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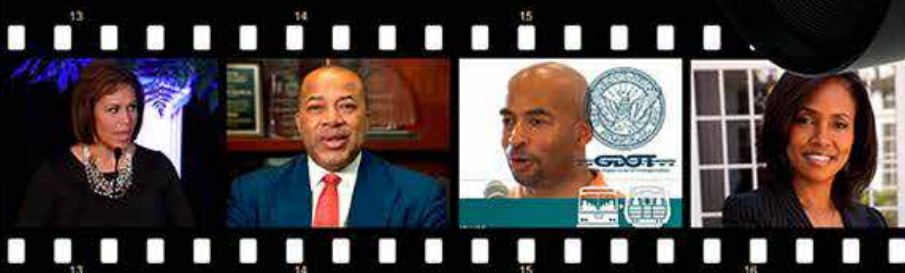
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# ATLANTA TRIBUNE

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## FORTUNE FOUND JUST ONE BLACK WOMAN FOR ITS 'MOST POWERFUL' LIST; BLACK ENTERPRISE AND ATLANTA TRIBUNE: THE MAGAZINE FOUND PLENTY

"When *Fortune* released its annual Most Powerful Woman list last week, editors at **Atlanta Tribune** and **BLACK ENTERPRISE** were surprised to find that just one Black woman made the cut: Ann Marie Campbell, the executive vice president of The Home Depot's U.S. stores.

**Atlanta Tribune** recently profiled the Women of Coca-Cola, including Kathy N. Waller, Lisa Borders who now helms the WNBA and other African-American women in senior roles at the giant enterprise. The February 2016 Issue of **Atlanta Tribune** magazine highlighted 17 of Coca-Cola's African-American female vice presidents.

In **Atlanta Tribune's** latest **Superwomen** issue, women like Shan Cooper, former general manager of Lockheed Martin filled the pages of the annual Women's History Month edition of the publication.

"It's not often that you find a collective of richly tenured African-American women executives holding senior posts in chorus – all under the banner of one corporation," Senior Editor Katrice L. Mines writes. "It is, in a word, inspiring. But, what's more stirring are the stories they share – lessons, triumphs and the intrinsic inclination to reach back."

*From Facebook: Thank you, **BLACK ENTERPRISE** and **Atlanta Tribune** for challenging Fortune but more importantly acknowledging our hard working, deserving and capable women. - Wanda McKenzie*



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## THE EDITOR'S VIEW



It is inevitable, when the nomination season for our Best of Atlanta issue begins each year, I expect to see some businesses that have become favorites of mine since readers put them on my radar in years past. I don't get to nominate, but I do root for the past winners to still be *winning* as much as I look forward to highlighting a new class of companies within the African-American small business community of metro Atlanta.

So often, the companies aren't actually new. We just have not had the pleasure of patronizing them.

These are the issues I keep at my fingertips, literally in a rack at the front of my desk, for my own reference as well as the frequent inquiries from friends and occasional calls to our offices for black-owned establishments of various industries.

If there was an issue that makes us most proud around the offices of **Atlanta Tribune: The Magazine**, I'd have to say it is the Best of Atlanta edition. Of everything we produce throughout the year, it just simply feels like our *best work* (no pun intended).

I'm positive you'll want to stash this issue away for your future needs, but I also hope that it will inspire you to let us know about your go-to and favorite black-owned spots around town for next year. We're always looking. **AT**



Katrice L. Mines  
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## NEW GROWTH

• iwi fresh Garden Day Spa's story of expansion started at its inception: Garden fresh goodness, after all, is difficult to contain. First, iwi fresh Garden Day Spa partnered with Atlanta Hot Shave to add men's grooming to its running concept of being a juice bar – or salad – for the skin. In the organic shave-skin parlor, iwi fresh's sibling gets all the trappings of the adjoining spa – where all products are handmade with fresh organic ingredients. iwi fresh's private-labeling division came next featuring owner Yolanda Owens' hand-picked selections for companies and individuals that are aligned with the iwi fresh ethos. Now, in addition to being in the process of expanding its production division to a new facility in the Westside Atlanta area to increase product revenue sales, the brand's garden fittingly includes Whole Foods on Ponce De Leon – where patrons can get the best of the Castleberry Hill flagship a little further uptown. Expansion, yes, but more accurately, growth at the juncture of readiness and opportunity.

**AT: Describe how the Whole Foods venture came about.**

Yolanda Owens: The Whole Foods venture came about with them approaching me. One day, a client and her friend booked appointments with iwi fresh for veggie mani's and pedi's. Before they checked out at the front desk, they shared how they enjoyed their services and how they loved iwi fresh's farm-to-skin concept. Then, they proceeded to say they wanted iwi fresh in their store. I asked what store, and they said Whole Foods! They were with the South Regional office and had been following and scouting iwi fresh on social media and decided to book an appointment to see if iwi fresh [was a good fit] for Whole Foods. They said that they wanted iwi fresh just as it is. I told them I needed a refrigerator to store the products and they said ok! So now, iwi fresh has a Farm-to-Skin bar in the Whole Foods Ponce De Leon store in Atlanta. We just had our one-year anniversary.

*(Continued on page 40)*



# City of South Fulton's First Municipal Judge Appointed

Tiffany Carter-Sellers has been appointed as the City of South Fulton's chief judge – the city's first municipal court judge. She will establish the municipal court to handle local ordinance violations and code enforcement violations among other duties.

For nearly a decade, Carter-Sellers – who heads The Law Office of Tiffany Carter Sellers LLC – has defended local governmental and quasi-governmental entities as well as *Fortune* 500 companies against claims of malpractice involving physicians, nurses, nursing homes and psychiatric facilities, wrongful death, premises liability involving negligent security, assault and sexual assault, employment discrimination, product liability and general commercial litigation. She uses her wealth of knowledge to assist claimants successfully pursue claims against these entities and achieve the best results possible.

