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2017 YOUNG EXECUTIVES

By Katrice L. Mines and Kamille D. Whittaker Todd Gray, Meredith Lilly, Jamel DaCosta and Qaadirah Abdur-Rahim wield power purposefully.



ALL THE WAY UP By Erica Dias Insights along the way.



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CONTRIBUTORS



Veteran automotive journalist Brian Armstead writes FastLane for Atlanta Tribune, bringing readers the best of what's new from the auto industry. Got a car question? Email him at autosense@ comcast.net.

Alex Jones is a corporate/editorial photographer and has photographed some of Atlanta's business elite for Atlanta Tribune: The Magazine, BLACK ENTERPRISE, and many corporate publications and websites. His work can be seen around town in publications, as well on the walls of the newly renovated SCLC Women's Headquarters on Auburn Avenue. See his work online at www.businessphotographyatlanta.com.

> Dawn M. Richards is the founder of the food and lifestyle brand, D.M.R. Fine Foods. With her food passion leading the way, Dawn shares recipes, travel stories, fashion, entertainment and lifestyle features on dmrfinefoods.blogspot. com and other media outlets, while maintaining a career as a FORTUNE 500 legal executive.

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ATLANTA TRIBUNE

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PUBLISHER

Pat Lottier – plottier@atlantatribune.com

SENIOR EDITOR Katrice L. Mines – kmines@atlantatribune.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR Kamille D. Whittaker – kwhittaker@atlantatribune.com

EDITORIAL INTERN Tiara Cole

ART DESIGN Jayme Ogles

PHOTOGRAPHY Alex Jones

Alex Julies

MULTIMEDIA American Technologies

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Lorraine Cochran-Johnson

ATLANTA MARKET SALES MANAGER Duane Torrence – dtorrence@atlantatribune.com

NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Armenious Patterson – ap1207@aol.com

MARKETING PROMOTION & CIRCULATION COORDINATOR

Allison Slocum – aslocum@atlantatribune.com

ATLANTA TRIBUNE INTERNET EDITION Editorial Staff

DISTRIBUTION Publication Marketing & Distribution 404.216.1476

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Atlanta Tribune: The Magazine

875 Old Roswell Road, Suite C-100 Roswell, GA 30076 (O) 770.587.0501 • (F) 770.642.6501

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What You're Saying...

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- @rodneysampson is doing and leading important work. Man of excellence is right! Kudos, Rodney – @Lana_Zum
- Way to go, @membersuite Sweet feature in @atlantatribune on growing the biz to meet market demand http://ow.ly/ Hk2U30awyaX – @rachelrbarclay
- The @atlantatribune highlights @membersuite's growth and CEO Andrew Ryan's successful Series B funding round – @arketi

- I spent my morning with influential women mentoring high school and middle school girls. Thanks @atlantatribune for hosting this great event! - @Ms_MichelleM
- Thank you to @atlantatribune for the opportunity to mentor young women at today's event @Ctr4CHR – @shavonnrichson
- Fun times this morning with women that have graced the @AtlantaTribune magazine covers #AT17SW - @StaceyChavis



CORRECTION: The Higher Learning article "When Hope Falls Short, Georgia Loses" in the April print issue of Atlanta Tribune: The Magazine erroneously was placed as a piece sponsored by the Georgia Lottery. We regret the error.

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THE EDITOR'S VIEW

know I say this every year, but the young executives in this issue are impressive. From government to finance, the non-profit sector and diversity, the amount of expertise between Jamel DaCosta, Qaadirah Abdur-Rahim, Meredith Lilly and Todd Gray is bankable. Their stories, a rich tapestry of what exactly set each on the courses they are taking, are enough to light a fire under anyone looking to shift up.



.....



It may sound simple, and on one hand it is, but when you really understand committing yourself to a cause greater than yourself — Abdur-Rahim's advice to "work hard every day" takes on an even heartier meaning. It's, in essence, sowing what you want to reap.

Gray, who recently discovered himself far less of an introvert than he always believed, is in the middle of an ideology evolution that is organically threading his professional pursuits with his legacy building. His focus: being a proponent of equity in both business and community. We approve.

Lilly is a walking embodiment of the theme she has made the banner of her life: see a need, meet a need. And that comes with a price she's willing to pay. "I live very intentionally and to the fullest so as to not have any regrets. ... I strongly believe in taking short-term loss for long-term gain. Almost everything that I've done in life that has paid off successfully, has cost me something."

And DaCosta's credo: "Live full; die empty" is an ample descriptor of the manner in which he is going about treading a path. Leave every gift you were born to give here where it is meant to cause the impact you were created to make.

I'm inspired. AT



Katrice L. Mines EDITOR kmines@atlantatribune.com

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- You may be on LinkedIn, but is your profile really doing you any good? We sought expert advice to help you tighten up.
 pg. 44
- If you're looking for alternative routes around Atlanta away from the I-85 bridge reconstruction – we've got you covered with our Techbyte. pg. 64



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ust Add Honey is expanding beyond its Sweet Auburn Curb Market location, recently partnering with The Hammonds House to provide a cafe within the museum, offering light, healthy fare ranging from soups, salads, veggie wraps and, of course, loose leaf tea options. Customers who visit the cafe will have the ability to walk around the Museum and view the newest exhibits free of charge. In addition to the café, Just Add Honey and husband and wife duo Brandi and Jermail Shelton will host public and private high tea "parTeas" along with other tea-infused events, using the company as a vessel to connect their already swelling customer base to a hidden gem in historic West End.

1. Why Hammonds House Museum? How did the partnership come about?

JERMAIL: We've always had a love for the West End neighborhood. Brandi bought her first home in the area in 2006. We love the culture and the history of that side of town. Brandi and I have this game we play called 'wish list' where we tell each other our biggest dreams and goals and manifest them through our thoughts and words. We were playing 'wish list' on Thanksgiving weekend and Brandi said, "I want a tea room in the West End." The following day, we rode around the West End neighborhood to look around and Brandi said. "Let's show the boys where we were married." We pulled up to the Hammonds House Museum, walked on the porch and Brandi took a picture before we left and said, "This is it. This will be where we have our tea room." The following weeks we meet with the Hammonds House Museum and 42 days later we stood on the same porch we said our vows — this time serving tea to customers. I have so many great memories of getting married in that home, so every time we're there it's like we're reliving that day - our love full circle. The Hammonds House Museum is a diamond tucked away in historic West End. The history of the home, the architecture, and beautiful artwork makes it the perfect combination for a sophisticated twist on a southern tea tradition. This partnership has had such an effortless flow; we know it was meant to be.

BEHIND THE SCENES



KRISTIE SWINK BENSON *Takes Her Talents to The High Museum of Art*

ristie Swink Benson is The High Museum of Art's new director of communications and will lead the teams responsible for marketing, advertising, public relations and digital communications.

Benson began her decade long career in communications with the DeKalb County government as a public information officer and was promoted to director of communications. As spokesperson, she forged strong relationships with constituents and local media, helping to stimulate positive coverage and fair and balanced reporting.

Just prior to her current role, she was director of public relations and media relations for Southern Company Gas. Benson brings extensive experience in communications planning, public relations, crisis communications and executive media training to this post.

"We are very excited to have Kristie join the High as a member of our senior leadership team," says Rand Suffolk, Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr., director. "Her proven track record of driving strategic communications and fostering community engagement, coupled with her personal passion for the arts, make her a great asset for the Museum as we continue to grow and reach new audiences."

Benson, who with her husband is an avid traveler and lover of Atlanta's thriving food scene, earned a Master of Arts degree in public communication from American University in Washington, D.C., and a Bachelor of Arts degree in mass communications from Winston-Salem State University. In 2015, she obtained an Accreditation in Public Relations, a prestigious designation given by the Universal Accreditation Board, and is a member of the national and Georgia chapters of Public Relations Society of America, the national and Atlanta chapters of American Association of Blacks in Energy, Women in Energy, and The Corporate Volunteer Council of Atlanta.

"This role aligns my personal passion for the arts with my love for communications, and I am extremely honored to join the High family," says Benson. "The High Museum of Art is a well-respected institution that I have grown up loving. I am humbled to be a part of how we engage future generations and make the arts essential to every community throughout Georgia." AT





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Spotlight on Spelman's SYMONE FOWLER-CANTY

Superior States a state of the States of the

The Chicago native has taken bold steps towards her career goals by participating in several summer programs. Through the Summer Health Professions Education Program with Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons, she was able to conduct valuable research and shadow several leading researchers. During a summer program at the University of Washington, Fowler-Canty collected data and conducted research for a project on semantic information retrieval through the Center for Sensorimotor Neural Engineering.

A member of the Alpha Lambda Delta honor society and a Health Careers Opportunities Pipeline Preparation Program Scholar, she received first place poster presentation honors at Research Day 2016 for her project, "Specific Facilitation of the Identification of Foot Objects Following Stimulation of the Dorsal Premotor Cortex."

Formerly an undergraduate teaching assistant in the mathematics department, Fowler-Canty has a gift for assisting others in need of help. In fact, her dedication to the College's surrounding community continues to influence her volunteer work. As secretary of FunLab, an educational non-profit organization founded by Spelman alumna Breagon Ricks that focuses on making

laboratory experimentation fun for kids, she leads and conducts hands-on experiments with students and educates them about various scientific concepts.

