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July + August

FEATURES

25

BUSINESS OWNERS OF THE YEAR

By Katrice L. Mines and Kamille D. Whittaker
Best practices and expert execution – we salute the business owners of the year.

34, 36, 38

TECH ON DECK

By Donnell Suggs and Leah McDaniel
These three pioneers are pushing the boundaries of Atlanta's tech terrain.

41

2017 SCHOLARSHIP GUIDE

By Taylor Lee and Tra'Keiyah Carter
Where there's a will there's a way ... to fund college.

50, 63

SUMMER TRAVEL

By Katrice L. Mines
Leisurely, but luxe, weekend jaunts to San Juan and Miami.

San Juan Marriott Resort
Outdoor Terrace

38



60



41



57



POWER

current

- 9 What You're Saying**
- 14 Behind the Scenes**
Vikki Millender-Morrow is National Black Arts Festival's New President and CEO
- 15 Higher Learning**
Emory Launches Initiative to Maximize Student Development
- 17 Venture**
Home Grown
- 64 Tidbits**
Jerrold Hill, New to Atlanta Habit Board

affairs

- 18 Tax Smarts**
Filing an Amended Tax Return
By Steve Julal
- 23 Attorney's Corner**
Meet the Judge: Justice Robert Benham, Supreme Court of Georgia
By Judge Terrinee L. Gundy, Municipal Court of Atlanta

tech suite

- 46 Technology for Business**
Get Ready for 'The Voice'
By Brent Leary

commentary

- 11 The Editor's View**
By Katrice L. Mines

LEISURE

- 50 Getaway To**
San Juan Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino
- 52 Hot Spot**
Gadgets You Won't Want to Live Without
- 55 The LookOut**
What I Want Now ...
- 57 FastLane**
2018 Volkswagen Atlas
- 58 Weekender**
Day-Cay: Staycation Getaway
- 59 To Do**
July/August Happenings
- 60 Travel**
Blissbehavin' in Cefalù, Sicily
- 63 Getaway To**
The Ritz-Carlton Key Biscayne, Miami
- 64 TechByte**
Must-Have Apps for Small Biz Owners
- 65 Tipsheet**
Integrate New Technology
- 67 For the Love of Food**
Flavor-Full: Grilled Caesar Salad
- 68 One More Thing**
Atlanta Business Community Mourns the Passing of William "Bill" Taggart



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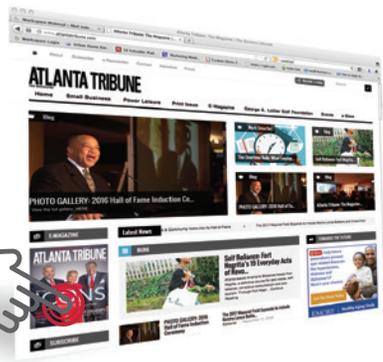


Dawn M. Richards is the founder of the food and lifestyle brand, D.M.R. Fine Foods. With her food passion leading the way, Dawn shares recipes, travel stories, fashion, entertainment and lifestyle features on dmrfinerfoods.blogspot.com and other media outlets, while maintaining a career as a **FORTUNE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



Born and raised in (Park Slope) Brooklyn, N.Y., **Donnell Suggs** has been a newspaper reporter and editor for over a decade. He is currently the Sports Editor at the *Houston Home Journal* in Perry, Ga. Along with his duties there, he also freelances for *The Undeafated*, the *Atlanta Voice* and **Atlanta Tribune: The Magazine**. A diehard New York Mets and Jets fan, he lives in metro Atlanta with his wife and two kids.

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ON THE DEATH OF MOREHOUSE COLLEGE INTERIM PRESIDENT WILLIAM TAGGART:

"Oh no! I just saw him at the @ABL1933 event. So sad."
– Montina Portis | @montinaportis

"I am saddened by the passing of Morehouse College Interim President William Taggart. Bill was a respected businessman, a devoted father and husband, and a civic leader dedicated to our city.

He has served Morehouse College with distinction for the past two years, providing steady leadership for one of the nation's best HBCUs and one of the most important educational institutions in the City of Atlanta.

My thoughts and prayers are with Bill's family and with the entire Morehouse community. For all his accomplishments, I know Bill had so much still to give. This is a loss we will feel for a generation."

– Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed

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– Chef G. Garvin | @chefgarvin

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– DIH, JD | @Dominiga

🐦 "Shouts to @atlantatribune and Editor @MyVicariousLyfe for respecting the freelance journalist process & not going down the #EbonyOwes route"
– Donnell Suggs | @suggswriter

Hello **Atlanta Tribune**, I'm host of the Talk with Green Guy Show in Atlanta, GA on WGST 640AM/iHeart Radio, every Sunday 9a-10a EST.

I admire and follow the stories you cover and this June Edition is outstanding!
– Eric Moncrief

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THE EDITOR'S VIEW



Even if you have not had the desire to own a business or have never felt particularly entrepreneurial, a good hearty chat with the right entrepreneur can spark something in you to wonder if you possess of bit of that spirit as well. Trust me, it happens to me almost monthly in my conversations with the individuals who are featured in the pages of **Atlanta Tribune: The Magazine**. I have witnessed, firsthand, budding companies at their very beginning mature into well-established and respected firms. And I am so often captivated by the successful brands they've built from the ground up – not just because they've "made it" but by what it is that drives them and compels them forward. Many of the people you read about in the magazine are enterprise owners that we've come to know through AT conferences and events as they're earnestly gleaning from the experts we feature in the magazine and in the face-to-face forums we host. We see them making the right connections and growing right before our eyes from one year to the next. So, when I read their stories and learn about the nuances of what is behind the brands, I see economic drivers and community builders who inspire me to keep searching out these stories. I always believe that even if you haven't had a one-on-one with someone to give you the push you need to launch out, mentoring is multifaceted ... and it even happens in the pages of this three-decade-old periodical.

This month, read about the companies we are saluting as our 2017 Minority Business Owners of the Year – Steve and Shawn Bromell of Pro Cutters, Ravi Chander and Sushumna Roy Jalajam of Softpath, Josie Alexander of Alexander & Associates, and Kenneth Loyd of South Coast Paper. And take what you need. **AT**



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INTRO

What You Should
Know Now

Our News This Month

current 14
business affairs 18
tech suite 46



*The Ritz-Carlton Key Biscayne is just the right destination for a quick weekend getaway from Atlanta. See why we're loving it on **pg. 63.***

VIKKI MILLENDER-MORROW

is National Black Arts Festival's New President and CEO

Vikki Millender-Morrow is the new president and CEO for the National Black Arts Festival.

Since it was founded by the Fulton County Arts Council under the guidance of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners in Atlanta over 29 years ago, the National Black Arts Festival has built a proud reputation as the oldest multidisciplinary arts organization in the United States focused exclusively on the arts and artists of African descent. NBAF was established with the first festival in 1988 after a study commissioned two years earlier by Michael Lomax, then Chairman of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners.

With strong leadership and support from the community, the festival, which is the centerpiece of NBAF's mission, has evolved into an annual showcase of artists of African descent who are creating, innovating and producing extraordinary work in the disciplines of dance, film, literature, music, theater and visual art. Over its three-decade long history, NBAF has attracted millions of audiences from within the region, across the country and around the world who are entertained, educated and enriched by its annual summer festival, world class performances, visual arts presentations and commissioned works and by its year-round education and public programs. By featuring artists from the African Diaspora, from the United States, Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and Latin America, NBAF promotes art and culture as vehicles for bringing diverse communities together.

Over the years, NBAF has featured acclaimed artists Maya Angelou, Wynton Marsalis, Pearl Cleage, Harolyn Blackwell, Vernetta Honeywood, Spike Lee, Katherine Dunham, Harry Belafonte, Maurice Hines, Maxi Priest, Sonia Sanchez, Radcliffe Bailey, Bill T. Jones, Youssou N'Dour, Carrie Mae Weems, Julie Dash, Amiri Baraka, Tito Puente, Ousmane Sembene, National Ballet de Guinea, Gladys Knight, Les Nubians, Philadanco, The Heath Brothers, Cicely Tyson, August Wilson, Alfre Woodard, Angie Stone, Omar Sosa, Jessica Care Moore, Nikki Giovanni, Russell Gunn, Gregory Porter, among many others.

Millender-Morrow is a seasoned nonprofit leader with over a decade of effective operational and strategic leadership at nonprofits in Atlanta including Jane Fonda's nonprofit, GCAPP, following a successful career with a *Fortune 100* company. She is the board chair of the Atlanta Jazz Festival and previously served on the board of the National Black Arts Festival. Millender-Morrow has an engineering degree and a master's in Public and Private Management.

She transitioned from a successful 20-year career in management at AT&T (Bellsouth) where she held positions in Engineering, Sales, Product Management, Regulatory and External Affairs and Human Resources, learning all aspects of the business, to move into nonprofit management. Millender-Morrow is a multi-dimensional leader. She uses the system's approach of an engineer to right size programs and improve processes; the talent development model of a human resources executive to build and sustain excellent teams; experience in governance to enhance the board and help develop an accountable five-year strategic plan; along with the tenacity and courage to lead an organization through dynamic times. Millender-Morrow made Atlanta her home 20 years ago. **AT**





SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN \$17 BILLION TO THE STATE OF GEORGIA FOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS SINCE JUNE OF 1993.

EMORY LAUNCHES INITIATIVE TO MAXIMIZE STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Aimed at undergraduates and new graduate students, the Emory Initiative to Maximize Student Development seeks to diversify the STEM workforce through mentoring, seminars and career coaching.

Last semester, a diverse group of 50 students gathered to learn about the art of storytelling from Eladio Abreu, a lecturer in the biology department. The weekly seminar was part of IMSD, aimed at the professional development of undergraduate and graduate students in STEM fields. What sets the program apart is its commitment to increase diversity in the biological, biomedical and behavioral sciences by nurturing students who may be underrepresented in these fields. The program includes some of Emory's strongest students, according to Amanda James, IMSD assistant director.

The two-year, NIH-funded research program has three main goals: preparing undergraduate students for doctoral programs in STEM fields, nurturing graduate students during their matriculation into Emory's PhD programs and increasing diversity through mentoring. And it accomplishes these goals by connecting undergraduates and graduates through mentorship, seminars and career coaching, says Keith Wilkinson, IMSD director and vice-chair of the Department of Biochemistry.

In addition to weekly seminars, IMSD offers classes aimed at increasing success post-graduation, workshops for career development and pathways to funded research, a rare commodity for undergraduates. Students who can't do funded research may use resources that IMSD offers to find other opportunities.

Lina Jowhar is an undergraduate who started the program in her third year at Emory. She is engaged in research on cystic fibrosis, a genetic disorder of the lungs, and she values the weekly meetings, particularly Abreu's lecture on the art of storytelling.

"I love his interactive teaching style," she says. "He was comfortable letting us know that he changed the examples in his PowerPoint to include Biggie and Tupac, which showed me how important it is to connect with your audience."

Like Jowhar, Jaleyah Walker has enjoyed a positive experience in the weekly lectures. A third-year psychology student and IMSD associate, she says that even a lecture about the future of the pharmaceutical industry, despite not pertaining to her major, helped her answer questions like, "Should I go into a post-doc program?"