Carter-Sellers earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from South Carolina State University in Orangeburg, S.C., and the University of Georgia School of Law. She has served as managing editor of the *Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law*, is a member of the Order of Barristers and a member of the 2006 Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial National Championship Team.

She will serve as chief judge part-time. **AT**



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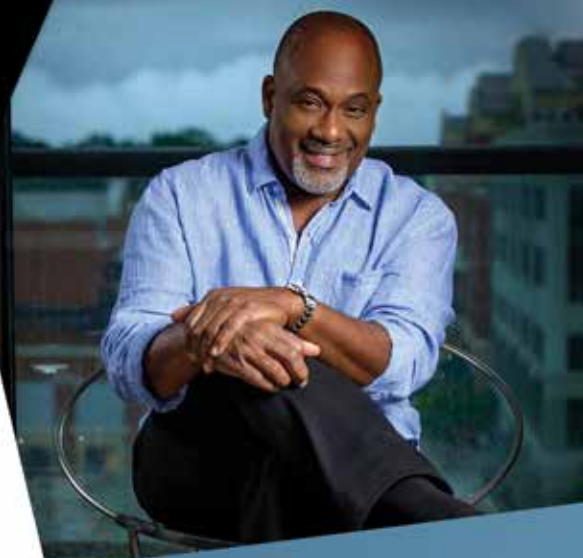
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# POWER + LEISURE.





# Harvard Debate Council Launches Program for Minority Youth in Metro Atlanta

## Harvard Debate Council Diversity Project to Raise Students' Social and Political Voice

Atlanta is now home to the Harvard Debate Council Diversity Project which, in addition to raising the social and political voice in urban Atlanta, is designed to matriculate African-American students into the Harvard Debate Council's residential summer program at Harvard University. This program gives students living in the Metro Atlanta area first-hand experience of residential life at Harvard University and an opportunity to learn from accomplished debate professors and coaches.

"Black people are magical," says Brandon P. Fleming, HDCDP executive director and assistant coach of debate at Harvard University. "I believe that whatever we haven't accomplished as a community is not due to a lack of ability, but rather an absence of high-quality educational opportunities. African Americans are still fighting to compete on a level playing field in society. This truth inevitably results in an underrepresentation on leadership platforms and unheard voices regarding critical issues that adversely affect our communities. If we truly desire diversity in American leadership, then this connection is one that we cannot afford to neglect."

This program is one of the first of its kind, according to Fleming, and will help student participants leverage both academia and leadership, as well as, present new possibilities to them. Students will attend interactive sessions two Saturdays a month from January to June 2018 consisting of critical thinking, research, and debate lessons. In Atlanta, HDCDP students will also attend lectures from Harvard debate instructors to learn the principles of debate and argumentation, and to prepare for debates centered on critical social and political issues. As well, participants will visit the Georgia State Capitol, Atlanta City Hall, law firms and courtrooms, which will serve as real-life debate stages.

"No other activity [besides academic debate] imbues young people with a skillset that will train them to be effective students, communicators and citizens. Debate combines competition with advocacy, making it rewarding and worthwhile for even the most reluctant students to learn to research, read, speak and write successfully," says Tripp Rebrovick, head coach of debate at Harvard University.

In addition to empowering and equipping area youth with unparalleled opportunities, the HDCDP also meets goals of the Harvard Debate Council. "The council is committed to both increasing the diversity of the student population at its summer workshop and expanding opportunities for high school students to participate in debate around the country and world," Rebrovick says.

Atlanta was selected as the program's base for a number of reasons

including Fleming's avid recommendation and the existence of a vibrant high school and college debate community in the city. This will allow HDCDP students to join this community and participate in competitions without having to travel to a different city, according to Rebrovick.

Atlanta's rich black history and home of the Civil Rights Movement also contributed to the decision to locate the program in the city. "Home to two of the most prestigious HBCUs [historically black colleges and universities] in the country, we knew there was no better intellectual training ground for black youth than the city of Atlanta. This city will also provide the support necessary for our youth to thrive on a national stage," Fleming explains.

Currently, the project is funded by an initial grant from the Harvard Debate Council. In order to grow the program, the council and 14-member advisory board are seeking individual and corporate sponsorships from the community.

Fleming provides encouragement for parents and students considering the program. "Seek and embrace the challenge," he urges. "Academic performance is not sufficient for the world's leading colleges and universities; these programs are seeking students that demonstrate leadership acumen—and that's what the Diversity Project helps to fulfill." **AT**

## EFFECTIVE STEPS FOR PREVENTING WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

Because of recent, alleged events involving a Hollywood executive, lively discussions about workplace harassment are featured prominently in discussions on television and social media and in workplaces throughout the country. The topics range from how could such alleged, inappropriate conduct occur over such a long period of time and, if it did occur, why did so many people permit it. While it may be that these particular types of alleged, egregious behaviors are not happening in your workplace, it is also possible that certain behaviors are occurring that might make some members of your workforce uncomfortable. For that reason, it is important for employers – and employees – to understand best practices for preventing and/or stopping workplace harassment.

Various federal, state and local laws prohibit harassment on the basis of an employee's membership in particular, protected categories. Thus, employees cannot be harassed on the basis of race, gender, religion, age, disability and national origin. State and local laws may prohibit harassment on the basis of other characteristics, including sexual orientation. While some believe such laws prohibit only sexual harassment or do not prohibit harassment against Caucasians or men, they are mistaken.

So, what should be done to prohibit workplace harassment or to address it promptly – if it occurs? The 11th Circuit recently provided guidance about certain best practices. In *Cooper*, the Court held the employer was not liable for harassment because it, in part, had policies prohibiting workplace harassment and the employee failed to report his concerns to the appropriate people outlined in the policy.