Fowler-Canty is also a mentor and teaching assistant with Insight Initiative, a program designed to sharpen the focus of 4th and 5th grade students through a yearlong mentorship and tutoring curriculum. Fowler-Canty's short and long-term goals are to become a healthcare specialist for minority populations. Passionate about medicine and early childhood education, she intends to pursue a career in medicine as either a pediatrician or dermatologist. **At**

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SWEET, WEST END

(Continued from page 13)

2. What will be some of the differences between the two Just Add Honey locations?

BRANDI: The Sweet Auburn Curb Market location is a fun, fast-paced spot to enjoy a cup of tea and answer a few emails. The space allows us to educate and share our love of tea with locals, tourists, students, and hospital staff that are downtown. The HHM space is a little more formal: White linen service and fresh flowers at every table with the backdrop of amazing brown artists. Each location has its own uniqueness and we invite everyone to visit both.

JERMAIL: Our main location at the SACM is more of a retail location that serves a cup of tea. Customers come in, purchase their loose leaf tea, grab a beverage, enjoy desserts from our locally sourced bakers, and leave. The Hammonds House Museum is more of an experience. Our cafe offers light, healthy fares ranging from soups, salads, veggie wraps and, of course, loose leaf teas. Customers who visit the cafe will have the ability to walk around the museum and view the latest art exhibitions while taking a moment out of their busy day.

3. Describe the historical and social significance of African-American tea rooms/ spaces.

BRANDI: Historically, we were shut out of 'tea time' because it was us serving them. We created our own tea time in secret. Now we have a tea room where we can sip with a friend or enjoy a moment to ourselves. Just Add Honey created a tea ritual class centered around women slowing down over a cup of tea. As women, we give so much to our families, spouses, and careers that we often forget to pour back into ourselves. Our tea ritual class is designed to teach the on-thego woman how to slow down and give back to herself over a cup of tea. It's a beautiful experience if you really stop and think about it. It's a form of self-care that we guide you to implement into your daily routine. Bring a tea space with you, wherever you may be.

4. The tea and menu curation process seems deliberate and intricate ...

BRANDI: Our blends are created from things we've enjoyed in our travels around

the world and/or customers' requests. For instance, our Good Night Tea is a blend of chamomile, lavender, and other herbs, I enjoyed a lavender tea in Europe and thought about recreating it to remember my trip. It was first introduced in 2009 before lavender was popular in beverages. We tried selling it at Piedmont Park Farmers Market and not one person was interested. Needless to sav. I made my family drink most of it and later it became Christmas gifts. I re-introduced Good Night Tea two years ago and now it's one of our best sellers. Our menu is simple. We make a sophisticated twist on a southern tea tradition. Whether it's our chicken salad sandwich served on a buttery croissant or our southern sweet tea, we take a classic and step it up a notch (or two).

5. Where did your combined passion for tea originate?

BRANDI: My mother gave me tea for any ailment. My aunt made Mississippi Mud Tea (sweet tea and orange juice) for family gatherings. My mom, sister and I traveled and enjoyed tea rooms wherever our passport took us. Later, studying abroad for fashion design and marketing, my love for tea resurfaced. I thought I could create a fresh take on a traditionally formal beverage. Mixing fun flavors together was just the beginning and in 2006 Just Add Honey was born.

JERMAIL: I married a tea lover whose passion grew over the years. I watched Brandi create blends and saw the positive reactions from customers at markets, events, and around town. In 2015, I left my real estate career to help grow the brand.

6. What's next for Just Add Honey?

We're working with restaurants, spas, hotels and other businesses interested in carrying our thoughtfully blended teas. As we continue to grow our main location at the Sweet Auburn Curb Market, we've also been looking throughout the city for another location to further expand our brand in Atlanta. There are so many cool places to grab a cup of coffee in Atlanta, but for that tea drinker who likes options, there's not much to choose from. When you think about tea, we want you to think about Just Add Honey Tea Company. **At**

TIDBITS



A tlanta City Attorney Cathy Hampton will leave her role after more than six years of public service, effective this month.

"Cathy Hampton has been a trusted advisor who has been by my side for the major successes of my administration, starting with pension reform, and most recently with the sale of Underground Atlanta," says Mayor Kasim Reed. "Over the past six years, Cathy has been an essential member of my team, and under her leadership, the City Law Department has consistently delivered outstanding results for the people of Atlanta. I am grateful for her work, and wish her the best in the next chapter of her career."

As the City of Atlanta's chief legal officer, Hampton was responsible for leading the Law Department, whose 85 members provide legal advice to Mayor Reed and the Atlanta City Council. The City Attorney oversees all civil legal matters for the City and its 8,000 employees, including the water utility and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, the world's busiest and most efficient passenger airport.

Hampton spearheaded the City's historic pension reform; secured an unprecedented extension of the water consent decree; negotiated the 20-year airport lease agreement between Delta Air Lines Inc. and the City; and reached an amicable resolution to the long-standing dispute between the Atlanta Public Schools and the Atlanta BeltLine. Under her leadership, Atlanta's landscape has been transformed by complex transactions which resulted in the development of Ponce City Market, the Porsche Cars North America headquarters, Mercedes-Benz Stadium, and the sales of Fort McPherson and most recently, Underground Atlanta. AT

BUSINESSAFFAIRS

Tax**SMARTS**

What Income Is Taxable?

A re you wondering if there's a hard and fast rule about what income is taxable and what income is not? The quick answer is that all income is taxable unless the law specifically excludes it. But as you might have guessed, there's more to it than that.

Taxable income includes any money you receive, such as wages and tips, but it can also include non-cash income from property or services. For example, both parties in a barter exchange must include the fair market value of goods or services received as income on their tax return.

Nontaxable Income

Here are some types of income that are usually not taxable:

- Gifts and inheritances
- Child support payments
- Welfare benefits
- Damage awards for physical injury or sickness
- Cash rebates from a dealer or manufacturer for an item you buy
- Reimbursements for qualified adoption
 expenses

In addition, some types of income are not taxable except under certain conditions including:

Life insurance proceeds paid to you because of the death of the insured person are usually not taxable. However, if you redeem a life insurance policy for cash, any amount that is more than the cost of the policy is taxable.

Income from a qualified scholarship is normally not taxable. This means that amounts you use for certain costs, such as tuition and required books, are not taxable. However, amounts you use for room and board are taxable.

If you received a state or local income tax refund, the amount may be taxable. You should receive a 2016 Form 1099-G from the agency that made the payment to you.

If you do not receive it by mail, the agency may have provided the form electronically. Contact them to find out how to get the form. Be sure to report any taxable refund you received even if you did not receive Form 1099-G.

Important Reminders about Tip Income

If you get tips on the job from customers, that income is subject to taxes. Here's what you should keep in mind when it comes to receiving tips on the job:

Tips are taxable. You must pay federal income tax on any tips you receive. The value of non-cash tips, such as tickets, passes or other items of value are also subject to income tax.

Include all tips on your income tax return. You must include the total of all tips you received during the year on your income tax return. This includes tips directly from customers, tips added to credit cards and your share of tips received under a tip-splitting agreement with other employees.

Report tips to your employer. If you receive \$20 or more in tips in any one month, from any one job, you must report your tips for that month to your employer. The report should only include cash, check, debit and credit card tips you receive. Your employer is required to withhold federal income, Social Security and Medicare taxes on the reported tips. Do not report the value of any noncash tips to your employer.

Keep a daily log of tips. Use the Employee's Daily Record of Tips and Report to Employer (IRS Publication 1244) to record your tips.

Bartering Income is Taxable

Bartering is the trading of one product or service for another. Small businesses sometimes barter to get products or services they need. For example, a plumber might trade plumbing work with a dentist for dental services. Typically, there is no exchange of cash.

If you barter, the value of products or services from bartering is taxable income. Here are four facts about bartering that you should be aware of:

1. Barter exchanges. A barter exchange is an organized marketplace where members barter products or services. Some exchanges operate out of an office and others over the Internet. All barter exchanges are required to



issue Form 1099-B, Proceeds from Broker and Barter Exchange Transactions. The exchange must give a copy of the form to its members who barter and file a copy with the IRS.

2. Bartering income. Barter and trade dollars are the same as real dollars for tax purposes and must be reported on a tax return. Both parties must report as income the fair market value of the product or service they get.

3. Tax implications. Bartering is taxable in the year it occurs. The tax rules may vary based on the type of bartering that takes place. Barterers may owe income taxes, self-employment taxes, employment taxes or excise taxes on their bartering income.

4. Reporting rules. How you report bartering on a tax return varies. If you are in a trade or business, you normally report it on Form 1040, Schedule C, Profit or Loss from Business. **AT**



Steve Julal is a principal with VAAS Professionals. He is a certified public accountant and a member of the Georgia Society of CPAs as well as the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Julal can be reached at 404.223.1058, or via e-mail at steve.julal@vaasprofessionals.com.





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BUSINESSAFFAIRS

Legal**SMARTS**

Georgia's Applicants for Employment Can NOT Pursue Disparate Impact Age Discrimination Claims under the ADEA

an a group of applicants for employment pursue age discrimination claims — alleging disparate impact — against an employer? Can that same group of applicants pursue such claims against the recruiting company helping to fill vacancies at the employer's work site? According to the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, the answer is "NO!"