As a black, first-generation college student, these questions are important. Walker praises one of the earlier weekly seminars in which IMSD graduate students led an open forum. Walker says she appreciates having an outlet for these conversations, in which students address topics that may bring feelings of vulnerability.

The program focuses heavily on mentorship and relationships between the students and program leaders, Emory faculty and IMSD alumni. Graduate students are frequently paired with a small group of undergraduates for breakout sessions during seminars and many mentor their undergraduate counterparts.



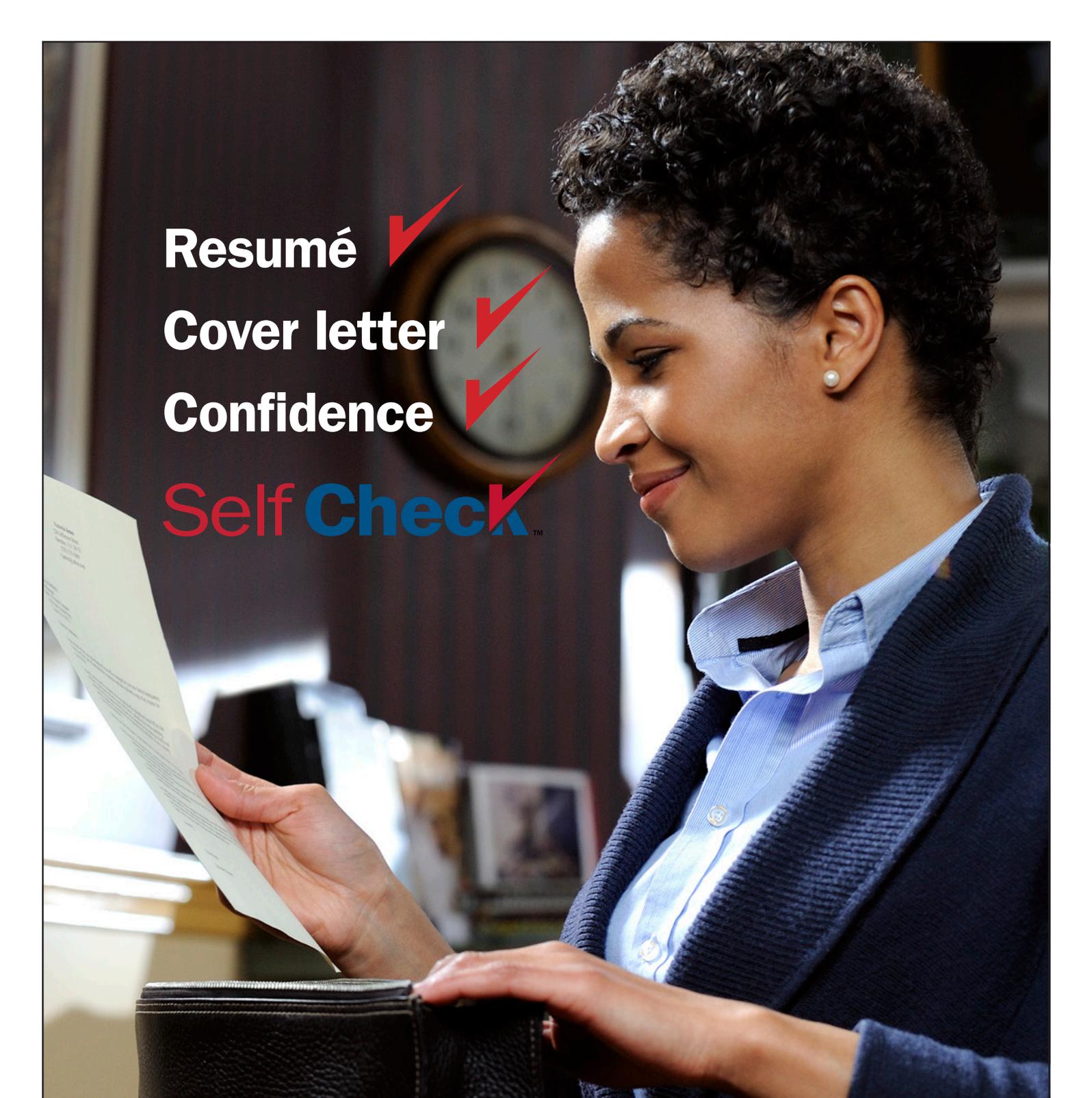
"Everyone who succeeds has a good mentor," says Pat Marsteller, undergraduate director of IMSD and a professor of practice in the biology department.

The program is dedicated to "improving mentoring cultures and nurturing talent from underrepresented student groups," says graduate director Eddie Morgan, professor of pharmacology.

As IMSD assistant director, James has been able to build an especially strong rapport with students; for example, she helped Walker work in lab with individuals who were familiar with being a first-generation college student. James says she strengthens her relationship with students by "finding shared experiences and opening up about her personal struggles," which helps them feel comfortable discussing their own issues and concerns.

This summer, IMSD undergraduates will participate in internships. Some will be part of Emory's Summer Research Programs, formerly known as the SURE (Summer Undergraduate Research at Emory) program, that Marsteller began 28 years ago; others will be going off-site to similar programs promoting undergraduate research like the Leadership Alliance at Brown or the Howard Hughes Medical Institute EXROP program.

Meanwhile, Wilkinson, Marsteller and James will focus their attention on preparing for the new graduate fellows and planning for next year. While happy about how things are going, Wilkinson is looking ahead for expansion — he hopes to soon have a regular bus service from Atlanta University Center and other schools in the area so that more students can participate in the weekly seminars and join the research community. **AT**



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Kenya Brantley's general store-inspired Greenhouse Mercantile has a little bit of everything — candles, specialty food items, an amazing apothecary section, all natural cleaning products, jewelry and clothing — and much of it carefully curated and sourced from creative local artisans. It's also a communal space — intentionally, so. The typical customer enjoys the uncommon things in life and strives to a life of slow living. They are environmentally conscious and enjoy the quality of a great product with hat tips to the fair trade movement. In addition to the local stock, Greenhouse Mercantile sells products that are made in developing countries in return for a fair wage. If you go on a random Tuesday morning at 8 o'clock, expect to stay a while with a cup of Savage Boy Roasters coffee, discuss current events with town regulars and feel good about it.

Atlanta Tribune: What was life like before Greenhouse Mercantile, and when did you feel you had the greenlight to open your business?

Kenya Brantley: I am actually a teacher by profession, but after a year in the classroom, I knew that teaching was not for me. It truly takes a special type of individual to become an educator. I feel like after an engaging conversation with my husband discussing the who, what, when, where, how of opening a business, I decided that if I didn't go for it, it would definitely be something I would regret later. So in 2012, I opened Greenhouse, and have been truly grateful ever since.

AT: Talk about your engagement and experience with fair trade.

Brantley: I have always been a fan of fair trade and paying workers overseas what they are worth. It is the act of saying no to sweat shops and fast fashion. One of my favorite fair trade brands is Fashionable, where the products are created by women who often have overcome extraordinary circumstances, ranging from prostitution to addiction to living in highly impoverished areas.

VENTURE

AT: What aspects of the fair trade and fare wages discussion often gets obscured or overlooked? How about the discussion surrounding supporting local artisans?

Brantley: One of the biggest challenges of the fair trade movement definitely seems to be the lack of education. Because fair trade is a fairly new concept, consumers are still learning about it and how to become more involved. When I started researching fair trade and the true meaning of fair wages, I was blown away at how many products there were. From jewelry, to clothing, to coffee and other food items, fair trade is and hopefully always will be an ever-growing, ever-evolving community of workers who deserve the pay that they work so hard for. The same goes for local artisans. I would encourage everyone to really research, examine, and focus on every product that they purchase. Where was it made? Who was it made by? Will it last or will it end up in a landfill sooner rather than later. I truly feel that if people begin to ask themselves those questions, there would be a greater move towards supporting local artisans.

AT: Did you always envision Greenhouse Mercantile as a space for events, coffee tastings, live music etc.? And how has that impacted business?

Brantley: I have always wanted Greenhouse Mercantile to be a space of community, ideas and collaborations. I love giving local music artists a chance to shine. And from the beginning, I have always loved the retail/coffee concept of business ... it just makes sense. Because of this sense of community, it has allowed me to not only be successful in my business, but impact the lives of others. When business is done right, you're never really in it for yourself. It should always be to help someone else.

AT: Was the vision for your company more an aspirational orientation to what society could be if everyone espoused a mercantile approach to getting what they need and making sure people get fairly compensated for their work and wares, or is it a nostalgic throwback to when this sensibility was more the order of the day?

Brantley: I have always been in love with the old "general store" concept. A place where you can find just about anything. I think that people in earlier times understood that a store was more than just a place where people bought flour and fabric. It was a place you could feel comfortable around the people you knew and the people who knew you. It truly was a community of like-minded folks. I aspire that Greenhouse Mercantile will be that kind of place for its customers. **AT**



Filing an Amended Tax Return

What should you do if you already filed your federal tax return and then discover a mistake? First of all, don't worry. In most cases, all you have to do is file an amended tax return. But before you do that, here is what you should be aware of when filing an amended tax return.

Taxpayers should use Form 1040X, *Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return*, to file an amended (corrected) tax return.

You must file the corrected tax return on paper. An amended return cannot be e-filed. If you need to file another schedule or form, don't forget to attach it to the amended return.

An amended tax return should only be filed to correct errors or make changes to your original tax return. For example, you should amend your return if you need to change your filing status or correct your income, deductions or credits.

You normally do not need to file an amended return to correct math errors because the IRS automatically makes those changes for you. Also, do not file an amended return because you forgot to attach tax forms, such as W-2s or schedules. The IRS normally will mail you a request asking for those.

If you are amending more than one tax return, prepare a separate 1040X for each return and mail them to the IRS in separate envelopes. Note the tax year of the return you are amending at the top of Form 1040X. You will find the appropriate IRS address to mail your return to in the Form 1040X instructions.

If you are filing an amended tax return to claim an additional refund, wait until you have received your original tax refund before filing Form 1040X. Amended returns take up to 16 weeks to process. You may cash your original refund check while waiting for the additional refund.

If you owe additional taxes file Form 1040X and pay the tax as soon as possible to minimize interest and penalties. You can use IRS Direct Pay to pay your tax directly from your checking or savings account.



Generally, you must file Form 1040X within three years from the date you filed your original tax return or within two years of the date you paid the tax, whichever is later. For example, the last day for most people to file a 2014 claim for a refund is April 17, 2018. Special rules may apply to certain claims.