Here are some additional best practice considerations:

1. Self-regulate one's own behavior. Managers and employers must avoid engaging in behaviors that are offensive – or perceived as offensive – on the basis of protected categories. It is not a question of “political correctness;” rather, it is about demonstrating professionalism toward colleagues whose lived experiences and perspectives differ from one's own.
2. Build and reinforce respectful cultures and consequences. Employers should distribute policies explaining what unlawful harassment is and how to report concerns. Employees failing



to adhere to company expectations about maintaining respectful workplace cultures – as with any other business objective – should experience consequences. While employees appreciate policies, they are more engaged when the environment reinforces them.

3. Encourage a “speak up” culture. If you see – or hear about – harassing conduct, then speak up. Be certain to follow the procedures outlined in your company's policy. If there is no policy, then inform your human resources professional or another manager. If your manager is involved in the harassment, then report to another manager or leader in the company. Consider it your responsibility, too, to create the environment you would like to see at work.
4. Train managers and employees. Be certain that all managers and employees know your company's policies and also that managers and employees understand their obligations under these policies.
5. Remind managers and employees that the Company prohibits retaliation. To address the fear that comes with reporting harassment concerns, employers' policies – and actions – must demonstrate that retaliation is prohibited. **AT**



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



## TaxSMARTS

# TAX-SAVING STRATEGIES THAT REDUCE YOUR TAX LIABILITY

If you're looking to save money on your taxes this year, consider using one or more of these tax-saving strategies to reduce your income, lower your tax bracket, and minimize your tax bill.

### Max Out Your 401(k) or Contribute to an IRA

Many employers offer plans where you can elect to defer a portion of your salary and contribute it to a tax-deferred retirement account. For most companies, these are referred to as 401(k) plans. For many other employers, such as universities, a similar plan called a 403(b) is available.

Some employers match a portion of employee contributions to such plans. If this is available, you should structure your contributions to receive the maximum employer matching contribution. If you have income from wages or self-employment income, you can build tax-sheltered investments by contributing to a traditional (pre-tax contributions) or a Roth IRA (after-tax contributions). You may also be able to contribute to a spousal IRA even when your spouse has little or no earned income.

**Tip:** To get the most from IRA contributions, fund the IRA as early as possible in the year. Also, pay the IRA trustee out of separate funds, not out of the amount in the IRA. Following these two rules will ensure that you get the most tax-deferred earnings possible from your money.

### Bunch Your Itemized Deductions

Certain itemized deductions, such as medical or employment-related expenses, are only deductible if they exceed a certain amount. It may be advantageous to delay payments in one year and prepay them in the next year to bunch the expenses in one year. This way you stand a better chance of getting a deduction.

### Use the Gift-Tax Exclusion to Shift Income

In 2017, you can give away \$14,000 (\$28,000 if joined by a spouse) per donee, per year without paying federal gift tax. And, you can give \$14,000 to as many donees as you like. The income on these transfers will then be taxed at the donee's tax rate, which is in many cases lower.

For gift tax purposes, contributions to Qualified Tuition Programs (Section 529) are treated as completed gifts even though the account owner has the right to withdraw them. As such, they qualify for the up-to-\$14,000 annual gift tax exclusion in 2017. One contributing more than \$14,000 may elect to treat the gift as made in equal installments over the year of gift and the following four years so that up to \$56,000 can be given tax-free in the first year.

### Consider Tax-Exempt Municipal Bonds

Interest on state or local municipal bonds is generally exempt from federal income tax and from tax by the issuing state or locality. For that reason, interest paid on such bonds is somewhat less than that paid on commercial bonds of comparable quality. However, for individuals in higher brackets, the interest from municipal bonds will often be greater than from higher paying commercial bonds after reduction for taxes. Gain on sale of municipal bonds is taxable, and loss is deductible. Tax-exempt interest is sometimes an element in the computation of other tax items. Interest on loans to buy or carry tax-exempts is non-deductible.

### Give Appreciated Assets to Charity

If you're planning to make a charitable gift, it generally makes more sense to give appreciated long-term capital assets to the charity, instead of selling the assets and giving the charity the after-tax proceeds. Donating the assets instead of the cash prevents your having to pay capital gains tax on the sale, which can result in considerable savings, depending on your tax bracket and the amount of tax that would be due on the sale.

### If you are Self-Employed...

As a self-employed business owner you can also take advantage of additional tax saving strategies such as:

### Special Deductions and Tax Credits

You may be able to expense up to \$510,000 (\$500,000 adjusted for inflation) in 2017 for

qualified equipment purchases for use in your business immediately instead of writing it off over many years. Additionally, self-employed individuals can deduct 100 percent of their health insurance premiums as business expenses. If you provide health insurance to your employees, you may be able to benefit from the small business health care tax credit.

### Setting Up and Contributing to a Retirement Plan

If you have your own business, consider setting up and contributing as much as possible to a retirement plan such as Keogh plan, Simplified Employee Pension (SEP) plan or SIMPLE IRA plan. These are allowed even for a sideline or moonlighting businesses. Several types of plans are available which minimize the paperwork involved in establishing and administering such a plan.

### Hiring Your Child in the Business

If your child is under age 18, he or she is not subject to employment taxes such as FICA and federal unemployment taxes from your unincorporated business (income taxes still apply). In addition, your child may be able to contribute to an IRA using earned income. This will reduce your income for both income and employment tax purposes and shift assets to the child at the same time; however, you cannot hire your child if he or she is under the age of 8 years old. **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](mailto:steve.julal@vaasprofessionals.com).



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## LATREVIA KATES-JOHNSON, ESQ.

