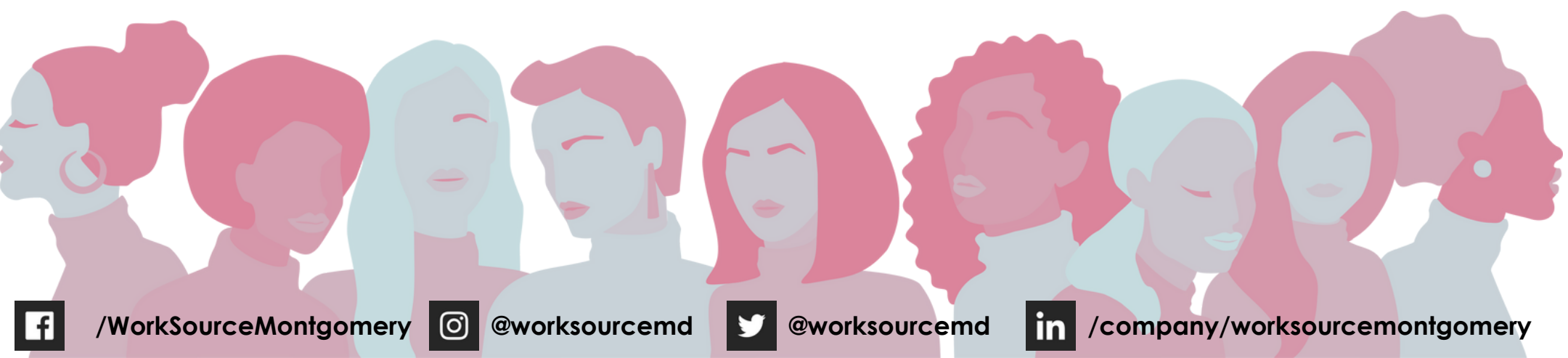


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Dr. Bruton joined the Montgomery County Workforce Development Board in March 2022. The connection between workforce development and health is threaded together according to Dr. Bruton.

"This Board brings together the things I care about most. The fabric of people is rooted in their work, and a healthy workforce drives community advancement," she said. *"Everything about workforce development excites me because it's about empowering people and places."* Currently consisting of nearly thirty members, the Board is a community of its own, something Dr. Bruton is entirely familiar with.

Dr. Bruton is a bilingual English/Spanish speaker, has called Silver Spring her home since moving to the DC area in 2009, and spends her free time enjoying hiking and biking the many trails Montgomery County has to offer. She recently published the Amazon best-selling book, *"Finding Your Way in the Nonprofit Sector: Your Portable Mentor for Avoiding Pitfalls and Seizing Opportunities"*. A March review in Publisher's Weekly says the book is best for fans of Brene Brown's, *"Dare to Lead"*.



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