You can track the status of your amended tax return for the current year three weeks after you file. You can also check the status of amended returns for up to three prior years. To use the "Where's My Amended Return" tool on the IRS website, just enter your taxpayer identification number (usually your Social Security number), date of birth and zip code. If you have filed amended returns for more than one year, you can select each year individually to check the status of each. **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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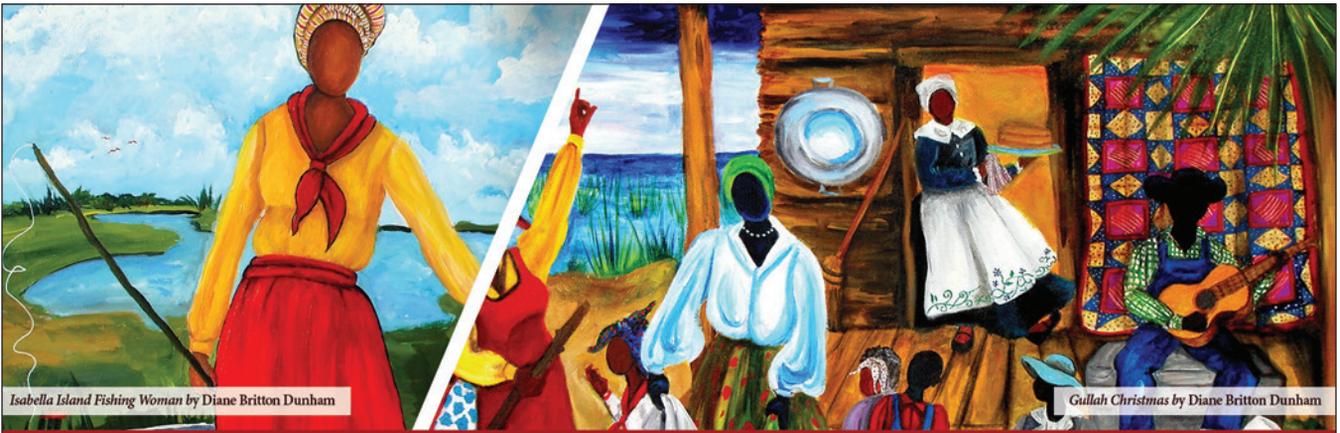
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MEET THE JUDGE

JUSTICE ROBERT BENHAM,

Supreme Court of Georgia



In 1970, Attorney Robert Benham began the practice of law with the Atlanta Legal Aid Society while waiting for his tour of duty as a second lieutenant with the United States Army. Upon completing his active duty service and attaining the rank of captain, he began the active practice of law in Cartersville, Ga. where he became president of the Bartow County Bar Association and later served as chairman of the Coosa Valley Area Planning and Development Commission. He later served as the vice chairman of the Georgia Conference of Black lawyers. In 1984, Benham was appointed by Governor Joe Frank Harris to the Georgia Court of Appeals and in 1989, he was appointed to the Georgia Supreme Court where he later became Presiding Justice and then chief justice of the Georgia Supreme Court. While a Justice on the Georgia Supreme Court, Justice Benham served as chief justice, chairman of the Governor's Commission on Drug Awareness and Prevention and he was instrumental in starting Georgia's Drug Courts, a member of the State Bar Task Force on the Involvement of Women and Minorities in the Profession, the Georgia Commission on Children and Youth, the National Association of Court Management, and a member of the National Conference of Chief Justices, a member of the Federal-State Jurisdiction Committee, president of the Society for Alternative Dispute Resolution, chairman of the Judicial Council, chairman of the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism and a member of the Governors Southern Business Institute.

1. What surprised you most about working with the Judiciary?

While I was not surprised as to the importance of the Judiciary, I, to some extent, was surprised that few people realize the important role the Judiciary plays in the everyday lives of people.

The decisions of the Courts can have a lasting impact on the quality of life of all citizens.

2. How do you think your mother would describe you?

My mother and father were successful business people and community leaders who expected their children (three sons) to be productive and to be significant contributing members of society. My mother attended my swearing-in on the Georgia Court of Appeals and the Georgia Supreme and when asked as to how she felt about her youngest son becoming the first African American to be elected to a statewide position in Georgia, she replied "I am a little disappointed because I wanted you to be President!"

3. Who is the most interesting person you have met in your life's journey?

Justice Thurgood Marshall had a profoundly positive impact on my life. As a summer student at Harvard's Reginald H. Lehman Program I was invited to have a one-on-one dinner with, then, United States Solicitor General Thurgood Marshall during which he impressed upon me the important role lawyers have in improving the quality of life of all people. This role is important because lawyers have an opportunity to look beyond the most distant horizon, anticipate that which is to come, participate in its arrival, and orchestrate its implementation.

4. What do you wish other people knew about how to become a judge?

While my journey to the bench came rather early in my life, after I had been a lawyer for only 13 years I was appointed to the Georgia Court of Appeals; and four years later, I was appointed to the Georgia Supreme Court. It took a lot of intensive preparation to achieve my goals, and that preparation involved not only participation in bar activities but it also required that I become heavily involved in religious, business, social and civic activities. These exposures gave me an opportunity to have a positive impact on the lives of other people by realizing that I have a vested interest in the success of others. My guiding principles required that I abide by legal, ethical, professional and moral principles which caused me to realize that just because the law allowed me to engage in certain activities, I should also apply ethical, professional and moral yardsticks before engaging in certain activities.

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

Whatever task you are called upon to undertake you must be willing to go early, stay late and work harder and smarter than anyone else. If you undertake each of your important tasks in this manner you will increase your chances of succeeding and you will be better prepared to face other challenges in your life. **AT**

ATTORNEYS' CORNER



QUESTIONS
Judge Me Not

Favorite Word?
Possible

Least Favorite Word?
Can't

Woodworking or Fishing?
Woodworking

South Africa or Italy?
Italy

Roasted Peanuts or Boiled Peanuts?
Roasted Peanuts

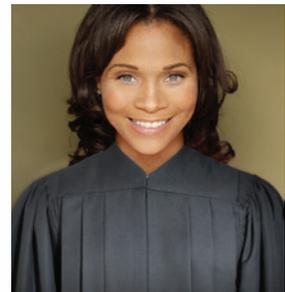
Souper Jenny or Arden's Garden?
Arden's Garden

Atlanta Hawks or Atlanta United?
Atlanta Hawks

Black Jack or Poker?
Black Jack

Gladys Knight or Diana Ross?
Gladys Knight

Center for Puppetry Arts or Fox Theatre?
Fox Theatre



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JOSIE ALEXANDER | ALEXANDER & ASSOCIATES

By Kamille D. Whittaker

From the time Josie Alexander opened Alexander & Associates law firm in 1989 until today, her firm has contributed expertise and advice to weighty, historical, and newsworthy events; and attracted a significant list of clients comprised of individuals, governmental entities, and businesses, many of which have shaped the City of Atlanta and the State of Georgia. She opened her law firm on two simple premises. “First, I wanted to serve individuals, particularly those who had been negatively impacted by unlawful employment decisions. Second, I knew I could build a better law firm, one that was more relevant to how I wanted to practice law. I wanted the ability to select my own clients and to write briefs and other legal documents in accordance with my interpretation of the law. As a young associate at a large law firm, I simply did not have the freedom I desired to be a serious lawyer. I opened my own law firm and that was one of the best decisions of my professional career.”

She is particularly proud of her firm’s extensive work representing the Atlanta Committee for the 1996 Olympic Games. “At the time we were chosen to represent the Olympic Games, the Americans with Disabilities Act had just been enacted. The Civil Rights Division of the United States Justice Department, then led by Duvall Patrick, saw the Games as a perfect opportunity to set the parameters of this new law. So, what should have been my firm providing advice on how to make the Games accessible to individuals with disabilities, turned into my firm handling a complete, intensive, overarching, Justice Department investigation of the Olympic Games.”

The investigation included new venues being built by the Olympics, such as the Centennial Olympic Stadium; existing venues being used by the Olympics; the Transportation Department of the Olympics; and the Ticketing Department of the Olympics. In the end, Alexander was coordinating the investigation for the Olympics – working closely with the entities, such as the City of Atlanta and the Atlanta Braves, which had a vested interest in the Olympic Games.

“Basically, because of this extensive investigation, I experienced the opportunity of a lifetime – to assist with one of the most interesting sporting events on Earth, to shape the Americans with Disabilities Act in its infancy, and to work with other persons who loved the City of Atlanta and wanted the Olympic Games to be a showcase of how to achieve accessibility for disabled individuals, especially at large events. As a lawyer, this experience was exhilarating and engaging. It also set the stage for my firm to be retained in the future by other large corporate and governmental entities.”

Alexander went on to serve as a special assistant attorney general for the State of Georgia in the area of employment law.

“My firm was assigned quite a few cases. We handled them during the litigation and trial processes. Many, we successfully petitioned the courts to dismiss at the earliest stages of litigation, potentially saving the State of Georgia thousands of dollars. This experience as a Special Assistant Attorney General shaped my philosophy of the practice of employment law – to have clients focus on preventing lawsuits before they are filed, especially by training supervisory staff. It also gave me invaluable practical experience on how to strategically win employment cases that are in litigation. Finally, it taught me the complex problems that managers face as they make employment decisions on a daily basis, in the context of challenging situations and employees, as well as employment laws that are changing and evolving.”

About four years ago, Alexander decided to follow the contours of employment law’s evolution and take her firm in a different direction. Instead of primarily representing clients in the areas of administrative law, litigation and trials, she decided to focus more on preventive law.

“I wanted to assist corporations and governmental entities in preventing lawsuits before they arise. By following this concept of preventive law, clients stand to save hundreds of thousands of dollars that are now used to defend lawsuits brought by employees, some of whom are merely disgruntled and some of whom have legitimate claims. Each lawsuit brought by an employee can easily cost an employer \$250,000 to \$500,000 or more. So, I design programs that teach supervisory staff how to legally handle common employee issues and concerns.”

Each program is tailored to the particular employer’s needs and culture. Upon request, she also will train employees regarding employment law.

“A legally educated workforce, particularly among supervisory staff, can make a substantial difference to a company’s or governmental entity’s bottom line. In this new practice area, I supplement, rather than replace, any attorneys who are already representing a client.”

Alexander’s friends often tell her that it was a gutsy move for an African-American female lawyer to open her own law firm in 1989.

“At the time, I just did what needed to be done,” she says. “Looking back, I think my friends had a point.” **AT**

RAVI CHANDER | SOFTPATH

By Kamilie D. Whittaker

As young adults starting out in business, husband and wife team Ravi Chander and Sushumna Roy Jalajam were thrilled to have an opportunity to embark upon a journey into a world immersed in innovative technology, data analytics and high-tech software. Both were highly skilled and adept in the technology arena and believed that they had found our path to success.

“We knew that as young entrepreneurs, we could not make it to the top alone and wanted those who would join us, to also believe that the path they had chosen, would be right for them as well. From inception until now, we affectionately coined the phrase ‘softpath’ to represent a clear path ahead and to reflect a myriad of technical services provided in Master Data Management, MDM software resells, IT consulting and IT and non-IT staff augmentation.”

Hence the namesake of what is now the fastest growing technology enterprise with a primary focus on innovative technologies, emerging data analytics, niche skill-sets and Social, Mobility, Analytics and Cloud. “The Softpath name reflects our brand and vision to care for others and to ensure that every aspect of the business we do, is smooth, unencumbered and an exciting and successful journey. Our company’s vision is to impact quality of life for others including our clients, staff and contingent employees. Our promise is to that never get too busy to appreciate others and always continue on a ‘softpath’ to learning, growing and sharing.”

Over the years at Softpath, they have experienced and witnessed a number of changes and innovations within the technology industry that disrupt the notion of “business as usual.”