### *Fighting For Justice*



**S**ince 2007, St. Petersburg, Fla., native Latrevia Kates-Johnson has helmed The Kates Law Firm of metro Atlanta and Clayton County, specializing in all aspects of Civil Litigation, Criminal Defense, Personal Injury and Family Law. Her desire to become an attorney stemmed from injustices that she witnessed for many young black males, including her own brothers, who were not financially secure enough to challenge the system with strong representation.

Today, she fulfills her vision through her litigation-intensive practice, after training under some of the top litigators and judges in Clayton County. A graduate of Morris Brown College and John Marshall School of Law, Kates was a human resources specialist and recruiter at Cinnabon Inc. and Citizens Trust Bank for six years, and then left that track for law. First, she became a paralegal, then a law student and paralegal, and finally a Georgia-barred attorney running her own successful law practice.

**1. Outside of the inner motivation and concerns for justice, can you tell me more about the process and influences that have**

**resulted in you becoming a lawyer.**

It has been a long journey – but I am here and feeling good to be here. I worked my way through college as my parents did not have the resources to financially support me or my younger siblings. I had to extend my college career so that I could support myself through school, and also to provide support to my younger siblings. Fast forward, many years later, (the late) Judge Morris Braswell was speaking with me one day while I was a paralegal for Attorney Eric Carter. I was telling Judge Braswell that I would be 33 years old when I finished law school! Judge Braswell replied, “You will be 33 years old regardless!” I don’t know why that was so enlightening to me but it was ... I began my true journey that very day! I was inspired to be the best, and to feel strength in the path that took me here.”

**2. How do you walk out of law school and start your own practice?**

In part because as a paralegal, I had a lot of hands-on exposure to litigation and cases.

Also, I did my summer internships in Clayton County DA’s Office and Solicitors Office. Lastly, to be precise, I did not walk out of law school and start my own practice, because like most others, I took the bar exam right after I graduate. While I awaited Bar results, I worked for the law office of John Beal in Clayton County.

**3. Have you had a mentor - in or outside of the law - and if so, who is that person and tell me about her/him?**

My mentor has always been Robert Mack (now Clayton County Superior Court Judge). Judge Mack is a minister and God-fearing patient man. When I began my practice, he and another attorney (Ethenia King-Grant) looked out for me. They would refer cases to me and they were ALWAYS there to assist me with cases or simply guidance.

**4. What motivates you to be successful?**

The underprivileged people whom we serve. Specifically juveniles. I became an attorney to truly make a difference – not simply get rich. That said, I do operate a profitable practice, and that benefits my family, most importantly my children Kyla and Riely Johnson. They are my first loves. I am married as well to Ernest Bernard Johnson. I am a true believer in being humble and treating others as you desire to be treated. We take care of each other. To sum it up, my God, my faith, my family. My desire to make a difference - one case at a time. That’s what motivates me. **AT**




**Brian D. Poe, Esq.** is managing partner of Brian Poe & Associates, Attorneys, PC and director of a national legal search firm. He can be reached at 404.880.3318 or via e-mail at [brian@thesigningattony.net](mailto:brian@thesigningattony.net) or [brian@esquire-connect.com](mailto:brian@esquire-connect.com).



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# BEST OF ATL 2 0 1 7



## Mecca Gamble | Photographer

**W**hen Mecca Gamble gets behind her camera, she can make a rainy day look like the sun is shining; literally. The Atlanta-based wedding photographer and creative didn't set out to be a photographer from the jump of her professional aspirations, but surely destiny has a way of making sure those who are willing land right where they should.

Gamble, who says she's had her fair share of customer service and administrative jobs, found her passion on the last day of undergraduate studies when she came across a photographer's blog. "She had photographed a maternity shower, and I loved how fun the photos were," the Pittsburgh native says. "I called my mom ... it had to be no later than 7 in the morning, and told her I was going to be a photographer." Gamble took the minimal training of a singular elective photojournalism course she'd taken that semester and immersed herself in as much information as she could find.

She's turned that into a collaborative resource for the modern bride producing creative wedding and portrait photography through the east and beyond.

If she wasn't a photographer, she says she'd "totally be a middle or high school educator," adding, "I love to learn new things, and share my findings with others."

When Gamble isn't behind her camera or computer, she is cycling through the park, trying a new recipe from

Pinterest or catching up with the shows on queue in her DVR.

### Whose work has influenced you?

Danielle Finney, Latasha Haynes, Elle Danielle, Jasmine Star, Katelyn James, Amy and Jordan Demos. I've studied all of their work and have been blessed to learn from each of them in some capacity.

### How do you keep a sharp eye?

I'm always studying. I purchase magazines, read blogs, keep a vision board, attend conferences and workshops when available, and still shoot for free when I have an idea or want to try out new of equipment.

### What would you say is your signature as a creative?

Definitely my clean, colorful editing style. I often have people tell me they can recognize my work without looking at the credits.

### Who is your dream client?

I find that my dream client(s) are women who are a lot like me. I'm adventurous, fun and I love my family. **AT**





# Nicole Garner Scott

Nicole Garner Scott, in her own words, is a “serial entrepreneur.” Under that banner, she has created an enterprise consisting of a high profile public relations and marketing agency, a beauty business investment agency, an online platform to empower entrepreneurs, a non-profit fostering entrepreneurship in adolescent and teenaged girls, and has authored two books.

A product of Georgia State University and New York’s Fashion Institute of Technology, Garner Scott is the principal of the high-profile events planning, fashion and lifestyle, public relations and marketing agency – The Garner Circle PR. Beginning her career under the tutelage of some of the industry’s most noted entertainment and celebrity publicists, it didn’t take long for her to realize her passion for the lifestyle side of PR.

Since 2005, The Garner Circle has worked with world-class and emerging brands, corporations, consumer companies, technology companies of all shapes and sizes, beauty brands, regional businesses, non-profits, film/ television and high-profile individuals to help them achieve their strategic public relations and marketing objectives across a broad range of interests.