As background, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act is the federal law essentially prohibiting employers from discriminating against employees, on the basis of age, because they are 40 years old or older. In this case, Villarell applied for an employment opportunity with RJ Reynolds. RJ Reynolds used a contractor, Pinstripe, to review resumes and to identify top talent. As part of the screening process, however, RJ Reynolds gave Pinstripe specific guidelines which included identifying only candidates who were "2-3 years out of college." The guidelines also indicated that Pinstripe should "stay away from" applicants "in sales for 8-10 years." At the time of his initial application, Villarreal was 49 years old. He applied to the Company multiple times, but was never hired. A lawyer contacted Villarrel approximately two years after his rejection and indicated his belief that Villarreal and others over the age of 40 were rejected for employment because of the hiring guidelines. Villarrell sued — on behalf of himself and other applicants — for age discrimination. He claimed the Company intentionally refused to hire him because he was over 40 years old (e.g. disparate treatment claim) and that it used its hiring guidelines in a manner that prevented applicants - over the age of 40 - from gaining employment (e.g. disparate impact claim).

The Court's analysis focused primarily on Villarell's disparate

impact claim. In short, the Court concluded that the Age Discrimination in Employment Act's disparate impact provision applies only to employees — not applicants for employment. Thus, while employees can sue employers for applying policies in a manner impacting them more negatively than younger workers, applicants for employment cannot do so. Applicants for employment also cannot pursue disparate impact claims against recruiting contractors applying such policies when making selection decisions on the employer's behalf.

Does this mean that older applicants for employment cannot sue employers advertising an interest in hiring only recent college graduates? No. In fact, the Court specifically indicated that applicants could continue pursuing age discrimination claims based on disparate treatment by showing that the hiring guidelines or the numerical data of persons actually hired evidenced age bias. For these legal and other business reasons, employers should consult counsel when developing employment selection guidelines. **At**



APPLICATION Fr

Dionysia Johnson-Massie is a veteran litigator and shareholder at Littler Mendelson, P.C., the largest labor and employment law firm in the country exclusively representing national and international employers. Johnson-Massie may be reached at 404.760.3901 or djmassie@littler.com.



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MEET THE JUDGE **THOMAS A. COX, JR., JUDGE** Superior Courts of Georgia | Atlanta Judicial Circuit



n 2016, Thomas A. Cox, Jr. was elected to the Superior Court of Fulton County bench. Judge Cox started his career in the public sector at the United States Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. Upon his return to Atlanta, Cox worked for the Georgia Attorney General's Office and the Fulton County Attorney's Office. Then, he established a career as a trial attorney and counselor that concentrated his practice in the areas of labor and employment litigation. While in private practice, Cox was a partner in a small diverse law firm, a regional law firm and at two AmLaw 200 large law firms before becoming a judge. In two of his previous firms, Cox served as the Atlanta Vice-Chair and Team Lead of the Labor & Employment practice group. Cox graduated with honors with a bachelor's degree from Morehouse College in Atlanta, and received his Juris Doctorate from Boston College Law School.

What has surprised you most about working with the Judiciary? I have been surprised by the sheer variety of issues faced every day by members of the bench. I am honored to serve the citizens. I am also humbled and grateful to have been placed in such a position of important responsibility, realizing the impact that judicial decisions have on the lives of persons that appear before the Court. How do you think your mother would describe you? My mother would say that she always thought that I would serve the public and that she was a big part of the inspiration for that process.

Who is the most interesting person you have met in your life's journey? Dr. Robert Brisbane, former chair of the Political Science Department at Morehouse College. Dr. Brisbane believed in academic rigor, achieving high goals and serving the community. He was responsible for inspiring me and many of my classmates to pursue a career in the law.

What do you wish other people knew about how to become a judge? With reference to becoming a judge through winning an election, it requires a great deal of self-denial and personal sacrifice. At the heart of the process is the need to develop a critical body of work as an attorney. This is the foundation of the process of aspiring to a judicial position. Winning an election also requires an action plan. Staying focused on the goal often in the face of difficult circumstances is a must. It is also essential to engage a team of political professionals with a track record of winning campaigns. Finally — the winning judicial candidate must be prepared to go it alone, against the grain, if that's what it takes.

What is your personal philosophy on how to achieve success in life? My personal

philosophy on how to achieve success is premised on an acknowledgment of "grounding" in something bigger than self. For me, my faith is a big component, as well as being true to self. I am also a big proponent of developing a plan before engaging in any major human endeavor. Although developing a plan is not a guarantee of success, I have found that during the course of my journey, that I have succeeded more often than not with a plan. **At**





Favorite word? **Perseverance**

Least Favorite Word? Why

Cornbread Muffin or Croissant? **Croissant**

St. Maarten or Puerto Rico? St. Maarten (a personal favorite)

Star Wars or Star Trek? Star Trek

Centennial Olympic Park or Alliance Theatre? Centennial Olympic Park

SODO (South Downtown Atlanta) or Atlantic Station? Atlantic Station

Boxing or Basketball? Basketball

Saturday Night Live or Meet The Press? **Meet The Press**

Atlanta Falcons or New England Patriots? Atlanta Falcons!



by Judge Terrinee L. Gundy, Municipal Court of Atlanta

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MEREDITH LILLY ON TAKING A GAMBLE

By Kamille D. Whittaker

Meredith Lilly has several choice words for the woman she is becoming: "Think big, work smarter and take measured, calculated risks."

Risk and eventual reward have become the operating motifs for the attorney-turned community organizer and political director.

She gets it from her grandfather.

"During one of my last conversations with my grandfather, who was 100 years old, he talked to me about how much he enjoyed his life and did everything he ever wanted to do. I think he passed that spirit to me. I live very intentionally and to the fullest so as to not have any regrets. I think that conversation validated my sense of intentional living and, in a sense, gave me permission to bet on me. I strongly believe in taking short-term loss for long-term gain. Almost everything that I've done in life that has paid off successfully, has cost me something."

Her cost-benefit analysis, she gets from her legal background and successfully running her own law firm after graduating from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law in Houston. "I started my career as a full time attorney, which very much dictates how I strategize, develop, and implement my plan. Because I realized early that my path is my path, I'm very authentic and true to me."

And in 2007, being authentic and true to herself meant leaving it all behind to go work for the historic Obama for America Campaign, where the Alabama native started out her campaign career handing out fliers, making campaign calls and putting up campaign signs in Portsmouth, N.H. She then served as a regional political director, managing multiple campaign offices in several states across the nation. Upon this success in 2008, she received a presidential appointment as the Senior Advisor to the Regional Administrator of the United States General Services Administration in Atlanta without question, it was the best risk she says she had ever taken.

Then, there's the reward. She was selected as state director of Obama for America-Georgia in April 2012, distinguishing herself by successfully leading and mobilizing Obama employees and volunteers during the campaign; assisting President Obama to secure a hard-fought victory in the 2012.

In her role, she was a lead engineer who assembled and organized thousands of Georgians to travel to North Carolina and Florida during the last few months of the 2012 presidential election. Additionally, Lilly promoted President Obama's policies and assisted with early voter registration to effectively help President Obama secure Florida's Electoral College.

"I was completely new to the political environment in the state. The responsibility of being the state representative for the Obama campaign cemented my future in Georgia politics, and therefore paved the way for me to build an expansive network of community, political, and business leaders not only in Georgia, but around the world."

After the successful 2012 race, Lilly returned to the Obama administration at the United States General Services Administration in her previous role.

Since, as a testament to her political acumen, she has been called upon to manage the campaigns of Mereda Johnson, Doreen Carter, and Mike Thurmond. Most recently, Lilly managed a challenging, yet successful congressional re-election campaign for Congressman Hank Johnson. Prior to this, she successfully led Kasim Reed's 2013 re-election bid for Mayor of Atlanta as campaign manager, achieving an impressive 85 percent victory.

In her current role, Lilly serves as DeKalb County's external affairs manager in CEO Michael Thurmond's administration. She focuses on constituent services and community-based engagement – adding to her already expansive community imprint with Habitat for Humanity, NAACP, American Cancer Society (Relay for Life), Hospitality House for victims of domestic violence and Toys for Tots. She is an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. – all feeding into another motif she espouses: "See a need, meet a need."

"The love for people and community motivates me. My faith in God has truly driven me to become successful and has kept me grounded. I know that it is only by His strength that I am able to serve others and my community as a whole. I'm inspired by the future and all that it has to offer. As I reflect on the things I hope to accomplish, I recognize that this is only the beginning. I have much more in store and I am committed to serving my community with fervent passion. We are here for a purpose and until I've reached that point where my spirit directs me to do something else, I will pursue what needs to be done."

But first, ritual. On Sundays, Lilly is on cruise control in the streets of Atlanta.

"I fill up my car and drive around for hours looking at multi-million dollar mansions. It's how I unwind and dream about the future I work hard daily to build. At the end of my Sunday drive I'm completely out of gas and recharged for the week ahead." At

TODD GRAY A SERVANT LEADER By Katrice L. Mines

• o say that one has roots in entrepreneurship and service may sound cliché, but Todd Gray can decisively substantiate that part of his story. Gray's great aunt and uncle were entrepreneurs who owned Lee's Inn in the Ashby Street area in the '40s and where civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and entertainers like Lena Horne and Piano Red often gathered. There was little divide between the couple's business and civic minds. Observing their immersion in community as well as that of his parents seeded in Gray a like-attentiveness.