“The adoption of innovative technologies and the utilization of social media platforms have changed the way we do business today. Through the use of professional networks, we now have innovative ways to bring passive candidates into the pipeline and create additional sourcing opportunities and even a better way to source candidates. We have invested heavily in creating multiple solutions and accelerators of commonly used technology around data management and analytics solutions which provides quicker implementation of solutions for our clients with less customization.”

These solutions with quick application can be used as what is called ‘plug and play’ resources for data implementation. In fact, they predict there will be drastic changes in the technology industry as current processes will begin to automate.

“In the next five to 10 years, we will begin to see a reduction

in human interaction and skilled labor due to technological advances. Today, we live in a very active world but within a few years from now, the world will change from the world we know today. With the entrance of artificial intelligence, technological advances will affect common tasks such as driving cars and going to the grocery store — technology will disrupt normal day-to-day activities such as these. Many jobs will be eliminated due to artificial intelligence. Computer coding will be a thing of the past, and in many fields, including medical, manufacturing and engineering, there will be an eliminated of jobs due to robotics and advanced technical platforms.”

The technological antidotes: “Seek to constantly improve internal processes and begin to adopt new processes around the changes anticipated and become ‘future ready.’ Upgrade your business technology processes, people and adapt to the changes that are right around the corner.” And too, acknowledge that small diverse firms in comparison to bigger brands are just as adept in successful delivery of these services.

“Small diverse firms are agile and nimble. Such firms with niche technologies can provide higher quality of services with speed-to-market and flexibility. It is better to go with the expert who has invested time and talent into understanding the intrinsic details — talent and quality must be combined.”

The combination has proven successful not only for their business but in their marriage. Early in their business, they established clear core values for success: Trust, loyalty, commitment and respect. Over the years, they have learned the importance of relinquishing control and allowing their unique differences to complement each other, which has proven to be a major component of business success — now a decade in the making.

“We began by treating each other, at all times, with the utmost respect and learning to respect our differences, while remaining loyal with an unwavering commitment of trust and support. Intentionally, seek to maintain work-life balance and never bring the martial emotions into the business. “

One of their favorite lines is “never bring the business to the dining room table” — in other words, let family time be family time.

“We view family matters and business as two separate entities. If you have a happy home, you will have a happy business. Happy wife, happy home and happy business — work to ensure that these are in the right order.” **AT**





KENNETH LOYD | SOUTH COAST PAPER

By Katrice L. Mines

On the first day of Kenneth “Kenny” Loyd and Paul Mitchell’s venture as business owners, the duo made a seven-figure investment into their paper converting, sales and marketing operation.

“The business is very capital intensive,” the president of South Coast Paper explains. “So when Paul Mitchell and I started the operation, day one we ordered a machine out of Germany that had a serious capital investment. We brought the machine over and we had a contract that would fulfill 70 percent of the machine time.” Well, the company that South Coast Paper had the contract with was sold, but not to the company that Loyd and Mitchell expected it to be purchased by and who they had a verbal agreement with for continued work.

“That company didn’t want to have anything to do with us nor would they sign the contract and we’d already bought the machine. So, given that fact, we had the brand new equipment coming to our operations in Hammond, La., and we had no orders for the machine. We had an operation that was set and ready to go, and the money that we spent put us in the hole.”

Loyd describes the company’s first two years as being on life support, followed by intensive care year three. But, by its fifth year, South Coast Paper was in good health. “And the reason we were able to overcome those obstacles was because of number one, my partner – the managing member of the company Paul Mitchell and number two the team we have assembled, our plant and operations team. Those individuals helped us to overcome those obstacles and to build a company today that is about a \$95 million operation.”

For the 17 years since, the company with plants in Atlanta, Maplesville, Ala., and Mexico City, Mexico, and sales staff across the country has enjoyed steady growth – currently employing about 130 people.

As president, Loyd develops and secures relationships with suppliers, customers and other business partners. Mitchell handles operations from the financial, legal and information systems standpoints. Theirs is a balancing act that was an obvious recipe for success for the two early on.

“Each of us had something that helped us to grow,” says Loyd who was bitten by the entrepreneurial bug while pursuing an MBA at Case Western Reserve.

“I saw a need in the paper industry for converting services and at that time, paper was going into more retail outlets and the manufacturing

operations were struggling to meet those demands. And so I thought that I’d be able to fulfill those needs by working with companies like the one I was previously with, Champion International, and be able to provide those services so that they could have a retail play that would enhance their sales. The other reason [for going into business] was the opportunity to be able to help control some of the destiny of myself but also of the people who would be a part of our team. That was very important to me; and to be able to grow a business that could have the potential to expand into other opportunities.”

To enrich and network, Loyd and Mitchell are active members of the Georgia Minority Supplier Development and National Minority Supplier Development councils in which they have immersed themselves in opportunities to increase their capacity.

“You have very good people in place who are very well connected throughout not only our region but throughout our country. It’s important that you use the minority supplier development councils so that more people will know about your operation and what your capabilities and skillsets are, and also to share and learn from other companies. When you’re apart of those councils, that’s the education you get and the ability to grow your company.”

In their spare time, both are board members of the South Carolina Community Bank with Mitchell serving as chairman of the board.

“Paul has done tremendous work. Because of him, South Carolina Community Bank was saved ... His investments, his time, his efforts and his funds,” he says. “He invested in that bank to make sure that it was a very good bank and a good bank that remained minority owned.”

Loyd, who lives in Marietta, Ga., with his wife, Andrea Cox Loyd and is father to a daughter Tayler and son Jordan, mentors young African-American males and assists them with access to college via athletics.

Mentoring is a common theme that informs Loyd’s thinking about most of what he pursues. Asked what words of wisdom he would offer budding small businesses, he shares, “Make sure that from a capital standpoint, financially, that you are doing something and part of a space that you really have knowledge of. And relationships are critical. Whatever relationships you have today, make sure they’ve been maintained properly. Because years down the road, those people you touched will come back – one way or another directly or indirectly – to help you move forward in whatever your aspirations are.”

He knows of what he speaks. **AT**

STEVE AND SHAWN BROMELL | PRO CUTTERS LAWNSCAPES INC.

By Katrice L. Mines

You could call Steve and Shawn Bromell fishers of men ... well, small business owners, to be exact. The husband and wife who own Pro Cutters Lawnscares have not only built solid company with their own hands, they've helped others who want to follow in their entrepreneurial footsteps as business owners.

Founded seven years ago, the commercial right-of-way and interstate mowing business that serves metro Atlanta and beyond in Georgia services medical facilities, businesses, schools and subdivisions and provides roadside cutting. The ambitious couple came to their business venture organically which has been a rooting foundation. When they launched together, shortly after getting married, Steve had been doing lawn care himself following 8 years in the U.S. Army, and Shawn, who began her career in broadcast journalism – first on the radio and then as a television news anchor and reporter – always wanted to own a business. With their union, she got two dreams for the price of one.

“For me, it was just a desire to be able to create something of our own, figure things out and make it work,” she says of her affinity for enterprise ownership. “Steve and I both believed we had the heart and mind to operate a business that could not only provide a valuable service to our community, but also provide people with jobs.”

When they launched, Steve cut grass himself while Shawn was home handling logistics like staying up until 2 o'clock in the morning many nights printing post cards to drum up business. “To go from that to a business that has won seven awards, has a work force of nearly 200 people and increased sales by 2,100 percent is amazing,” Shawn reflects.

Pro Cutters now employs about 50 people, works with over 15 subcontractors and has annual revenues more than \$10 million. But for them, the company's reach is about more than a day's work; it's also very much about community building. And the undergirding philosophy behind what they do is simple: Do *everything* in excellence. The payout, reaping what they sow as every contract the lawn care company has serviced has been renewed.

“We are so proud that Pro Cutters has helped several people start businesses in their own right and employ even more people. It's like a net that keeps growing and it means we are doing our part to help make Georgia's economy even better,” Shawn says.

Members of the National Minority Supplier Development Council and other small business organizations, Steve – who teaches an entrepreneurship class at the couple's church and mentors fledgling

businesses – suggests similar affiliation and involvement for up-and-comers in the small business sector.

“Having a forum where you can be around a diverse group of business owners and corporate executives is priceless. You must be focused and have an open mind to learning and giving of yourself.”

Pro Cutters was named the 2016 National Supplier of the Year by NMSDC and the 2017 SBA Minority Small Business Champion.

The tenets of entrepreneurship that Steve drives home to his mentees and students: having a solid foundation of faith, and the willingness to lean in when times get tough while pursuing “the dream.” And the myth he finds himself most often debunking, that “they must have it all together before starting,” he says. “The truth is if you wait until that happens you may never start. Success starts in the mind and must have constant movement to achieve it.”

The nuances the Connecticut native learned hands-on are also threaded into what he shares. “One thing I can say I've learned is you have to stand behind your company's work, no matter what. If a client is unhappy, you make it right. I know a lot of small businesses don't believe they can do that, thinking ‘I can't afford to do that job over for a customer (if your company did indeed mess up) or pay that bill if my employees damaged something.’ But what you save initially, you will lose later when people see your company as having no integrity.”

The Bromells are parents to three sons – 25-year-old Michael, a graduate from Indiana University now in law school, 14-year-old Justin who attends Rockdale Magnet School for Science and Technology, and 6-year-old Chayce who is heading to first grade.

Along with their success professionally, Shawn and Steve count them as their greatest accomplishment.

And the qualities they're passing on to their children have undoubtedly already begun to take hold from the duo's faith, work ethic and steadfastness to their dedication to serving others. Something has stuck.

“When you look at the statistics for small business success – according to the SBA, only about half of all business startups will survive five years... and the numbers really go down when you get to 10 years,” Shawn says. “Business is not for the faint of heart; you have to have a strong will and determination to make it.”

Check. **AT**



Ideas Man

By Donnell Suggs

Sandwiched between Georgia Tech, The Coca-Cola headquarters and the Bank of America building, The Gathering Spot on Northyards Boulevard is the perfect place for someone as eclectic and entrepreneurial as Joey Womack, co-founder and executive director of both Goodie Nation, a non-profit, and its for-profit spinoff Amplify 4 Good. Womack believes in the idea of ideas.

Goodie Nation is on a mission to be the pre-accelerator for the many ideas that – if properly cultivated and nurtured – become the world’s many applications and solutions. “We provide a role for all people to play in order to solve the world’s toughest problems,” says Womack. The Mobile, Ala. Native and Florida A&M University alumnus was preparing

for an evening in conversation with three other Atlanta-based tech business owners and executives as part of a series sponsored by Hypepotamus, an Atlanta-based company that covers the local tech scene.

“Everybody has a skill and everybody has a role to play,” he adds. “Everybody can contribute something.” Womack believes Atlanta has the potential to be considered the Silicon Valley of the South and maybe even move beyond that to becoming the go-to place for tech in the country. “Atlanta has the potential to be a top five market in the country because we have talented people and a huge supply of incoming talent from the local universities. But most importantly we are already doing well and we still haven’t figured ‘it’ out yet when it comes to diversity.”

Goodie Nation and Amplify 4 Good are attempting to even out that imbalance for Atlanta and the rest of the country and world. “Atlanta is great for innovation in social impact because we’re at the epicenter for social change,” says Womack. “People are trying, but the minority communities are still behind. When they start to realize their potential, Atlanta will take off.”