TGC’s practice areas include Consumer Brands, Health & Wellness, Book PR, Technology, Beauty, Entertainment, Nonprofit, Corporate Communications and Reputation Management, Cultural Connecting and all campaigns encompass digital strategy. Resourceful, innovative, and nimble, its team thinks big to deliver successful, game-changing results.

TGC’s aim: To develop and execute novel and fresh ways for its clients to connect with their target audiences in memorable ways. As a result, the agency measurably increases the positive results of its communication efforts.

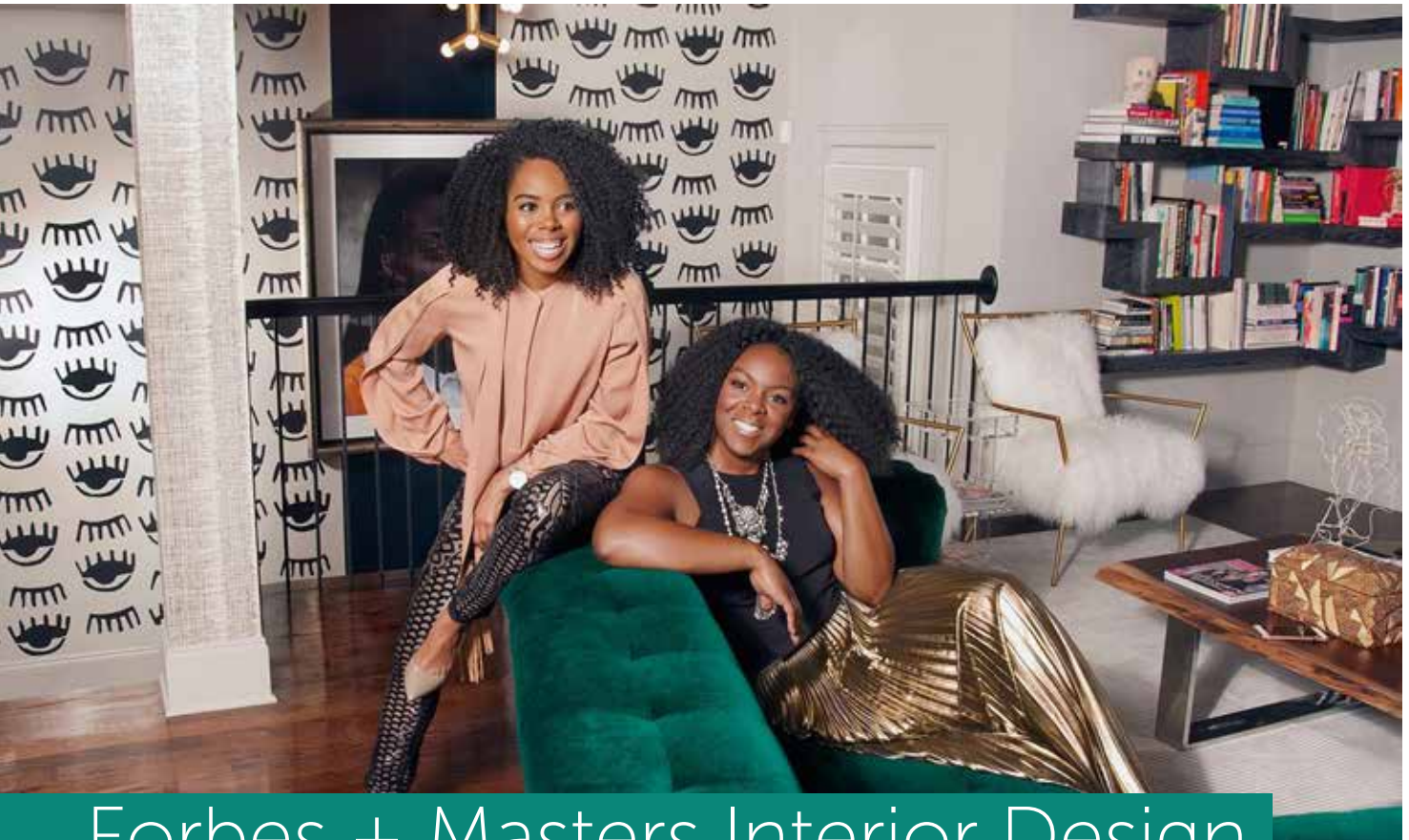
Clients include the Jaguar Luxury Brand, Lionsgate, Ciara, Estelle, Oxygen, Bravo, Beautiful Textures Hair Care, Porsche, Adidas, Xbox, Hyundai, and P&G; and its work appears on MTV, BET, E!, VH1, NBA TV and on the glossy pages of many of today’s most well-noted magazines and blogs.



Author, instructor and practitioner, Garner Scott has asserted herself as an authority in the world of publicity and branding. Opening The Garner Circle PR at the turn of the millennium, her PR firm represents fashionable clients in raw, rich, and unconventional territories. **AT**







## Forbes + Masters Interior Design



In execution and affinity, Tavia Forbes and Monet Masters have created an interior design motif that is, in a word, “audacious.” Add to that carefully curated details with touches from your travels, patterns lifted from a favorite outfit with other fond memory catchments, and they will have designed a residential or commercial space that is unmistakably and unapologetically you. Their formula, with all their eclectic leanings: First a connection to the client, then fidelity to design to merge their creativity with the client’s personality. Then come the questions: What is the architectural element in the room? Where are the windows? How tall is the ceiling? What type of flooring is currently laid? Those existing elements and the architectural elements in the space forge their design direction and their collaborative rhythm.

It’s not unlike their creation story.

The two designers met when their paths began overlapping on projects that underscored their like-minds. They decided to join forces when said overlaps meant entrusting one another with their respective clients and finding the endeavor with the existing scaffolding seamless.