The Atlanta native is the director of Supplier Diversity for Grady Health System where he oversees sourcing, contract management, system wide development, implementation and the facilitation of proactive programming which encourages the use of minorityowned, women-owned, veteran-owned, LGBT-owned, service disabled veteran owned, and historically underutilized business. As well, his passion for the field and its undergirding premise of equity has spilled into how he gives back. Gray has partnered, over the past decade, with the State of Georgia's Mentor/Protégé Program as a mentor for small businesses and supports youth minority entrepreneurship through the Greater Atlanta Economic Alliance Construction Skills Development Institute and other organizations that provide current and future entrepreneurs with education, awareness and technical assistance

"My passion throughout my career regardless of role or title has been rooted in servant leadership," he surmises. "Serving my community has evolved and integrated into my professional career."

In 12 years, Gray has been able to leave a thumbprint on the Diversity and Inclusion, and Supplier Diversity sectors by seizing the opportunity to roll up his sleeves with clients and witness them grow and create jobs in Atlanta and across the country. Since joining Grady in 2013, he has helped to develop its supplier diversity program to become one of the top in the healthcare industry. "The economic impact of that effort has created countless jobs and quality of life access for so many in the city of Atlanta and across the state," he says.

But the trajectory up has not always been smooth sailing;

perspective has made all the difference. "My life is a true testament that storms are beautiful, and if you stay focused, positive, and faithful, you will come out closer to you purpose, and even prepared for the journey."

One storm Gray can personally reference was 15 years ago, early in his career, when the division he was a part of with a major bank was being outsourced. Prior to that, however, he had volunteered for the company's Corporate Diversity Leadership committee. It was a point of entry that not only allowed him to avoid an inevitable layoff, but also was a defining moment for him in realizing his purpose in diversity and inclusion. "That has been my driving force ever since."

Prior to joining Grady Health System, Gray served as Supplier Diversity manager for CVS Caremark and assistant vice president of Wachovia and Wells Fargo Corporate Supplier Diversity.

His life hack of choice for staying at his best: Cycling. "I fell in love with it a couple a years ago and I call it medicine on wheels. When I'm out in the community on my bike. whether on a casual ride or a quick ride from Ponce City Market to Stone Mountain and back, it's an activity that helps be build mental and physical strength."

Gray contributes civic leadership by serving as vice-chair of the Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council's Board of Directors, the Atlanta Business League Board, and The Villages at Carver Family YMCA Board. As well, he founded an Atlanta community youth development initiative for young men ages 12-17 called P.O.L.I.S.H.E.D. to help young men in the Atlanta Community develop life, social and community involvement skills through tutoring and mentorship.

"I've always valued the principle of stewardship, but I now find different ways in my life to exercise it on a day-today basis. Through this, I'm able to shift my perspective globally enough to understand all the inner workings, but micro enough to know how to motivate and influence change. And equity, at all levels for me, is a critical factor in assuring the vibrancy of our communities. I measure each of my efforts by how it will engage, empower and inspire others." AT

QAADIRAH ABDUR-RAHIM CHANGE AGENT

By Katrice L. Mines

Q aadirah Abdur-Rahim considers herself a status-quo disruptor. Add to that: visionary, strategist, coach, collaborative leader and mentor, and you have a precise character sketch of the Future Foundation's CEO. If anyone needs facts and figures, she's got them. Over the past 12 years as CEO, Abdur-Rahim has grown a team of two to a staff of 40, recruited more than 30 board members, and raised \$25 million-plus in revenue to service four locations and 11,000 students.

It all began with two simple goals of learning as much as she could and working hard every day. "Those two idealistic goals evolved into more formal goals like increase revenue, increase the number of children served and go to business school," she says. All in all, her strategizing has produced.

Abdur-Rahim grew up in Atlanta's South Side, East Point, and College Park — one of five siblings attending low-performing public schools. Seizing what she describes as the opportunity of a lifetime, she attended the University of California, Berkeley, on an athletic scholarship. But while she ran track, Abdur-Rahim struggled academically, insufficiently prepared for higher education by sub-par local schools. The struggle, however, fueled her to dig in even deeper.

The former U.S. Air Force Reservist earned a bachelor's degree in social work before going on to the University of California San Francisco where she earned a master's degree. She then returned to her hometown of Atlanta to make an impact on kids like her. Joining the Future Foundation as a program director, Abdur-Rahim grew the organization founded by Shareef Abdur-Rahim, an East Point youth who went on to stardom in the NBA from a small afterschool program into a phenomenon that brings together the nonprofit, business, and government sectors to empower resilient youth.

"I have always imagined myself using my career to help people. I am happy about where I am professionally and completely excited about the position I am in to do more," Abdur-Rahim says. "I continue to have the most enriching development experience leading and significantly growing a start-up nonprofit. People mention all the time [that] I can go and do anything and make significantly more money working in different sectors. However, over the last six months it's become so clear I am being led by a higher power and purpose to work in the non-profit sector."

A Georgia Education Policy Fellow, Abdur-Rahim has been named one of America's Leaders of Change by the Urban Fellows Program and earned an MBA at Emory University's Goizueta Business School. Moreover, she has developed a "Theory of Change" to address how poverty can be disrupted and alleviated anywhere by giving children access to family, education, health, relationship and life skill support, creating what she calls a "second family environment." Future Foundation participants have a 100 percent high school graduation rate, compared to 70 percent of their peers.

So, what's next for the Future Foundation? Of course ... increase.

Abdur-Rahim recently led its board of directors through a strategy development process that fundamentally shifts the vision of Future Foundation to explicitly move from individual-level impact to more system-level impact. The shift to a system-level focus is to disrupt poverty by coordinating multi-sector resources to improve the high school graduation rates of historically low performing feeder patterns across the state of Georgia. "Understanding the world is rapidly changing and success is occurring across broader business ecosystems, I pushed our board to reexamine our strategy. Our new strategy allows us to scale our work and provide thought leadership in the area of creating social by working across sectors. Disrupting business as usual is always a risk and continues to challenge me in ways I never imagined. However, the outcome of stronger communities is worth the challenge and I am up for it."

The organization launched a new strategic plan in January 2017 that drastically changes its work and requires the organization to grow. On a daily basis, Abdur-Rahim coaches the nonprofit's senior team around how to continuously communicate the vision across the organization and execute revamped operations to support the strategy.

The update was not without hiccups: In implementing the new strategy, Abdur-Rahim said she set a pace that was too fast for the organization's partners and internal team. They collaboratively developed the work, but were not communicating enough about the vision, details and expectations. The potential setback was ultimately a valuable lesson. "I learned that it's not enough to collaboratively lead a process to get buy-in; you need to find creative ways to constantly communicate the shared vision and reinforce the details. We are overcoming the challenge by having a series of 'heartfelt conversations' to improve culture internally and build stronger partner relationships."

Abdur-Rahim continues, "My purpose is centered on being the change I want to see in the world. There are children and adults sitting in poverty stricken communities with the intellect to cure diseases and end global issues like poverty. Yet, they lack the opportunity, access, and exposure to understand their capabilities. As a first generation college graduate and person who grew up in a similar environment, I know firsthand the importance of seeing someone who shares my experience become successful and use their grace and good fortune to empower others. Working in the non-profit sector for me is about surrendering to an inner voice that guides me to live in my purpose." At



JAMEL DACOSTA | PURPOSE DRIVEN

By Kamille D. Whittaker

St. Francis of Assisi once asked to be "blessed with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships ... anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation, so that we may work for justice, freedom, and peace ... and just enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in the world." It is against this pillar of reference that Jamel M. DaCosta says he finds himself — navigating between the junctures of contentment and ambition; audacity in the midst of purpose. "I speak to my mentors, sometimes daily, to discuss my future plans, to share my goals and to get asked the difficult questions. Through those conversations I know if my desires are genuine or if they are for self. So, I know when my ambition isn't a desire to be exalted but to be informed, to support a cause that I'm passionate about, and to offer any assistance that I can."

As such, he keeps Howard Thurman's charge close: "There is something in every one of you that waits and listens for the sound of the genuine in yourself. And if you cannot hear it, you will, all of your life, spend your days on the ends of strings that somebody else pulls."

Distilled in his favorite credo: "Live full; die empty."

Or, in the vernacular of his profession: Input determines output.

DaCosta, after all, is a finance man.

Howard University-groomed and University of Georgia Terry College of Business-molded, he has spent the last decade working as an analyst with one of the nation's largest energy companies, the fourth largest retailer, and currently MARTA, the ninth largest transit system in the United States. Here, he is involved in the research and financial analysis of transit-oriented development projects as well as developing MARTA's 10-year, \$2 billion capital plan. He assists in executing the strategy for the Authority's \$300 million annual capital budget, cash, debt, and grants program; and performing cash flow, variance, and trend analyses, budgeting, modeling, and capital project financial analysis therein; and he took lead on providing financial analysis for proponents responding to RFPs through the Authority's Contract and Procurement team, a touchstone for the city's transit-oriented MBEs.