The idea for Goodie Nation came from the same place all ideas come from: necessity. Womack’s zest for social impact didn’t start in college; originally, he went to school to study accounting. “I never thought I’d be doing this. Both sides of my family were involved in social impact,” says Womack, referring to his mother who grew up in Montgomery, Ala., and family members who were involved in the civil rights movement. Womack approached that spirit of freedom in a more technological way, looking to create a safe and constructive place for an online community of black entrepreneurs and local business owners. “We look to help people come up with ideas for tech solutions and then bring in skills-based volunteers to help them with their idea, plans, revenue and model.”



Launched in 2009 as a Facebook message group, Goodie Nation eventually began hosting hack-a-thons where computer programmers, software designers and others involved in tech came together to build on ideas and projects.

Goodie Nation also offers Heroes Therapy, a meeting of the minds on a smaller scale – usually between 10 to 12 people, according to Womack – that transpires exactly how it sounds. “We talk about their issues and let them know that they are not alone on their journey,” says Womack. The idea of having ideas can be a difficult task but there’s a place for those who chose to take that trip. Innovative training programs and support groups like Founder’s Therapy, Teacher’s Therapy and Goodie Bootcamp see to it that the mission stays on course. In March, they held the first Teacher’s Therapy session, and Womack believes there will be another because of how successful it was. “Teachers have their own set of issues and they are definitely heroes. Helping teachers deal with their problems helps us with our youth program,” he says. “It makes sense when you start to pull back the layers.”

Then there’s Goodie Nation’s Hack Daze for the youth. “We are there to help kids come up with apps that come up with solutions for problems; more importantly these events help the kids learn to be leaders,” says Womack. One app is attempting to target solutions for bullying. Another participant has already patented an application that will work to make the blue light security system on Georgia State University’s campus more effective. The idea of improving ideas has become a movement and is being passed on and that is exactly what Womack is looking to continue to do. “Atlanta is great for innovation in social impact because it’s at the epicenter for social change. Between the civil rights movement and global health leaders like the Center for Disease Control, Emory, and the airport making the world more accessible, we have all the resources. When you think about the caring nature of our population, we can change the world.” How’s that for an idea? **AT**



Tonya Peat
Cancer Survivor

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

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Stand Up To Cancer is a program of the Entertainment Industry Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Please talk to your healthcare provider about appropriate screenings for your age, sex, family history and risk factors; and about clinical trials that may be right for you. Photo by Nigel Perry

Code Word: Equality

By Donnell Suggs



James Brown, an Augusta, Ga., native and the undisputed “Godfather of Soul,” once famously sang, “This is a man’s world.” Fellow Augustan and Clark Atlanta University alumnus Erica Stanley is doing her best to dispute that claim, if not in the world, then in the tech industry.

Stanley has worked for a number of media and tech giants like Boeing, Fox Interactive, Turner Broadcasting and Oracle, but it’s her work with Women Who Code that might be credited the most with the spark that has opened the door further for women the most. Stanley, a software architect and engineer, who lives in Atlanta with her husband Stephan Lee, also a Clark Atlanta University alum and an Integration Manager with Apollo MD, believes in the city’s potential to be on par with Silicon Valley and the Bay Area, if not surpass it.

“As soon as you start to imitate someone else you’re already limiting yourself,” says Stanley, who currently works for Salesloft in the Atlanta Tech Village. “Atlanta brings something to the table that the Bay Area doesn’t. The goal is really about getting our members as much exposure in the Atlanta tech community. So much of the success has to do with the diversity in Atlanta ... I think that this community and city has been very welcoming to what we’re trying to do.”

That diversity did not exist at one time and it was hard to imagine a career in tech for a woman, much less a woman of color. As a girl, Stanley believed anything was possible in regards to computers. “My love for all things tech started early,” she says. “I promptly took apart my first computer and my father told me he wasn’t going to buy me another one until I put that one back together. Technology seemed like magic at the time.” That feeling of taking an idea and building it up to the point where it is no longer what you dreamed of but a reality still fuels her. “You could build your own, there were so many different directions I could take it,” she says.

Stanley started to be an integral part of that tech diversity movement from a grass roots level in Atlanta in 2013, when she met Women Who Code CEO and board chairman Alaina Percival, a Bay Area techie and Atlanta native. Stanley was asked to speak with potential and current members at an event, and her association with the organization and its

importance to her adopted home town grew from there. “I thought Women Who Code was really important and something we all needed to talk about. Atlanta needed to be in the conversation.” What was just going to be a short stay turned into a permanent residence. “I expected to work with them for a year and I’m still working with them,” says Stanley with a laugh. She founded the Atlanta network of Women Who Code and believes there’s still more work to be done. “So much of the success of the program has to do with the diversity in Atlanta and that’s one of the major strengths of this city,” she adds. “We are on the right path and need to keep getting better at it.”

The movement has advanced on to the future tech leaders of Atlanta with Girls Who Code, who along with Band of Coders and the Global Village Project, are trying to change the world. Girls, the same age as Stanley was when she first dismantled her computer now get an opportunity to learn how to build apps and websites for state of the art computers. The game has definitely been changed. “I think it’s super important to get girls to believe they can be a part of this movement,” says Stanley of Girls Who Code, where she sits on the company’s advisory board. “A lot of the work I do with girls is to inform them early so that the spark can be lit. It’s also important to change the perception from just sitting at a computer all day to actually building things.”

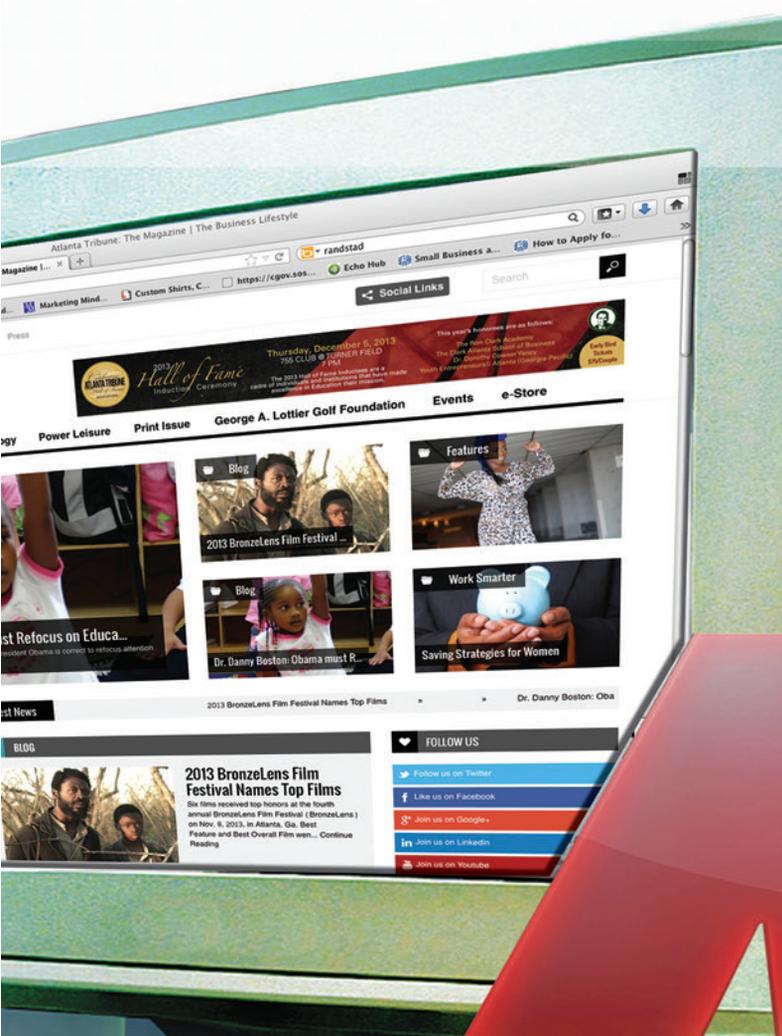
Events like the Women Take on Tech hackathon at the Atlanta Technical Development Center in the heart of downtown that will take place from October 13-15 are next on Stanley’s agenda. She’s also in the process of beta testing a new app, Synapse, that she along with Lee and their college friend Deron Walters, also a software engineer, built. The app is expected to make networking much easier and is currently for iOS systems. “We’re trying to figure out the workflow for the app,” says Stanley. “We expect to have a quick follow for Android.”

With all of the work Stanley has coming her way, the app’s release in the fall/winter is just another one of her steps toward equality for women in tech. First Atlanta, then the world. “As the community continues to grow you’ll start women continue to lead more and more,” says Stanley. “More and more people empowering others.” **AT**



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A Green Thumb for Tech Start-ups

By Leah S. McDaniel



Tech. Start-up. Incubator. These are the buzzwords of the hour and entrée into this industry can be elusive. Meet the man who has it figured out, Jarryd A. McCree.

Leading three successful companies by the time he was 30, McCree, vice president of Products at LateShift, is a tech guru who is addicted to entrepreneurship.

“I’m addicted to building companies and growing them,” McCree says.

McCree got his start in tech early, catching the bug after his first computer science class in high school which appealed to his pragmatic nature with a balance of creativity. Having grown up in metro Atlanta, he attended the Georgia Institute of Technology where he was the captain of the rugby team and qualified for the south U.S. National under t23 squad. After graduating in 2008, he began working as an IT consultant with several *FORTUNE* 100 companies.

After working corporately for several years, he decided to branch out on his own, working with partners to found his first company Eboticon®, an emoji app that offered multicultural options before it was an iOS standard.

“Once we launched, we were number one in the iTunes App Store for social media which was incredibly exciting,” McCree recalls. “And we won a couple of local awards here in Atlanta.”

After Eboticon®, McCree was off and running, starting work almost immediately with his second company SmartUp®, which is an online platform that allows startups and small businesses to easily connect with legal entities for a variety of services.

“I kind of realized, in the beginning, a lot of entrepreneurs understand the technical aspect, but the legal side is just a giant black box; my partners and I wanted to take the difficulty out of that.”

SmartUp® also includes a patent platform which simplifies a business component for entrepreneurs that can often be expensive and difficult to obtain. This experience led McCree to get involved with ClientSlide®, the leading electronic signature system for the legal industry.

Recently, McCree became involved in a new venture, LateShift — a consumer-facing financial empowerment platform aimed at using tech to work with financial institutions and big companies enabling consumers to take control of their financial health.

“The tech side will be massive, but I can’t speak to it too much as we are still in stealth mode, McCree shares. “But, I am so excited for this; there are 77 million people in debt in this country and I want to help them.”

McCree credits the open and dynamic Atlanta tech community with how he decides where he wants to invest his time.

“Through this community I meet a lot of different people and I always want to use technology to help people. In Atlanta, people will give without expecting anything back; they just want you to succeed and I just love that about it.”

McCree gives back through speaking both locally at his alma mater and through other organizations, and strongly encourages anyone who is interested in getting involved in tech to reach out to him or others in the Atlanta community.

“The tech scene here is amazing. It doesn’t matter your age or background; if you’ve ever thought about wanting to get involved, do it.”

When he’s not blazing new trails on the tech scene, you can find him thrill seeking in other areas. “Every year, I try to do something that scares me to death,” McCree says.