Forbes brought her business background to craft client budgets and keep spending in line as well as spearheading meetings, proposal presentations and mood boards; while Masters serves as the consummate task master, who oversees project logistics, manages contractors and organizes installations, working behind the scenes to make sure everything is in order. With her design school background, she takes the reigns on renderings and floor plans for those seeking bespoke spaces.

On any given day, find them both with rolled up sleeves. With Masters creating patterns and handpainting design elements and Forbes wielding a hammer to create and customize furnishings, the team isn’t content unless they’re onsite creating custom elements specific to a design that won’t be seen elsewhere. Just call it, the Forbes + Masters aesthetic. **AT**



# Kiyomi Rollins | The Good Hair Shop

Kiyomi Rollins's preferred status is one of constant reinvention. Already a successful business owner of The Good Hair Shop since its humble beginnings at a mall kiosk back in 2008, to a thriving brick and mortar location currently, Rollins spent all of 2016 in business classes trying to be proactive versus reactive as the hammer of gentrification threatened to devour small businesses in the West End — now Westview. As a result of the classes, Rollins was able to successfully close on a small business loan through Invest Atlanta. The funding went towards yet another transformation of The Good Hair Shop which included a complete remodel and rebranding to include skin and hair product demos; and a brand new bar-style concept for its natural hair and skin product line — growing exponentially while still keeping its heart.

Its operating ethos: Natural hair — every kink, coil, loc, teeny-weeny afro or bald head is to be celebrated and loved upon; because there, “everybody has good hair.”

“Our shop is a safe place, a sacred space and a judgment free zone — your time is yours alone. The Afrocentric artwork on the walls, the music playing in the background and the images we play on the screen all work in sync to help you feel as cared for as your curls will.”

She's been at this awhile. In fact, in the community where she grew up, folks affectionately referred to Rollins as, “the neighborhood girl who did hair.” She recognized how important hair was to the black community — for both women and men, and paired it with an entrepreneurial drive that finally lured her away from the corporate realm to create a missioned-principled company that believes in educating and empowering customers about exceptional haircare that is also environmentally sustainable and a linchpin of self-care.

“Hair defines us. We make important decisions based on hair. For us it's about more than whether or not we'll attend that social event. Our hair determines whether or not we'll go for a swim or a workout, which means it even affects our health.”



The shop's namesake makes it plain.

“I call my business The Good Hair Shop because, in our culture there have always been very strong and negative connotations about 'good' and 'bad' hair. Society romanticizes certain hair textures over others and, unfortunately, we internalize that from a very young age. I want my clients to understand that good hair is whatever the Creator blessed them with. In other words, it's all good.” **AT**

# Best Lifestyle

## BEST ART GALLERIES



### 1. Zucot Gallery

100 Centennial Olympic Park Drive  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
404.380.1040  
[zucotgallery.com](http://zucotgallery.com)

### 2. Notch 8 Gallery

1397 Blashfield Street SE  
Atlanta, GA 30315  
404.913.3411  
[notch8gallery.com](http://notch8gallery.com)

### 3. Gallery 992

992 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd  
Atlanta, GA 30310  
678.974.8144  
<http://musicintheparkatl.org/gallery-992/>



## BEST EVENT SPACES

### 1. The Gathering Spot

384 Northyards Blvd. NW #190  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
404.948.2459  
[thegatheringspot.club](http://thegatheringspot.club)



### 2. COZE

255 Trinity Ave. SW, Suite A  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
404.908.8169  
[cozeatlanta.com](http://cozeatlanta.com)

### 3. The LOFT at Castleberry Hill

170 Northside Drive SW, #96  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
404.420.7030  
[loftatch.com](http://loftatch.com)