His position at the turnstile of Atlanta's operational, development and infrastructure sectors has ushered him into civic conversations and roles that require his leadership and acumen: In 2011, Atlanta City Councilwoman Felicia Moore, tapped him to serve on the City of Atlanta's Elected Officials Compensation Committee as co-chair where he was tasked with making a recommendation on salary changes for the mayor, city council, and school board. As a licensed real estate broker, he also serves on the board of City Council District 9's Neighborhood Planning Unit D, and on the executive board of the Atlanta Chapter of the National Black MBA Association as director of Community Affairs. DaCosta is a community man; an Alpha man.

It all started when former NFL player Danny Buggs formed The Winning Circle at his elementary school in DeKalb County. "This organization taught us discipline, history, and brotherhood, and it illustrated the importance of community. Later, I knew I was heading in the right direction when I didn't feel a sense of fulfillment from just my career, but, rather, from being a part of volunteer efforts that impacted others' well-being."

Service to the community is the cornerstone of generational connection, he asserts. "Whether we are spending time with elders with Meals on Wheels Atlanta, building a home with Habitat for Humanity, mentoring with Big Brothers Big Sisters, or planning events with the National Black MBA Association, when you are in the community there is a transfer of knowledge that takes place and you are able to have a better perspective of older/younger generations alike. When we continue to commit to our communities, our perspective of humanity evolves and our appreciation for one another deepens."

And finally, DaCosta is a family man — father, driver, chef, bedtime story reader, yoga partner, hairdresser, stylist to daughter, Gabrielle — and CFO of the DeKalb Kids Project, an educational and leadership organization started by his brothers.

The overarching mission: To provide each child with the necessary tools and skills to fulfill their passions, make their visions a reality and obtain physical, emotional and mental wellness with the assistance of parents, educators and community leaders.

"I was brought up in a single parent home with five siblings and we experienced what it was like not to have. And like many people who go through this, you develop a sink or swim mentality. I'm forever grateful for it because during the times I thought I was sinking God was only developing a stronger swimmer. He surrounded me with community servants teachers, neighbors, crossing guards — who took a vested interest in my success and I am indebted to them. They were selfless and givers of their time. They didn't hold any punches when it came to making sure I didn't end up as a statistic. I am a direct benefactor of their investment in my community, and they were acutely aware that their future and mine were tied together."

When combined with the constant of a praying grandmother, if value is a function of time and investment over time, it all computes.

"Somebody told me once that 'God remembers the prayers of 1,000 generations.' I sometimes think about my ancestors' plight and what they were praying for and I think to myself, if my life represents the culmination of their prayers answered, then I better make good use of it." **AT**

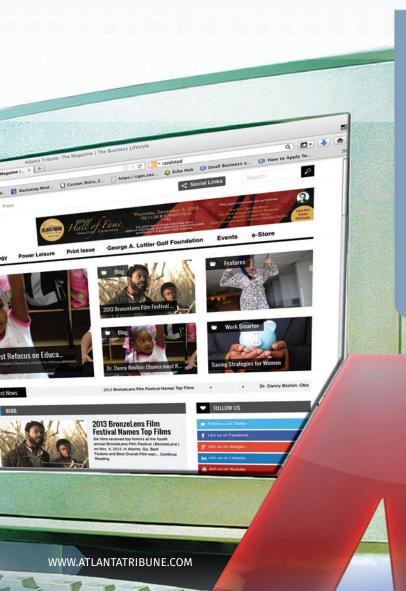
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VENTURE

LOCK IT IN

By Tiara Cole



he fear (and expense) of running out of printed business cards coupled with their inherent limitations is nearing its end. The Electronic Business Card allows Android, Google Play and soon Apple users to go beyond the scope of a 3.5 x 2 paper stock to digitally share resumes, business websites, addresses, emails, social media, create invitations and design flyers all within the convenience of a free mobile app. Self-taught founder and CEO 27-year-old Tonny Mallett-Mosby works alongside marketing director and graphic designer Dwaylon Cunningham and app developer Peter Mastin.

What inspired you to create EBC?

I moved from Milwaukee to Atlanta in 2014. I was working, but making little money, so I started fixing phones on the side to make ends meet. I knew I needed business cards, but didn't have the money to buy them. I thought 'I'll just send my business cards through text to customers instead, that way they can share it with someone else.' This sparked the idea of EBC.

What experiences prepared you to be founder and CEO of a start-up business at such a young age?

I saw first-hand the process and struggles of running a business watching my Uncle Lee develop his T-shirt printing company. I learned early on that little sacrifices will eventually go a long way.

Will there be a boom in mobile apps specifically?

The future of technology is endless, the impossible will be made possible. Apps will continue to boom because they make life simpler.

You're a self-taught technology developer, what was the hardest thing about getting EBC off the ground?

The most difficult part was marketing and getting people to download the app. We're constantly thinking of new strategies and concepts to target new audiences.

Running a business and working full-time can be overwhelming, how do you strike a balance?

There really is no balance, it seems like I'm always working. When I leave my corporate job, I'm working on EBC. I am very grateful for my business partners Dwaylon and Peter, EBC wouldn't have gotten this far without them.

Is there a specific reason you chose the mobile app route instead of an online-based business? What are the advantages?

Working in telecommunications allows me to see the growth of technology. People want everything at their fingertips and so I knew an app would cater to that.

As a fairly new start-up, what long-term goals are in the works for EBC? What's next for your career?

We want to see the app expand its features and grow its users. We'll be happy when EBC becomes a household name.

What advice would you give to other young innovators in the tech industry?

Never give up on your dream. When it seems impossible, always believe in your idea and don't be afraid to fail and start again. **At**

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IN FIVE SHAKIA SMITH CHEMIST

Shakia Smith, a chemist with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is passionate about investigating preventative methods to treat and cure the HIV/AIDS pandemic by utilizing epidemiology and surveillance. Currently pursuing a master's degree at Georgia State University, she is working on a thesis titled, "Awareness and Use of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis among Black Men Who Have Sex with Men in the United States." With more than four years of scientific research experience, Smith has also conducted analyses of individual and population exposures to the chemicals in tobacco products. Her efforts have been focused on the public health outcomes of smoking because of the numerous health risks associated with tobacco exposure. Ultimately, she is aiming for a career as an epidemiologist, public health analyst, or public health advisor at the Centers for Disease Control, and to own a clothing boutique. In April, she began a new role as a post market surveillance specialist in Warsaw, Ind.

AT: What is the most unexpected reality of your job?

Smith: The most unexpected reality of my job is the fact that millions of individuals worldwide still continue to use tobacco products despite the staggering statistics illustrating the harmful public health effects created by using these products. Once addiction is established, it is a difficult habit to break.

AT: Tell me about a time when you almost gave up, how that impacted you and what you did instead.

Smith: Research is a very rewarding field; however, it comes with a cost. Before you can even start a research project, literature searches are conducted to determine what research has already been done on a certain topic. Your goal is to find a gap in the literature which will leave the door open for a researcher to embark on a new exploratory journey. Once a gap is found, one must look for similar studies done on the same subject matter. Often times, there may be little information on the research that you want to conduct. This can be discouraging, so you can do one of two things: start completely over with a new topic or persevere until you find the information that you need for your research. I'm currently dealing with this situation right now as I write my thesis for graduate school. The odds are against me because my research is innovative. However, I won't give up because I'm on the verge of a breakthrough. Instances like these teach you how to be humble and to appreciate the struggle. More than anything, it motivates me.

AT: Did you always know you wanted to be a chemist? What inspired this career path for you?

Smith: Initially, when I attended Georgia Southern University, I wanted to be a pharmacist. However, one semester into my freshman year, I became fascinated with research. I developed a passion for curing and preventing HIV/AIDS, so that sparked my interest in being a scientist. However, by working in public health for over three years now, I know that there is more than one way to prevent HIV/AIDS, and it doesn't require me to work in a lab for the rest of my life. Prevention is the key to stopping this disease from spreading all around the globe.

AT: What motivates you to get out of bed in the morning?

Smith: God motivates me to get up in the morning. We take the simple things for granted: being able to see, hear, walk, run, taste, feel, etc. It could all be gone just like that. I'm just grateful that God even gives me the opportunity to get out of bed. Aside from God, my 6-year-old niece motivates. I am a role model for her and other little black girls. God has ordained us to more than what the world expects us to become, so I work hard everyday to set an example for my niece.

AT: If I came back to check in with you a year from now and you were celebrating a what a great 12 months it's been, what did you achieve?

Smith: Within 12 months, I would have received a promotion at work, finished my master's degree, and I would be writing a business plan for my clothing boutique. At

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LESSONS FROM THE WAY UP

Co-founder of The B Firm: PR Erica Dias is something of a lifestyle connoisseur. The Richmond, Calif., native handles brand management, public relations and event marketing for the firm. In her repertoire, as well, a love and passion for fashion. Dias's more than 10 years of experience in the fashion and beauty industry — styling for Comcast & TIVO commercials, hit TV shows on networks like BET (106 & Park, The Basement) and VH1 — primed her to expand into other arenas of the industry. She decided to not only grow her brand, but also to help heighten the brand of others.

Dias knows the ins and outs of what it takes to get a brand to the next level.