These feats have included everything from climbing Mt. Rainier to this year flying a helicopter. “Fly high, fly free,” which is one McCree’s favorite quotes, accurately describes his boundless potential in this fast moving industry. Y With the growth of opportunities to gain programming skills, McCree thinks this could be the next big space in tech.

“[According to] a study by Intuit, by 2020, 40 percent of Americans will be independent laborers through programming and we will begin to see the growth of big economies in this area over the next few years.” **AT**

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SCHOLARSHIP GUIDE 2017



By Taylor Lee and Tra'Keiyah Carter

One way to maximize the splendor of the college experience is to minimize the financial responsibility. The higher the cost, the heavier the burden. According to Student Loan Hero, class of 2016 graduates have on average \$37,172 in student loan debt, which is up six percent from 2015. And even after almost \$50 billion in grants and scholarships received last year, there was a vast amount untouched. In 2016, there was more than \$2.6 billion in unused federal grants, so it is safe to assume there are numerous ways to reduce post-graduate debt going forward. There are countless scholarship opportunities available ranging from need-based to merit-based, and they can be yours to claim. No one enjoys throwing away money, so instead we are bringing some opportunities to you with our 2017-2018 scholarship guide.

William Randolph Hearst Endowed Fellowship for Minority Students

Award Amount: \$4,000
Deadline: August 16, 2017
www.aspeninstitute.org

Blacks in Safety Engineering Scholarship

Award Amount: \$1,000 annually, non-renewable
Deadline: December 1, 2017
www.foundation.asse.org/education.php

AfterCollege Stem Inclusion Scholarship

Award Amount: \$500 annually, non-renewable
Deadline: June 30, 2017
www.aftercollege.com

Holly A. Cornell Scholarship

Award Amount: \$7,500 annually, non-renewable
Deadline: January 10, 2018
www.scholarships.com/financial-aid/college-scholarships/scholarships-by-major/engineering-scholarships/awwa-holly-cornell-scholarship/

AAUW Selected Professions Fellowship

Award Amount: \$5,000 to \$18,000, non-renewable
Deadline: January 10, 2018
www.aauw.org

Herman and Mary Allen Scholarship

Award Amount: \$1,000 to \$2,500 annually
Deadline: Varies
www.pinellaseducation.org/Scholarships

ABA Diversity Scholarship

Award Amount: \$5,000
Deadline: Varies
www.buses.org/aba-foundation/scholarships/diversity

Freedom From Religion Foundation Catherine Fahringer Memorial Award

Award Amount: \$2,500
Deadline: June 17, 2018
www.blackskepticsla.org

ACHE Albert W. Dent Graduate Student Scholarship

Award Amount: \$5,000
Deadline: March 31, 2018
www.ache.org/Faculty_Students/dent_scholarship.cfm

ACS Scholars Program

Award Amount: \$5,000 (Maximum)
Deadline: March 1, 2018
www.acs.org

Actuarial Diversity Scholarship

Award Amount: \$4,000
Deadline: May 2, 2018
www.actuarialfoundation.org/programs/actuarial/act-diversity.shtml

AETNA/NMF Primary Care Fellows

Award Amount: \$10,000 (Maximum)
Deadline: Varies
www.scholarships.com/financial-aid/college-scholarships/scholarships-by-type/minority-scholarships/african-american-scholarships/aetna-nmf-primary-care-fellows/

Barbara Odom-Wesley Spirit of Achievement Scholarship

Award Amount: \$3,000 (Maximum)
Deadline: June 8, 2018
www.arlingtoneducation.org/scholarships.htm

Minority Teacher Education Scholarship

Award Amount: \$4,000
Deadline: Varies
www.ffmt.org

First in the Family Humanist Scholarship

Award Amount: \$1,000
Deadline: June 10, 2018
www.blackskepticsla.org

Jesse L. Jackson Sr. Fellows Toyota Scholarship

Award Amount: \$25,000
Deadline: May 30, 2018
www.pushexcel.org/pages/scholarships

BLM Squared Scholarship

Award Amount: \$1,000
Deadline: July 1, 2017
www.blmsquaredscholarship.org

Brittany Bowers Beauty & Brains Scholarship

Award Amount: \$1,500
Deadline: March 21, 2018
www.dymonintherough.com/scholarships.html

Chesapeake Bay Trust Honorable Arthur Dorman Scholarship for Environmental Education

Award Amount: \$5,000

Deadline: December 2, 2017

www.cbtrust.org/scholarship-awards-program

Leonard M. Perryman Communications Scholarship for Racial Ethnic Minority Students

Award Amount: \$2,500

Deadline: March 15, 2018

www.umcom.org/about/leonard-m-perryman-scholarship

National Press Club Scholarship for Journalism Diversity

Award Amount: \$2,000

Deadline: March 1, 2018

www.press.org/about/scholarships/diversity

Ron Brown Scholar Program

Award Amount: \$40,000 (\$10,000 per year)

Deadline: November 1, 2017

www.ronbrown.org

HOPE Scholarship

Award Amount: Varies

Deadline: No later than last day of classes/exams

www.gacollege411.org

The Pearl Scholarship

Award Amount: \$500

Deadline: February 1, 2018

www.psimuzeta.org/sisters-of-the-dove.html

Xerox Technical Minority Scholarship

Award Amount: \$10,000

Deadline: September 30, 2017

www.xerox.com/jobs/minority-scholarships

The Jackie Robinson Foundation

Award Amount: \$28,000 (up to over four-year span)

Deadline: February 15, 2018

www.jackierobinson.org/apply/applicants/

Study Abroad Scholarship in Bosnia and Herzegovina for American Minority Students

Award Amount: \$2,000

Deadline: Varies

www.acbih.org/scholarship/study-abroad-scholarship-in-bih-for-american/

Charles Shelton Veterinary Medicine/ Technology Scholarship

Award Amount: \$2,500

Deadline: April 15, 2018

<https://thecharlessheltonfoundation.org>

Dr. Dan J. and Patricia S. Pickard Scholarship for African-American Male Students

Award Amount: \$1,000

Deadline: May 31, 2018

www.dallasfoundation.org/scholarship-listing.aspx

George A. Lottier Golf Foundation Internship & Scholarship Award

Award Amount: \$1,000

Deadline: Rolling

www.atlantatribune.com

United Negro College Fund

Award Amount: Varies

Deadline: Varies

www.uncf.org/forstudents/scholarship.asp

Media Fellows Program Scholarship

Award Amount: 1,000 to \$5,000

Deadline: July 30 annually

www.mediascholars.org

National Association of Black Journalists Scholarship

Award Amount: up to \$3,000

Deadline: February annually

www.nabj.org/?page=ScholarshipsNABJ

HBCU Study Abroad Scholarships

Award Amount: \$2,000

Deadline: November annually

www.iesabroad.org

Dell Scholars Program

Award Amount: 20,000

Deadline: Varies

www.dellscholars.org

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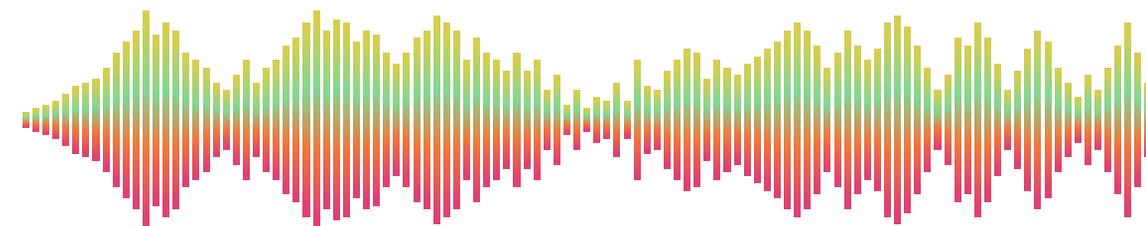
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About the Author:

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



Hold on. This isn't about a TV show. Give me a minute to explain.

At a CRM industry conference last year, I presented a session called focused on how voice-activated assistants were beginning to make their way into the mainstream. At the time, Amazon Echo had less than 1,000 skills (voice commands) developed for it, and tech giants Google and Apple hadn't launched its competitive home speaker devices. And due to the level of interest from attendees, I was asked to do a follow-up session at this year's conference. What a difference a year makes.

The number of skills developed by third-party developers for the Echo has grown to more than 12,000, according to estimates. Google not only has released its device, but Google Home has the ability to recognize up to six voices. And if telling your devices to do things for you wasn't easy enough, Facebook says they are working on technology that they say will read your thoughts, and let you hear with your skin. But more importantly, a study from VoiceLabs estimated there were 6.5 million "voice-first" devices shipped in 2016; that number is expected to grow to 24.5 million in 2017.

Focus on Messaging Apps and Chatbots

Even as the excitement over voice-first devices grows, the numbers are still dwarfed in comparison to messaging apps and text-based interfaces like chat bots. Facebook estimates people send more than 30 billion messages a day on WhatsApp; in total, more than 80 billion text-based messages are being sent each day. Which makes for an obvious reason companies are focusing their efforts on text-based chatbots, because they can provide quick responses to frequently asked questions. And that can lead to better experiences delivered more consistently in channels of rapidly growing importance to customers; and the ability to scale these outcomes in a more cost-effective manner.

Voice-first Devices Are Game Changers

As the numbers above illustrate, we've entered an era where conversation is king (my apologies to content and context) because of the experiences messaging platforms can deliver today. And even while text-based interfaces like chatbots are the focus of the majority of conversational strategies, that doesn't mean voice-first initiatives will be on the backburner for long. In fact, due to the accelerated improvement of voice recognition technology, Gartner estimates 30 percent of all interactions with devices will be voice-based by 2018, because people can speak up to four times faster than they can type.

Things are developing so quickly on the voice side it's hard to keep up. According to research from RBC, by 2020, upwards of 60 million Alexa devices could be sold annually, 128 million Alexa devices could be installed in total by then, all leading to a whopping \$5 billion in annual voice-driven sales. And this is just Amazon devices we're talking about. With Apple HomePod and Google Home hitting the market, along with other competitors, we're going to see interactions through these devices grow exponentially.

While it makes sense that the immediate focus on conversational interfaces are on messaging apps and bots, you can't ignore where things eventually seem to be going with "the voice."

Amazon's head of voice design said recently it's now time to "design for the ear, not the eye." So keep an ear out for your customer's voice – it's literally the long-term key to keeping them around longer. **AT**

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50 // TRAVEL

Gadgets You Won't Want to Live Without

52 // HOT SPOT

What I Want Now ...