## BEST YOGA

### 1. Ona Hawk Yoga

Yoga@onahawk.com  
404.630.0000  
onahawk.com

### 2. Chelsea Loves Yoga

chelsea@chelsealovesyoga.com  
chelsealovesyoga.com

### 3. I Love My Temple Yoga

info@ilovemytemple.com  
404.314.0786  
ilovemytemple.com



## Best Professional Services

### BEST MARKETING & BRANDING FIRMS

#### 1. 4th Park

hello@4thpark.com  
4thpark.com

#### 2. Metrics Marketing Creative Consultancy

101 Marietta Street, Suite 2310  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
404.526.9321  
metricsmktg.com

#### 3. Creative Juice

75 Marietta Street, Suite 503  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
404.946.8599  
itscreativejuice.com



### BEST PR AND MARKETING STRATEGY

#### 1. The Garner Circle PR Atlanta

131 Ponce De Leon Ave.  
Atlanta, GA 30308  
262.477.3476  
thegarnercircle.com

#### 2. PRecise Communications

55 Ivan Allen Jr. Blvd. NW #840,  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
404.331.2002  
precisecomm.net

#### 3. Sankofa Public Relations

@sankofa\_pr  
sankofapr.com

# Best Professional Services (Cont.)

## **BEST ACCOUNTING**

### **1. FORBES Accounting & Consulting, Inc.**

3212 Northlake Pkwy NE, Suite 450627  
Atlanta, GA 30345  
844.432.2272  
forbes.accounting.com

### **2. VAAS Professionals LLC**

325 Edgewood Ave.  
Atlanta, GA 30312  
404.223.1058  
vaasprofessionals.com

### **3. Henry Benjamin & Co.**

3875 Powder Springs Road, Suite C  
Powder Springs, GA 30127  
770.943.0600  
henrybenjamincpa.com



## **BEST GENERAL CONTRACTING**

### **\*Dexter Jones**

#### **CuttingEdge Built LLC**

2700 Braselton Hwy, Suite 10.220  
Dacula, GA 30019  
678.804.5539  
cuttingedgebuilt.com

## **BEST LAUNDROMAT**

### **\*Brite Bubbles Coin Operated Laundry**

590 McDonough Blvd SE  
Atlanta, GA 30315  
678.732.0598  
Britebubbles.com

## **EXTERMINATOR**

### **\*Absolute Exterminating Services**

855.737.8799  
Absolute.Ext.com

## **BEST WEB & APP DESIGN FIRMS**

### **1. Nuracode**

1736 Defoor Place  
Atlanta, GA 30318  
404.425.9968  
nuracode.com

### **2. ShockTheory Interactive Inc.**

12705 Century Drive  
Alpharetta, GA 30004  
877.747.4625  
shocktheory.com

### **3. Dual.Dimensions Graphic Design**

404.583.0334  
dual.dimensions.com



# Best Special Occasion

## **BEST EVENT PLANNERS**

### **1. Park Avenue Events**

770.827.4050

hester@parkavenue-events.com

parkavenue-events.com

### **2. J. Ladson Weddings**

6600 Roswell Road, Suite C

Sandy Springs, GA 30328

478.839.5933

jladsonweddings.com

### **3. Blush Event Company**

770.550.0200

blusheventcompany.com

## **BEST CATERERS**

### **1. Hardright Bakery & Catering Inc.**

2187 Cloverdale Drive SE

Atlanta, GA 30316

404.622.0401

### **2. The Beautiful Restaurant**

2260 Cascade Road SW

Atlanta, GA 30311

404.399.3627

beautifulrestaurant-atlanta.com

### **3. Occasional Occasions by Carlton**

404.963.6857

info@OccasionalOccasions.net

cateringbycarlton.com

## **BEST PHOTOGRAPHERS**

### **1. Mecca Gamble**

678.337.8080

mecca@meccagamble.com

### **2. Taylor-Ector Photography**

770.696.1960

booking@taylorectorstudios.com

taylorectorstudios.com

### **3. Alex Jones**

770.808.5847

alex@picturealex.com

Picturealex.com



Mecca Gamble

# Best Eats



Atlanta Breakfast Club

## **BREAKFAST, BRUNCH & LIGHT FARE**

### **1. Le Petit Marche**

1986 Hosea L Williams Drive  
Atlanta, GA 30317  
404.371.9888  
lepetitmarche.net

### **2. Atlanta Breakfast Club**

249 Ivan Allen Jr. Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
470.428.3825  
atlantabreakfastclub.com

### **3. Urban Cannibals Bodega and Bites**

368 5th Street NE  
Atlanta, GA 30308  
404.330.8090



J & J Bourbon Bar

## **BEST DINE-IN RESTAURANTS**

### **1. Paschal's**

180B Northside Drive SW  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
404.525.2023  
paschalsatlanta.com

### **2. Cafe Circa**

464 Edgewood Ave.  
Atlanta, GA 30312  
cafecircalounge.com  
404.477.0008

### **3. J & J Bourbon Bar & Grill**

772 North Highland Ave. NE  
Atlanta, GA 30306  
404.345.3006

## **BEST PIZZA**

### **1. The Spinning Pie**

259 Peters Street SW  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
404.880.0703

### **2. Do At The View**

955 W Marietta Street NW  
Atlanta, GA 30318  
404.541.9060  
thedorestaurant.com

### **3. Nancy's Pizza**

265 Ponce de Leon Ave. NE  
Atlanta, GA 30308  
404.254.5103  
nancyspizzaatl.com



## BEST BBQ

### 1. Tom, Dick and Hank

191 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30312  
404.343.3774  
TomDickandHank.com

### 2. Daddy D's BBQ Joint

264 Memorial Drive SE  
Atlanta, GA 30312  
404.222.0206  
daddydz.com

### 3. Q-Time

1120 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30310  
404.758.2881

Tom, Dick and Hank



Baltimore Crab and Seafood

## BEST SEAFOOD

### 1. Baltimore Crab and Seafood

1075 Fairburn Road SW  
Atlanta, GA 30331  
404.505.2900

### 2. Sweet Auburn Seafood

171 Auburn Ave. NE Ste. P  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
678.974.5019  
sweetauburnseafood.com

### 3. Seafood on the Crest

2612 Bouldercrest Road  
Atlanta, GA 30316  
404.254.1155

# Best Eats (cont.)

## BEST VEGAN/VEGETARIAN

### 1. Viva La Vegan

1265 Lee Street SW  
Atlanta, GA 30310  
404.951.2737

### 2. Tasilli's Raw Reality

1059 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd.  
Atlanta GA 30310  
404.343.6126  
tassilisrawreality.com