Based in Atlanta since the inception of The B Firm PR, Dias has helped clients expand their brands in markets across the country through public appearances, product launching events and networking. The 31-year-old has made a footprint with her drive, loyalty and determination in making brands from entertainment to fashion a household name.

We sat down with Dias this month for her insights from the way up.

As I reflect about the things that have impacted me, my career and my development, the first thing that comes to mind is having **faith over fear**. As an entrepreneur, fear did play a slight role in the beginning, however one day after looking at my vision board, I reminded myself that I was a child of God and he didn't get me this far to let fear disrupt my purpose. So I chose faith!

Also having a **mentor** has greatly impacted my development. I meet with her once a month, take her to lunch or dinner and we catch up. Having a mentor, has been so helpful because she honestly has a vested interest in my personal growth. She has more experience in my field and is always a phone call away.

When I moved to Atlanta, I didn't know anyone. I would research networking events and go by myself. I wouldn't go home until I gave and received at least six to 10 business cards. When I attend events, I have a plan of action in mind and I am very intentional when I go out. I **network for net worth.**

Another helpful tip that has been really helpful was given to me by my younger sister Ashley Jernigan: **Adult friendships, are strategic partnerships.** Your friends should complement you and help you achieve more. You should NOT be the smartest one of your friends. If you are (and you secretly know it), it is time to start networking to meet new friends — reaching higher heights than you. Not only is this motivation, it keeps you from accepting mediocrity.

Reality: You can't be the Jack or Jackie of all trades and the master of none.

One last thought, which is also a morning mantra that has really helped in my personal development (also borrowed from my sister) is to: Reflect on my past but don't dwell on it; don't neglect the present and direct my future. **AT**

Morgan Freeman SU2C Ambassador Executive Producer of the documentary, The C Word

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in Making the Most Out of Your LinkedIn Profile

Chuck Hester | Chief Connections Officer Chuck Hester Enterprises

ne of the oldest social networks, LinkedIn has 240 million-plus active users and more than 1.7 million user groups and forums. Why should you care about that? Well, if you're using the site to better position yourself professionally, that's good news. According to Chuck Hester - LinkedIn guru - the network is more than a place for jobseekers and recruiters. LinkedIn is ripe for users who are mining for opportunities and prospects. "It is home to sales, customer service, marketing and C-level executives, and small business owners," he says. "I've done everything from refinance my house through a connection on LinkedIn; to my wife, who's a speaker as well, finding the correct shoes she needed to wear so that she could do a sixhour seminar." While the site does include jobseekers, Hester says the majority of users are in a business marketplace looking for business connections and relationships. If that's you, we have a few tips to help you tighten up your profile and usage.

The Home Page

Tip: It's important that you're able to use this entry point for the application because it offers you a snapshot of all the functions available to you as well as eliminating the need for separate email notification.

Your Profile

Tip: One thing to keep in mind is that LinkedIn is an SEO engine, meaning — the use of search engine optimization terms will greatly improve [the chances of] you being found by people utilizing the site's search bar. Employ strong descriptors to describe your role and expertise that situate you within your industry.

Pro-tips: Use your photo, not your company logo, and if you want to go a step further in engagement – you can now add video in the summary section of your profile. Also, any section of your profile that displays up and down arrows can be moved to emphasize what information you want most prominent.

Contact Information

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Tip: Make sure your contact information is current and label the websites you list specifically so that users know exactly where to go to access information they want from you. If you have not already, enhance your personal brand by creating a custom URL for your LinkedIn public profile. (How: On your profile page, click Edit your public profile in the right rail. Under the section Edit public profile URL in the right rail, click the Edit icon next to your public profile URL.)

Pro-tip: Build your recommendations by recommending others first and then asking them for one in return.

Company Pages

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Tip: It's an excellent way to promote your company or business like an online brochure. Use it to share your products and services, build a community, gain recommendations and drive traffic to your actual website.

LinkedIn and Your Professional Brand

Tip: LinkedIn really is a professional business social network. It's not like Facebook where you'd share what you had for dinner last night or where you're taking your children on vacation; it is about business. Be transparent – be the same person you are across all social networks that you're involved with. Treat your connections like they're physically in front of you, and you'll get a lot more engagement as a result. If you are open to opportunities, they will come.

Pro-tip: Stay in touch with your network and be a part of the community. AT

Most Common Mistakes in Using LinkedIn

- Don't sell, have a conversation.
- Don't be something you're not. Social media is about transparency.
- Listen, don't broadcast.
- Avoid flooding your media network with your marketing messages.
- Once you've established a relationship, don't abuse it for your marketing and PR purposes.
- Measure your results while using social media. For instance, if you'd started a company page – decide whether it's more important for you to gain followers or that your content is being shared frequently.
- Personalize your company by having real people not logos as a part of the presentation.



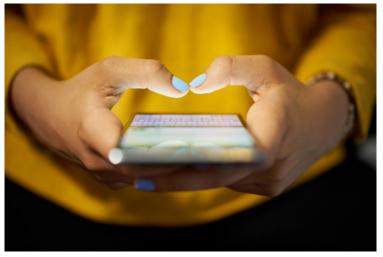
About the Author:

Brent Leary is a partner of CRM Essentials. He is co-author of "Barack 2.0: Social Media Lessons for Small Business." You can follow him on Twitter at twitter.com/brentleary

Tips for Using Facebook to Engage Customers from Facebook's Ciara Viehweg

growing number of small businesses are posting videos on Facebook, and millions of them are advertising on the platform. And small businesses are investing more in Instagram's advertising platform as well, which leverages Facebook's targeting tools to help them connect with the right prospective audience.

During a conversation I recently had with Ciara Viehweg of Facebook's SMB Community Engagement Team, she shared how small businesses are leveraging Facebook's platform to engage customers and prospects. Below are a few key points from our conversation.



How many small businesses are using Facebook today? Viehweg: There are already 50 million businesses with

Facebook Pages, and 3 million advertising on Facebook. What we're hearing from small businesses is that they're on there because it works, it's incredibly easy to use and it's mobile, which is where the world is today.

What trends are you seeing from your small business customers?

Viehweg: The first is mobile; businesses are telling us there is no better place than Facebook and Instagram to reach their customers because it's a mobile-friendly platform and people are spending more time on their mobile devices. One out of five mobile minutes are being spent on Facebook and Instagram so it's so important for small businesses to be where their customers are, which is why so many of them are really leveraging Facebook to reach their customers.

We're actually seeing a lot of small businesses using mobile devices to reach their customers. Over a third of active advertisers who are exclusively advertising using just their mobile device, which is a really cool trend to see.

I would say the other trend we're seeing is video. Businesses are telling us they absolutely love video because it's providing them a unique way to show behind the scenes what's going on in their business; invite their customers into their actual stores to see what's going on. There are over a million and a half small businesses that posted videos in the last month alone, which is really exciting.

Are there some underutilized tools that SMBs could be taking advantage?

Viehweg: We know businesses have very limited time and money, and our goal is to be the best marketing minute and dollars that businesses spend. It's important for businesses to ensure that they're using the Facebook Page Insight and Facebook Ad Insight tools we offer. They're free products and services that provide a wealth of information on who is interacting with their pages, and the actual ROI they're receiving on their ad. We're finding the businesses that are really leveraging these insights and targeting on Facebook are the ones having the most success.

How can small businesses get started using Facebook from a business perspective?

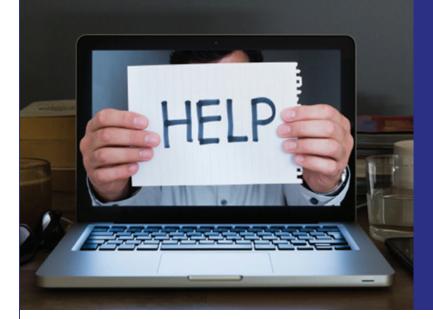
Viehweg: The first place, I would say, is our Facebook for Business page. There are tons of videos, great articles, and lots of success stories that you can sort by vertical to see what businesses like yours are having success on Facebook.

I would also say Facebook Blueprint. There are over 50 courses that you can take that teach you everything you need to know about marketing on Facebook and Instagram, and every single course is absolutely free.

Businesses are telling us that they are so excited about Instagram, so we also have an Instagram for Business page, a great resource to see some of the trends; to learn a little bit more about hashtag; get some support; and see what other businesses are doing well on Instagram. **AT**



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THE PEACE AND THE DRAMA

By Kamille D. Whittaker

W y mother's family hails from Bois Content, Jamaica in the hills north of Old Harbour Bay, on the South Coast of the island. My father lives in Linstead – of "Linstead Market" fame – an outlying lowland suburb, of sorts, to Kingston. My own house in the "land of wood and water" is 1.5 miles up a winding incline in the Prospect hamlet of the St. Mary parish, on the north coast.

Jamaica is home.

If you keep driving east along the coastline, you'll soon bend the curves of the little town of Oracabessa. Its commercial district consists of a covered produce market and a few shops and bars. The main street is a narrow promenade with a number of well-maintained buildings, vestiges of Jamaica's Spanish colonial run. The easternmost edge of this town – miles from the buoyant Ocho Rios and the lush Port Antonio is GoldenEye Hotel and Resort's home.