55 // THE LOOKOUT

2018 Volkswagen Atlas: Taking VW on its Shoulders

57 // FASTLANE

Day-Cay: Staycation Getaway

58 // WEEKENDER

July/August Happenings

59 // TO DO

Blissbehavin' in Cefalù, Sicily

60 // TRAVEL

The Ritz-Carlton Key Biscayne, Miami Gets It Right

63 // TRAVEL

Must-Have Apps for Small Biz Owners

64 // TECHBYTE

Integrate New Technology into Your Company

65 // TIPSHEET

Flavor-Full: Grilled Caesar Salad with Homemade Caesar Dressing

67 // FOR THE LOVE OF FOOD

Atlanta Business Community Mourns the Passing of William "Bill" Taggart

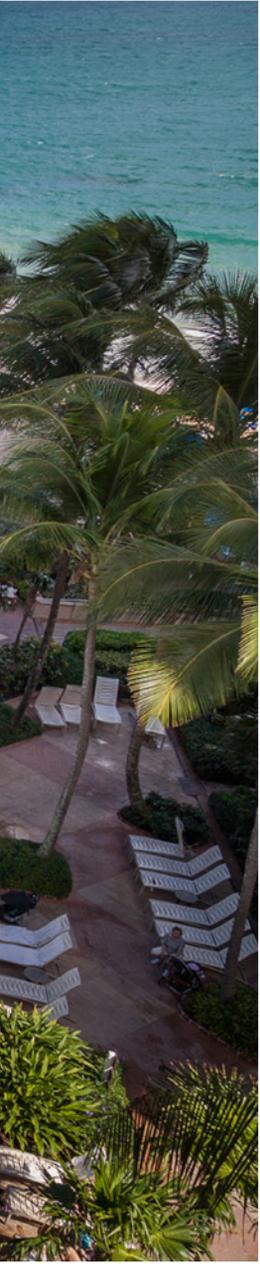
68 // ONE MORE THING



San Juan Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino

By Katrice L. Mines

Ranked among the top luxury hotels in Puerto Rico, San Juan Marriott & Stellaris Casino delivers all the sights, sounds and tastes of the Caribbean island; no passport needed.



My friends ask me often: “Where are you headed next?” Puerto Rico is atop of everyone’s favorite list of places to retreat. My destination mid-May – San Juan Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino in the trendy Condado Beach neighborhood was, as well. Half of the people I mentioned the resort to had stayed there already and talking about it made them instantly nostalgic to return. That was a good sign. I looked forward to the balmy, warm air that greeted me, relieved to have escaped the unseasonably rainy spring weather in Atlanta for a few days; and I had just a few pursuits in mind – lounging by the pool, scouting good food and a stroll through the historic colonial district. From the moment you enter San Juan Marriott’s property, you are met with the sights, sounds and aromas of the tropics. Business and leisure travelers comingle in the oceanfront lodging on the famous Condado Beach, steps from the water and near popular attractions like Old San Juan, Old San Juan Forts and the Puerto Rico Convention Center. Each of San Juan Marriott’s spacious, relaxing rooms offers luxury bedding and a private balcony with striking

views of Puerto Rico’s capital city. Ocean Club Wellness Center combines a state-of-the-art fitness facility where classes are available with the offering of spa services, and lazing all day is easy between the resort’s heated outdoor pool and beach. Like the rest of the island, sun and the soothing clatter of the ocean are plentiful and so replenishing is the utmost objective from which everyone staffed to aid in that goal takes their cue. Just one block from the hotel, a cooking lesson at Atelier Cocina Abierta is a must if you’re looking for an experience to add some dimension to your getaway. The Atelier at Cocina Abierta is an interactive space for the development and enjoyment of food, wine and spirits and an apt meeting point where culinary enthusiasts come together to explore the world through its cuisine. There is also no shortage of classic Puerto Rican fare back at the hotel with choices like Red Coral Lounge just off the lobby, La Vista Beachside Grill, La Isla Beach Bar, Coffee Merchant Treats To Go and more. San Juan Marriott is an ideal home base to see and do it all – including try your hand at the Roulette table in Stellaris Casino – in full relaxation mode. **AT**



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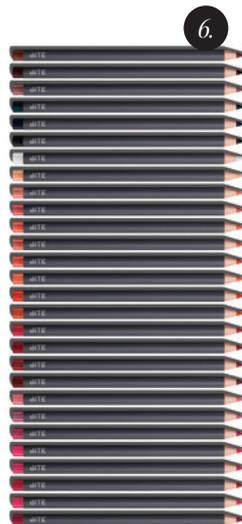
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2018 VOLKSWAGEN ATLAS:

Taking VW on its Shoulders

by Brian Armstead



In Greek mythology, Atlas was the figure that was tasked to carry the sky on his shoulders for eternity.

The 2018 Volkswagen Atlas has a role very close to the mythical Atlas, as VW is counting on Atlas to be a sales star as the company rebounds from its diesel emissions scandal.

The Atlas is large and in charge, as it's the only VW that seats seven. And the Atlas third row is unique, as you can leave three child safety seats firmly connected in the second row and still have adult access to the adult-sized third row.

Regarding Atlas content, you'll be impressed at base or SEL trim levels. Let's start with safety, where VW is world class in terms of features.

Atlas is the only vehicle in its class to offer the Automatic Post-Collision Braking System, which is standard on all models. This system builds on the premise that a collision is rarely a single, instantaneous action, but rather a series of events that follow the initial impact—the most significant of which can cause additional collisions. The Automatic Post-Collision Braking System addresses this by applying the brakes when a primary collision is detected by the airbag sensors, helping reduce the chance of additional damage.

On the road, the Atlas really excels. I expected it to offer

ponderous handling like some other large SUVs in its class, yet Atlas gives the impression that it's just as comfortable on road as it is off.

And yes, Atlas is indeed off-road capable. Use the console mounted rotary controller to select from four 4MOTION All-Wheel Drive modes: Dry, Rainy, Snowy and Rough.

And while you can 'rough it' off-road, you'll be hard pressed to rough it in Atlas' well-appointed interior.

It's hard to know where to start. Choose the expansive panoramic sunroof, and you'll get three rows of a clear view to the skies.

Another impressive standard feature is the 17 cup holders throughout the three rows. Yes, each passenger can have 2.42857143 drinks at their disposal. Apple CarPlay and Android Auto are standard equipment, and a rockin' 480 watt Fender Premium Audio System is optional.

At present, the only powertrain available is a 3.6-liter V6 outputting 276 horsepower with either Front or All-Wheel Drive.

If VW doesn't sell every Atlas they build, I'll be incredibly surprised. It's one heck of a great SUV at a most impressive and affordable price point. **AT**

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BQE Brunch

BRUNCH

Start your day with brunch and a live DJ at Edgewood's own **BQE Restaurant & Lounge**. Try their fried chicken and red velvet waffles with \$22 bottomless mimosas. Bqelounge.com

SPA

While the food settles, take a load off downtown at **Iwi Fresh Garden Day Spa** per the Veggie Spa Package which includes an iwi fresh herbal compression massage, followed by a veggie facial and finishes with a fresh-veggie Manicure/ Pedicure; a perfect way to unwind for as low as \$165. Iwifresh.com

CHECK-IN

After a day of great food and relaxation, rent out a home in the area of your choice from **Innclusive**, where all are welcome. Innclusive.com

NIGHT CAP

Before the night is over, stop by Kat's Kafe. Sit back and enjoy their signature martinis while indulging in the live music from local artists. Open-mic nights are for the fearless. Katscafeatlanta.com



Iwi Fresh Facial

▶ **2017 Who's Who in Black Atlanta Official Networking Reception & Book Unveiling**

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Who's Who In Black Atlanta welcomes Atlanta Tribune: The Magazine to the Real Times Media family and announces the Official Networking Reception and Book Unveiling of its 17th edition on July 28, 2017. whoswhopublishing.com

▶ **AfropolitanATL**

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KAPTURE LOUNGE
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Under the theme "The Culinary Escape," enjoy a night of connections and culture at ATL's largest and most diverse AfroCaribbean mixer for Diaspora professionals. afropolitancities.com/afropolitanatl

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Join the discussion hosted by 9to5 Georgia Chapter of Working Women on ways to end the wage gap amongst black women. 9to5.org

▶ **15th Annual Moving Your Business Forward: August Session**

TUESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2017 | 8 A.M. – 1 P.M.
THE HOME DEPOT CORPORATE HQ
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Join us for the August Session of Atlanta Tribune: The Magazine's 15th Annual Moving Your Business Forward series. There will be a continental breakfast, great prizes and a wealth of information. Atlantatribune.com

Blissbehavin' in

CEFALÙ, SICILY

by Regina Lynch-Hudson
Photography by Courtland C. Bivens III



The ancient fishing village of Cefalù is the perfect panoramic base for a scenic seaside sabbatical. Hubby and I settled for a slow-lingering sightseeing spree to allow us to savor every moment. Primarily sedentary days were spent soaking up sunshine, sea and sand, and stuffing ourselves on succulent seafood.

Cefalù is situated in the Province of Palermo, on the northern coast of Sicily, Italy on the Tyrrhenian Sea. We arrived in Palermo, which provides the nearest airport and seaport for

travels into Sicily. Then, we caught a train to Cefalù, an hour east of Palermo. At first brush, we were mesmerized by Cefalù's rocky bluffs overlooking the Mediterranean, and magnetic beaches – features that attracted Sicily's Norman invaders to found the city some eight centuries ago.



Despite a population of around 14,000 residents, Cefalù woos millions of tourists who swarm in from neighboring parts of Italy, Europe and the United States. The small resort town radiates with history, multicultural character and quirky charm. <https://cefalù.it/>

Combing Cefalù: Cefalù boasts the warmest temperatures during June through September, which cast us combing the city during the ideal season to fully enjoy the sparking environs. The town is compact enough to explore entirely on foot, and if you need transportation a scooter rental will suffice.

An intimate Medieval village with intriguing visual wonders, Cefalù's most popular architectural marvel is the never-completed

Cefalù Cathedral (Duomo Basilica Cattedrale), dramatically positioned in front of the mountain, La Rocca di Cefalù. The Duomo harks back to the Byzantine Empire with mosaics draped in baroque ornaments. You'll find the Museo Mandralisca, a must-see museum, located a mere pebble's toss from Cefalù Cathedral. One of the standout treasures in the museum is the Ignoto Marinaio, one of few masterpieces by Antonello da Messina to survive to modern times. For exercise and unparalleled vistas, hike up the rolling top of La Rocca (4 euros per person), leading to fortress ruins and a 360-degree view of the red-roofed settlement and sapphire waters below.

After a bird's-eye ogle of the city, take a pause at the Piazza del Duomo, the grand square of Cefalù, which faces the Duomo.

For day trips that encompass more of what Sicily has to offer, save time to roam and to take in one of a dozen offshore islands. There's no storage of stunning stopovers.

Cefalù Cuisine: Seafaring has been an integral industry in Cefalù for centuries. *Ti Vitti* (www.ristorantetivitti.com/EN/) showcased locally sourced fresh-from-the-ocean dishes. *Locanda del Marinaio*, a Michelin-starred restaurant that sits alongside the main waterfront thoroughfare, offered succulent seasonal catches. More brag-worthy eateries are found off the side streets of Corso Ruggero, the chief artery in the old town centre.

Sea Comfort: While many hotels are flung along the beaches bordering Cefalù, there's no more spectacular a locale to snooze than



the Cefalù Sea Palace. From an expansive balcony perch of the Cefalù Sea Palace, I could gaze the craggy blue coastline – a tapestry of endless bliss. **AT**
www.cefaluseapalace.it/en



Blissbehavin' In covers top bliss destinations where busy executives indulge in leisure activities. Publicist/travel writer Regina Lynch-Hudson has developed articles, and destination marketing concepts for countless airlines, venues and tourism boards. www.thewritepublicist.com



They Lost Their Mothers. But They Never Lost Their Courage.



