



Valeria Howard-Cunningham

President & Producer, Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo

Valeria Howard-Cunningham is the President and Producer of the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo (BPIR), the nation's longest-running African American touring rodeo celebrating the heritage and contributions of Black cowboys and cowgirls. A leader in preserving and expanding the legacy of BPIR, Valeria stepped into the helm of the organization after the passing of her husband, BPIR founder Lu Vason. Under her leadership, the rodeo has continued to grow its national footprint, deepen community engagement, and elevate cultural storytelling through rodeo events, educational partnerships, and heritage celebrations. Valeria has worked closely with a network of Black women leaders to sustain BPIR's mission of honoring Black Western history and creating opportunities for future generations of competitors, fans, and collaborators.