It's important to point out the sense of place – that Jamaica, Oracabessa specifically, is indeed GoldenEye's chosen home and not just some arbitrary island placement. Oracabessa Bay and Fisherman's Beach – once Jamaica's busiest banana loading port – and its labyrinthine coves, cays and caves are staples and participants in the surrounding ecosystem. There's not much that separates you – or the feel – from the outside-in for those in search of a rootsy chic aesthetic that's just mystical enough to remain aspirational. We *are* talking about one of James Bond's literary playgrounds after all. Ian Fleming, who penned all 14 Bond novels here called out the generative "peace and drama" of living and creating by the sea.

Island Records founder Chris Blackwell then transformed what started as Ian Fleming's writer retreat into a 52-acre, post-cool, post-glamour respite cut out of Oracabessa Bay, the flagship of Blackwell's Island Outpost properties.

As if it needed more to make it perfect, they added 26 one- and two-bedroom beach huts to the inventory of

lagoon cottages and shore line-fronting villas.

Octagonal in shape to permit more natural light and to enclose space more efficiently than its square counterpart, the free standing, pastel-stained wooden structures jut out at varying heights above the sand, and have their own new beachside bar, and freshwater pool, centered in between Snorkeler's cove and Button Beach.

"Inside," luxury linen, a canopy bed and rich touches of locally inspired design accent the sturdy wood. They all boast indoor and outdoor showers and waterfront or fauna-facing terraces.

A complimentary bottle of the requisite Blackwell Rum adorns every mini bar, also stocked with local treats like plantain chips and rum cake. In fact, all restaurants here serve up locally grown fruits and vegetables and, most importantly, national dishes like ackee and saltfish, callalloo, curry goat, Fish tea, jerk chicken – there is no limit.

There is also no air conditioning – precisely the point. The huts narrow the rind between indoor and outdoor living; strategically positioned and designed to maximize the best of the elements. Vaulted ceilings that crest louvered windows volley currents of idle breezes from the ocean and hills and panoramic views, for good measure.

At nighttime is the true test – inky black spills all around you with faint sounds of the nightlife, in the distance. I'm always amazed at the gentleness with which the wind would foreshadow its own eminent frenzy in Jamaica. Just before the storm, the air ceases being muggy, overbearing, and stifling. The mosquitoes seem to scatter. And the gentle wind caresses you with a cunning compassion that – if you did not know what it foretold – would lull you into a calm. In the hut, you were safe and sound.

At 3:02 a.m. one night, the rain came ferociously. And it was glorious. **At**



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2017 VOLVO V90 CROSS COUNTRY: Paradigm Shift for the Brickmaker

By Brian Armstead

hroughout its storied history, Volvo, the once Swedish brand now owned by Geely of China, has long been known for safety, but less-than-stellar styling.

The 2017 Volvo V90 Cross Country continues to uphold Volvo's safety legacy in a major way. Check the standard list of safety equipment and you'll be reading for a while. Although Volvos have been known for safety, they've also been known for boring, lackluster styling. Well cancel all of those thoughts, as the 2017 V90 Cross Country can only be described as one word: Sexy. I know that doesn't even sound right, but it's true — style is now a serious part of the Volvo equation. The new S90, XC90 and now V90 and V90 Cross Country are testament to a paradigm shift for the manufacturer that used to build cars known as "Swedish Bricks."

The 2017 Volvo V90 Cross Country's exterior styling is lean and muscular. The most dramatic view is from the side, where optional 21-inch wheels fill the rugged, plastic clad wheel wells. Up front, headlamps styled similar to 'Thor's hammer' complete the styling of a vehicle that combines luxury, safety utility and swagger in the best looking wagon Volvo's ever built. Step inside the V90 Cross Country and you'll experience what Volvo deems "The Scandinavian Sanctuary, where form and function equals beauty." With the 2017 Volvo V90 Cross Country, it's not just about the amount of standard and available interior content. The interior really makes its mark by harmoniously melding all interior components.

FASTLANE

In case you were wondering, the Cross Country in the V90's name means you get an impressive 8.3 inches of ground clearance, that's 2.3 inches over the base V90 Wagon. On smooth roads the 2017 V90 Cross Country is equally impressive. Clearly, extensive engineering has gone into the execution of the noise, vibration and harshness characteristics of the new wagon. Now, one should not equate supple ride quality with a lack of performance, as the V90 Cross Country powertrain features a 3.0-liter supercharged and turbocharged engine.

The 2017 Volvo V90 Cross Country is a very solid buy for active lifestyle families, couples, and those who just want one of the coolest sports wagons on the planet. Prices begin at \$55,300 and can rocket towards \$80,000 if you select all factory and dealer installed options. **At**

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BLISSBEHAVIN' AT UNITED STATES ARMY AVIATION MUSEUM

Photography by Courtland C. Bivens III

Fort Rucker, Alabama



hroughout the year there are many commemorative holidays that present opportunities to honor veterans and members of the armed forces who've sacrificed blood, sweat and tears through selfless service. The most popular is Veterans Day, a federal holiday celebrated on Nov. 11 as a tribute to those who have risked their lives to defend the freedom of others. Then, there's Armed Forces Day on May 20, a day set aside to recognize personnel who are currently serving in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard.

Veterans Day and Armed Forces Day activities commonly include touring memorials and monuments across the nation, attending air shows and parades, visiting the sick or wounded at veteran hospitals and creating 'care packages' to ship to military personnel stationed abroad. Throughout former President Barack Obama's terms in office, he urged citizens to learn more about military service by patronizing or participating in organizations and programs that support troops.

A 'learning getaway' to the United States Army Aviation Museum in Fort Rucker, Ala., granted me a greater appreciation of our country's aviation heritage of duty, valor and personal courage.





Channeling Bessie Coleman

Taking Flight: Accompanied by my husband, a former military aviator, I donned aviator couture as a tribute to Bessie Coleman, the first woman of African-American and Native American descent to hold a pilot's license. We were hosted by museum curator Robert Mitchell, who graciously spent an afternoon introducing us to vintage aircrafts (the museum maintains a collection of over 160 military planes), extensive photo archives, audio and video oral histories, and other memorabilia.

Major exhibits included the Vietnam Memorial for the 4,347 Army aviation personnel who paid the ultimate sacrifice for their country. The Army Aviation Hall of Fame recognizes individuals whose contributions significantly impacted Army aviation and riveting displays dating back to pre-WWI.

I admired magnificently restored one of a kind aircraft displays inside the museum's 70,000 square feet of exhibition space. Coleman was working as a manicurist when she initially became intrigued with aircraft, inspired by stories of World War I pilots. She moved to France to earn her wings due to being prohibited from receiving flight instruction in the United States. It was not until World War II that African-American male pilots were permitted into the U.S. Armed Forces in an all African-American 332nd Fighter Group led by Benjamin O. Davis. It was 1979 before the first African-American woman completed military pilot training.

I was especially captivated by the museum's modest but momentous acquisition of items that recognize pioneering black female aviators. The collection includes a photo of Lieutenant Marcella Hayes, the first commissioned African-American Aviator; and the uniform of Chief Warrant Officer Sheila Pressley, a AH-64 Pilot and warrior of the War in Irag.





Reaching New Heights: Countless schools nationwide, mainly from the Tri-State region (Alabama, Florida, and Georgia), tour the Army Aviation Museum. You, too, can discover the rich history of aviation by visiting the museum.www.armyaviationmuseum.org. Old "Army Aviation warhorses" with a story to tell are urged to contribute oral histories to museum historians to supplement ongoing research. **At**



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"With this being my last year as a scholarship recipient, I am going to take everything I've learned from Ms. Mary, as well as other recipients, and use it to push me through life and its' endeavors. Being a part of SWM has inculcated a sense of purpose that will embrace lifelong learning." - Brittany, Scholarship Recipient



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WEEK**ENDER**



Get reacquainted with this eclectic creativity hub.



Get Vintage

Vintage clothing stores in the city are hard to come by. But Ram-O-Rama's styles are at capacity with retro, alternative, hipster wear for men and women.

Night Cap

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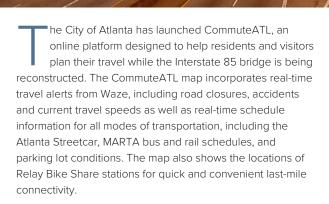
Enjoy live music, good vibes, and creative tacos at Tijuana Garage. The restaurant offers delicious and conveniently priced Mexican food with margaritas and fiesta flavors ready on arrival.

Tour the Art

Intellectual curiosity and creative juices are flowing through the offbeat and funky corridors of Moreland and Euclid Avenues.



techbyte



CommuteATL

"For the next several weeks, the City of Atlanta asks the public to choose transit, tele-commute, and use ride-sharing services as much as possible," said Deputy Chief Operating Officer and Public Works Commissioner William Johnson. "We hope CommuteATL will assist people as they make plans to travel to work, to school, or to any of the special events happening in our city. As we work to mitigate traffic congestion, our primary focus is preserving access for our first responders and to hospitals. We want everyone to make it to their destination safely, and we hope this new tool can help in this effort."

As motorists look for different routes to commute to work

and school, the City is taking proactive steps to protect residential streets and neighborhoods which are not designed to accommodate heavy traffic. These measures include prohibiting non-local traffic in certain areas while work on the Interstate 85 bridge is ongoing. The City has also increased staffing for its traffic-management operations. Engineers will make real-time adjustments to signals to keep increased traffic volume moving on major thoroughfares, which should alleviate the need to take smaller side streets.