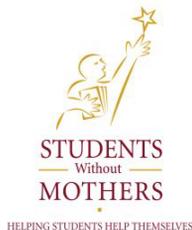
Senator Emanuel Jones
Georgia's 10th District
Keynote Speaker

Congratulations to the Recipients of the "Students Without Mothers Scholarship."

The death of a mother can have a devastating effect on a teenager. In many cases, it can put an abrupt end to any hopes of a higher education.

Students Without Mothers is a non-profit organization providing college scholarships to teens who have lost their mothers. The organizations' funds are limited however, and only a handful of deserving students can receive a Students Without Mothers scholarship every year.

This year that honor went to 6 exceptional students: Charmaine, Decatdria and Reba (pictured above); and Cameron, Skylar and Carlecia (not pictured). They received their awards at the June 13th Students Without Mothers Scholarship Luncheon where the guest speaker was State Senator Emanuel Jones. Attendees were treated to an amazing message about "Building Your Legacy" and the importance of not giving up.





The Ritz-Carlton Key Biscayne, Miami Gets It Right

By Katrice L. Mines

The idea of stateside travel locales that make you feel transported abroad ... Yes, to this. And The Ritz-Carlton Key Biscayne, Miami is one such destination.

A tropical island oasis located minutes from downtown Miami and South Beach, the four-star resort is situated along miles of golden beaches in what feels like a place set apart. Separated by little more than lush greens and the ocean; a brief drive in is all that's needed to disconnect. Simple. But, enough.

The hotel recently completed its final stage in a resort re-imagination that included a redesign of its guest rooms, reception area and a new signature restaurant, Lightkeepers. One of Miami's most iconic hotels located along the five-mile barrier island, the resort draws a variety of travelers seeking sundry experiences from family vacations to luxury jaunts. The basics and the intricacies of designing a traveler's home away from home experience are all done well here.

Opulent king and double bed options are featured in relaxing room layouts that are an extension of the hotel's breathtaking surroundings down to the details of custom-designed furniture and tropical ambiance. Two pools — one for families with a cascading waterfall and a separate adult tranquility pool for couples, nestled in lush tropical surroundings offer rest and recreation. It is believable that the resort has become a go-to destination for its indulgent nightly tequila tastings and world-class dining in one of

the resort's five-globally inspired dining destinations. Or for the evening cruises which sail the island of Biscayne Bay, Miami with panoramic views of the Miami Skyline and the Cliff Drysdale Tennis Center — one the largest tennis centers of any Ritz-Carlton worldwide. The Tennis Center features one hard court and 10 soft clay Hydrocourts, and several clinics and lessons for tennis enthusiasts of all ages.

At the 25,000-square-foot Ritz-Carlton Spa, Key Biscayne, 21 treatment rooms evoke classic West Indies glamour and tranquility, and services are inspired by the rich history of native Tequesta Indians, famed explorers and coconut plantations. The spa features a co-ed Sanctuary, eucalyptus steam rooms,

saunas, whirlpools and vitamin C-infused showers as well as two signature Couple's Suites, a full-service hair salon, fitness center, movement studio and Spa Boutique.

A wide variety of dining options has made the resort a culinary destination for even the most discerning palates. Grab coffee, snacks and sweet treats at Key Pantry, an open-style marketplace café or settle into the ocean breeze on plush sofas and cabanas for a gourmet burger at Dune Burgers on the Beach. If you're looking for a more intricate meal, Lightkeepers' inviting menu is influenced by the abundance of fresh seafood sourced from the southern waters of Florida and the fertile soils of the Florida Keys, northward. With cheeses from Winter Park, beef from Ocoee, and snapper from Key West, locally grown and caught ingredients are key to the quality and diversity of taste options. My suggestion, the Palmetto Creek Pork with smoked chorizo, white bean ragout and mustard molasses glaze.

At The Ritz-Carlton Key Biscayne, Miami the well-established nuances are not its exception; they are the rule.

Rates start at \$299. **AT**



Must-Have Apps for Small Biz Owners



WAVE

The Wave app is an easy-to-use accounting software platform made specifically for small businesses, independent contractors and sole proprietors with nine or fewer employees. It lets companies track sales and expenses, manage invoices and customer payments, pay employees, scan receipts and generate accounting reports. Waveapps.com



NETSUITE ONEWORLD

NetSuite OneWorld could be your one-stop shop for managing your business when you're away from a desktop or laptop. It provides large and small businesses with a scalable enterprise resource planning system. With the mobile app, you're able to manage expense reports, purchase orders, business dashboards and security records. Netsuite.com



GUSTO

This app streamlines your company's entire payroll, tax and benefits process. Besides online employee onboarding, Gusto automatically reports new hires to the government; handles all local, state and federal tax filings; automates deductions for benefits and workers' comp payments; and emails digital pay stubs to employees. Gusto.com

TIDBITS



JERROLD HILL, NEW TO ATLANTA HABIT BOARD

Jerrold Hill has joined the board of Atlanta Habitat for Humanity. Hill, vice president of Human Resources, Southern Company Gas, is responsible for leading the human resources strategy at Southern Company Gas, including employee relations, talent development, diversity and inclusion and labor relations. He also shapes the vision of the company as a member of the Southern Company Gas Management Council.

Hill brings more than 12 years of broad and diverse leadership experience to his role. Most recently, he served as managing director of supplier diversity and was successful developing and executing company-wide supplier diversity strategy as a vital component of the organization's strategic goals and enterprise values. His previous roles with the company include director,

3 Innovative Ways to Integrate New Technology into Your Company



1. AUGMENTED REALITY

When Microsoft unveiled its HoloLens glasses, it was quick to focus on its traditional business roots and show the potential business applications of the headset. Enterprises can use AR devices like the HoloLens to show designs, collaborate remotely and see and learn new concepts in relation to the real world.

2. WIRELESS CONFERENCE ROOMS

Ditch the clunky wires, cables and connectors. Meeting spaces are going the way of Internet connectivity into the wireless era. Apple's Airplay and Google's Chromecast have typically been cast for the consumer, but enterprises can take advantage and make their communal spaces mirror the appeal of hip co-working spaces.

3. WEARABLES

Supply your staff with fitness trackers and smart watches. The former presents a way for companies to encourage healthy and active lifestyles and the latter can present opportunities for additional mobility, accessibility, flexibility and real-time updating during the work day. **AT**

Regional Operations and operations manager with Atlanta Gas Light Company, as well as client services manager, Human Resources. Prior to his experience at Southern Company Gas, Hill spent five years with Bridgestone in leadership roles for human resources and retail management positions.

He serves on the board of directors for the Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council, is an active member of the Illinois Utilities Business Diversity Council, the American Association of Blacks in Energy, Atlanta Chapter, and volunteers with Atlanta Habitat for Humanity.

Atlanta Habitat board members serve three-year terms and are volunteers who come from a variety of backgrounds with the resources, wisdom, and passion to lead in constructive,

effective, and meaningful ways. The board is responsible for setting the overall direction of the organization including strategic goals, finances and governance policies.

"Their input and leadership will be valuable to our organization's three strategic goals, which are to increase homeownership, focus on targeted neighborhoods such as Atlanta's historic Westside, and to build our capacity to offer quality affordable housing for future homebuyers," says Atlanta Habitat president and CEO Lisa Y. Gordon.

In 2016, Atlanta Habitat built 50 new homes and completed more than two dozen critical repair projects. The organization made an annual \$6 million economic investment in Atlanta last year. **AT**

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FLAVOR-FULL:

Grilled Caesar Salad with Homemade Caesar Dressing

Now that summer has officially settled in for a spell, there's an abundance of room for grilled fare. Scrumptious grilled fare, to be exact. As outdoor entertaining, lighter bites, and more casual dining make their way to center stage, I look forward to bringing along one of my favorite dishes that serves me well throughout every season: Grilled Caesar Salad with Homemade Caesar Dressing.

If you're wondering if this dish is up for your game day, weekend soiree, weeknight meal menus, I assure you it is. It more than holds its own among burgers and franks and sides and, yes, even dessert, without sacrificing on flavor or flair. I fell in love with this salad years

ago, and it was a hit at my Spring Pop-Up Cooking School, so it has already passed the taste test many times over.

There's nothing quite like making your food from scratch. The homemade effect is hard to beat and that couldn't be truer when it comes to homemade salad dressings. Caesar dressing is especially wonderful with a bold, deeply savory and umami flavor that can single-handedly elevate your classic Caesar Salad to other-worldliness-and when coupled with grilled, slightly charred greens, you'll never see this salad the same again.

Here's to a delicious summer filled with lots of happy eating.

GRILLED CAESAR SALAD WITH HOMEMADE CAESAR DRESSING

Ingredients:

2-3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 garlic clove, peeled and finely minced
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon anchovy paste
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
Few dashes of Tabasco (optional)
3 tablespoons grated Parmesan, plus extra for sprinkling
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 large egg yolk
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
Romaine hearts

Method:

Add the lemon juice, garlic, mustard, anchovy paste, Worcestershire, hot sauce (if using), egg yolk, salt, and pepper to a blender to combine. With the blender on low, slowly drizzle in the olive oil to incorporate until dressing is thickened. Remove dressing from blender and whisk in 3 tablespoons of Parmesan. Set aside.

Heat a grill pan over medium-high heat. Take romaine hearts and lightly drizzle with olive oil. Grill, face-side down, for up to two minutes, or just until greens start to slightly wilt and char.

Greens can be served whole or chopped. Add dressing and garnish with a sprinkling of fresh Parmesan. Enjoy! **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.



Atlanta Business Community Mourns the Passing of **William "Bill" Taggart**

William "Bill" Taggart, interim president at Morehouse College and Atlanta Business League Board Chair, passed away suddenly in June.

With more than 30 years of experience with *FORTUNE* 500 companies, higher education, boutique firms and federal government agencies, Taggart distinguished himself as a result-driven leader in both public and private sectors.

He assumed the role of Interim President of the College in April 2017 after having been chief operating officer of Morehouse since 2015.

As the first Executive-In-Residence and COO of Morehouse College, his primary responsibilities were to lead and transform the institutional development, technology, campus operations, and human resources functions of the college. As well, he served as the external relations liaison to the Atlanta business and civic community, corporate America and global philanthropic organizations.

As CEO of Atlanta Life Financial Group, Taggart led the transformation of the 110-year-old firm that resulted in profits increasing over 700 percent, net margins growing from 3 percent to 24 percent, while doubling the firm's total equity and reinstating the corporate dividend to shareholders. Prior to joining Atlanta Life Financial Group, Taggart served as chief operating officer for the Office of Federal Student Aid where during his tenure, he successfully led FSA through the most significant period of growth in its history. Taggart grew federal aid to 15 million college students from \$96 to \$150 billion dollars annually. In addition, he led an agency transformation that resulted in cost savings of \$68 billion dollars over 10 years.

An Atlanta native, he earned a BBA from Howard University and received an MBA from Harvard Business School. Taggart also holds an honorary doctorate in business from Morris Brown College and was active in various business and civic organizations to include: 100 Black Men of America and Rotary Club of Atlanta. He was a board member of the Atlanta Business League, The Carter Center, Woodruff Arts Center, Westside Future Fund, Carver Bank and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta; and was a life member of National Black MBA Association and Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Incorporated. **AT**

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