"CommuteATL.com is a place for Atlanta residents to get real-time awareness of traffic and road conditions in the region and discover the various transportation options they have to move around our city. Our team is excited about continuing to add additional real-time, interactive mapping features to the site over the coming weeks," said Samir Saini, chief information officer for the City of Atlanta.

The City was able to launch CommuteATL through two essential partnerships — the Waze Connected Citizen Program, a free data-sharing partnership, and the 100 Resilient Cities network, a \$100 million investment by the Rockefeller Foundation to make cities more resilient to the physical, social, and economic challenges that are a growing part of the 21st century. **AT**

Tip Sheet

Small Business Financing: Securing a Loan

A t some point, most small businesses owners will visit a bank or other lending institution to borrow money. Understanding what your bank wants, and how to properly approach them, can mean the difference between getting your money for expansion and having to scrape through finding cash from other sources.

Understand the basic principles of banking

Your chances of receiving a loan will greatly improve if you can see your proposal through a banker's eyes and appreciate the position that they are coming from. Banks have a responsibility to government regulators, depositors, and the community in which they reside. While a bank's cautious perspective may be irritating to a small business owner, it is necessary in order to keep the depositors' money safe, the banking regulators happy, and the economic health of the community growing.

Each banking institution is different

Banks differ in the types of financing they make available, interest rates charged, willingness to accept risk, staff expertise, services offered, and in their attitudes toward small business loans.

Selection of a bank is essentially limited to your choices from the local community. Typically, banks outside of your area of business are not as anxious to make loans to your firm because of the higher costs of checking credit and of collecting the loan in the event of default.

Furthermore, a bank will typically not make business loans to any size business unless a checking account or money market account is maintained at that institution. Ultimately your task is to find a business-oriented bank that will provide the financial assistance, expertise, and services your business requires now and is likely to require in the future.

Build rapport

Building a favorable climate for a loan request should begin long before the funds are actually needed. The worst possible time to approach a new bank is when your business is in the throes of a financial crisis. Devote time and effort to building a background of information and goodwill with the bank you choose and get to know the loan officer you will be dealing with early on.

Bankers are essentially conservative lenders with an overriding concern for minimizing risk. Logic dictates that this is best accomplished



by limiting loans to businesses they know and trust. One way to build rapport and establish trust is to take out small loans, repay them on schedule, and meet all requirements of the loan agreement in both letter and spirit. By doing so, you gain the bankers trust and loyalty, and he or she will consider your business a valued customer and make it easier for you to obtain future financing.

Provide the information your banker needs to lend you money

Lending is the essence of the banking business and making mutually beneficial loans is as important to the success of the bank as it is to the small business. This means that understanding what information a loan officer seeks--and providing the evidence required to ease normal banking concerns--is the most effective approach to getting what is needed.

A sound loan proposal should contain information that expands on the following points:

- What is the specific purpose of the loan?
- Exactly how much money is required?
- What is the exact source of repayment for the loan?
- What evidence is available to substantiate the assumptions that the expected source of repayment is reliable?
- What alternative source of repayment is available if management's plans fail?
- What business or personal assets, or both, are available to collateralize the loan?
- What evidence is available to substantiate the competence and ability of the management team?
- Even a brief examination of these points suggests the need for you to do your homework before making a loan request because an experienced loan officer will ask probing questions about each of them.

Before you apply for a loan here's what you should do:

1. Write a Business Plan

Your loan request should be based on and accompanied by a complete business plan. A business plan is more than a device for getting financing; it is the vehicle that makes you examine, evaluate, and plan for all aspects of your business. Once you've put the plan together, write a two-page executive summary. You'll need it if you are asked to send "a quick write-up."

2. Have an accountant prepare historical financial statements.

You can't talk about the future without accounting for your past. Internally generated statements are OK, but your bank wants the comfort of knowing an independent expert has verified the information. In addition, you must understand your statement and be able to explain how your operation works and how your finances stand up to industry norms and standards.

3. Line up references.

Your banker may want to talk to your suppliers, customers, potential partners or your team of professionals, among others. When a loan officer asks for permission to contact references, promptly answer with names and numbers; don't leave him or her waiting for a week.

Walking into a bank and talking to a loan officer will always be something of a stressful situation. Preparation for and thorough understanding of this evaluation process is essential to minimize the stressful variables and optimize your potential to qualify for the funding you seek. **At**

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Spring Fling! COCONUT, LIME, RASPBERRY & ROSE POPSICLES

returned from a quick getaway to the beach over the weekend that left me relishing spring and all its vibes more than ever. Back home and searching for kitchen inspiration to keep the mood flowing, it wasn't long before my musings turned to the yummy, refreshing and whimsical world of popsicles.

I've had these darlings on my radar for quite a while, with the boxed popsicle molds sitting at the ready for about a year now as a testament. But the moment finally arrived when spring fever, coupled with my child-like obsession for all things frosty, could no longer be denied.

Enter my homespun (but delightfully scrumptious — and figure friendly) concoction of slightly sweet, tart, floral and citrus-y popsicles. The blend of coconut water, freshly squeezed lime juice, rose water, and elderflower cordial with fresh raspberries for their gorgeous aesthetic effect and tart bite, produced my newest favorite snack that's sure to keep me noshing throughout the remaining days of spring, into the summer, and beyond.



Ingredients:

2 cups coconut water Juice of 2 limes Teaspoon of rose water 2 tablespoons elderflower cordial Fresh raspberries

Method:

Combine coconut water, lime juice, rose water and elderflower cordial. Fill popsicle molds halfway with mixture and add fresh raspberries. Freeze for about 40 minutes. Remove molds from freezer and fill with remaining mixture and top off with more berries. Freeze overnight and enjoy! (Cook's Note: Run molds under warm water if difficult to remove.) **AT**



Dawn M. Richards is the founder of the food and lifestyle brand, D.M.R. Fine Foods. With her food passion leading the way, Dawn shares recipes, travel stories, fashion, entertainment and lifestyle features on dmrfinefoods. blogspot.com and other media outlets, while maintaining a career as a *FORTUNE 500* legal executive.

ONE MORE THING



Changing Seasons with Interior Designer Michel Smith Boyd

By Tiara Cole

ichel Smith Boyd's passion for interior design can best be described as a marriage between architecture and fashion. He successfully combines the two by capturing luxury design while complementing many design styles and on-trend fashion choices at once, and has become one of the most sought out interior designers in the Atlanta area.

No stranger to the urge many feel to rearrange their decorative spaces as seasons change, expect to see more colors — rich palettes, bright colors and jewel tones — in Boyd's work as summer approaches, building on his typical repertoire of fashion-forward layers, patterns, textures, and textiles with classic furniture silhouettes.

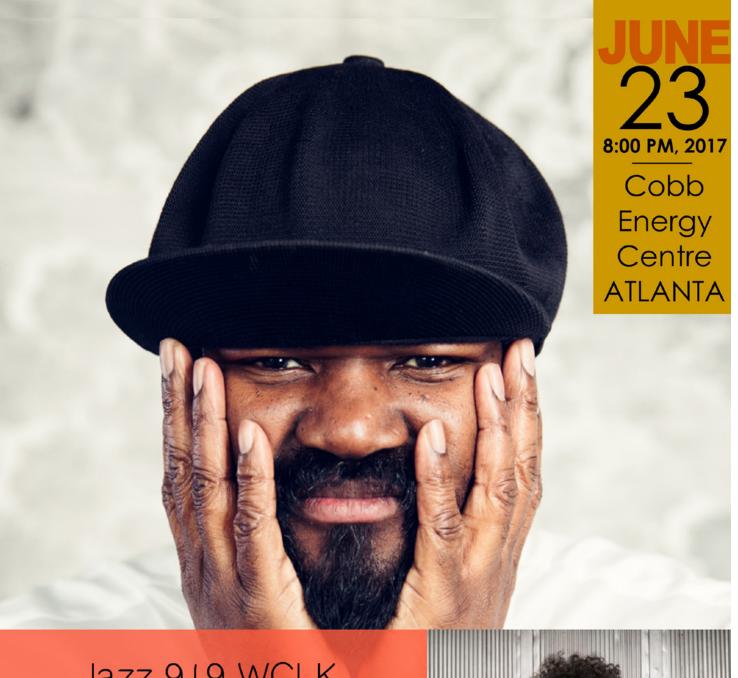
"Clients who want lots of color in their spaces have a distinctive personality. They're confident in making bold statements and want to be inspired," he says. "They want their own sanctuary where they can come in and turn off their busy lives." It is particularly important, he notes, for designers to know how to adjust the foundation of a home according to the season. His approach: Opting for neutral and cool grey toned walls, rugs, and sofas, while allowing less expensive items to incorporate the color. Timeless core furniture pieces, he explains, will

allow for easy, cost effective updates when seasons change.

Boyd's motto while designing is making sure clients understand what he is communicating. "I am constantly inspired by other designers in all forms. Filmmakers, photographers, and musicians all have their own unique way of communicating their point of view to their audiences. So if you don't get it, I didn't do my job." **A**T







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