### 3. Lovin' It Live

2796 E Point Street,  
East Point, GA 30344  
404.765.9220  
lovingitlive.com



Tasilli's Raw Reality



Twisted Soul

## BEST SOUL FOOD

### 1. Twisted Soul Cookhouse & Pours

1133 Huff Road NW Ste D  
Atlanta, GA 30318  
404.350.5500  
twistedsoulsouthernfried.com

### 2. Richards' Southern Fried

99 Krog Street NE  
Atlanta, GA 30307  
678.732.9594  
richardssouthernfried.com

### 3. Greens and Gravy

1540 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30310  
404.565.2074

## BEST AFRO.CARIBBEAN

### 1. Festivals Jerk Chicken Grill in Glenwood Park

925 Garrett Street  
Atlanta, GA 30316  
404.549.9828

### 2. CalaBar & Grill

4144 Redan Road Ste. 102  
Stone Mountain, GA  
30083  
404.299.2240  
calabarandgrill.com

### 3. Negril Village Atlanta

30 North Ave. NE  
Atlanta, GA 30308  
404.464.7159  
negrilvillageatl.com



Negril Village  
Atlanta

## BEST DESSERTS & TREATS

### 1. Pienanny Bakery

393 Marietta Street NW  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
404.975.3822  
pienanny.com

### 2. CheeseCaked

720 Morosgo Drive NE #110  
Atlanta, GA 30324  
404.262.3333  
cheesecaked.com

### 3. Sublime Doughnuts

535 10th Street NW  
Atlanta, GA 30318  
404.897.1801  
sublimedoughnuts.com



# Best Specialty

## BEST PET CARE SERVICES

### 1. Dogma Dog Care

4790 Wright Drive  
Smyrna, GA 30082  
404.436.4346  
dogmadogcare.com

### 2. Greenbriar Animal Hospital

3600 Campbellton Road SW  
Atlanta, GA 30331  
404.344.8079

### 3. Glamour Paws

776 N. Highland Ave. NE  
Atlanta, GA 30306  
404.885.9285  
glamourpaws.net



## BEST FUNERAL HOMES

### 1. Willie A. Watkins Funeral Home

Historical West End Chapel  
1003 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30310  
404.758.1731  
williewatkins.com

### 2. Gregory B. Levett & Sons Funeral Homes & Crematory Inc.

South DeKalb Chapel  
4347 Flat Shoals Pkwy.  
Decatur, GA 30034  
404.241.5656  
levettfuneralhome.com

### 3. Pollard Funeral Home Inc.

827 Pollard Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30315  
404.688.7073  
pollardfuneralhomeinc.com

## BEST SECURITY FIRMS

### 1. The Guardian Security & Protective Services

2839 Church Street  
Suite 200  
Atlanta, GA 30344  
404.766.2611  
theguardiansecurity.com

### 2. System 5 Electronics

1761 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30310-1251  
404.756.0312  
system5electronics.com

### 3. Culpepper & Associates Security Services Inc.

1810 Water Place  
Suite 180  
Atlanta, GA 30339  
770.916.0060  
cassecurity.com

# Best of Hair & Beauty

## BEST HAIR SALON

### 1. Shē Salon

170 Northside Drive SW Suite #99  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
404.681.2778  
shesalonatlanta.com  
Shē Salon offers an array of services from natural styling, trendy or classic cuts as well as color and weaves.

### 2. Like the River Salon

240 North Highland Ave.  
Northeast G  
Atlanta, GA 30307  
404.941.7099  
liketheriver.com

### 3. Nubiance Salon & Spa

2325 Cheshire Bridge Road NE  
#100  
Atlanta, GA 30324  
404.235.0606  
nubiancesalon.com



Shē Salon

## BEST SPECIALTY HAIR & BEAUTY

### 1. Taliah Waajid

4045 Orchard Road  
Smyrna, GA 30080  
770.805.8865  
naturalhair.org

### 2. curlBOX

981 Joseph E. Lowery Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30318  
404.875.6755  
curlBOX.com

### 3. Design Essentials

272 Park Central Blvd.  
Decatur, GA 30035  
800.535.8683  
designessentials.com



## BEST NATURAL HAIR SALON

### 1. Loop Salon

537 Ponce de Leon Ave. NE  
Atlanta, GA 30308  
404.532.0024  
loopsalon.com

### 2. The Damn Salon

6780 Roswell Road NE  
Atlanta, GA 30328  
404.832.0801  
thedamnsalon.com

### 3. Too Groovy Salon

265 Ponce de Leon Ave. Suite E  
Atlanta, GA 30308  
404.873.5300  
Toogroovysalon.com

## BEST BARBER SHOP

### 1. Rocky's Barber Shop

2591 Piedmont Road NE  
Atlanta, GA 30324  
404.228.6583  
rockysbarbershopatl.com

### 2. Classic Intown Barbershop

75 Marietta Street NW, Ste 103  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
404.521.8972

### 3. Exquisite Barber Salon

822 Concord Road SE  
Smyrna, GA  
470.424.3558



# Best of Leisure



Tipple Rose Tea Parlor

## BEST TEA

### 1. Tipple + Rose Tea Parlor + Apothecary

806 N Highland Ave. NE  
Atlanta, GA 30306  
678.705.7995

### 2. Just Add Honey

209 Edgewood Ave. SE  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
404.314.6261  
justaddhoney.net

## BEST COFFEE

### 1. Urban Grind ATL

962 Marietta Street NW  
Atlanta, GA 30318  
404.724.0605  
urbangrindatl.com

### 2. Grant Park Coffeehouse

753 Cherokee Ave. SE  
Atlanta, GA 30315  
404.856.0433  
grantparkcoffeehouse.com

### 3. Dream Café

249 Peters Street SW  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
404.975.3859  
dreamcafeatlanta.com



Just Add Honey

## BEST WINE SELECTION & TASTING

### 1. Tilford Winery and Farms

126 Berrypatch Lane  
Kathleen, GA 31047  
478.396.3025  
tilfordwinery.com

### 2. The Wine Cellars

1295 West Spring Street, Suite 100  
Smyrna, GA 30080  
770.437.1753  
winecellarsonline.com

### 3. Pop The Cork Wine Tours

404.433.2956  
popthecorkwinetours.com

## BEST PAINT & SIP

### 1. Urban Art Expression

291 Peters Street SW  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
404.386.3427  
urbanartexpression.com/  
events

### 2. Creative Art Connection

2050 Lawrenceville Hwy.  
Decatur, GA 30033  
615.601.2787  
creative-art-connection.us

### 3. Mosaic Moon Mobile Paint and Sip

404.994.0515  
mosaicmoon.life

# Best of Leisure

(cont.)

## BEST BOOK STORE

### 1. Medu Book Store

2841 Greenbriar Pkwy. SW  
Atlanta, GA 30331  
404.346.3263  
medubookstore.com

### 2. Shrine of the Black Madonna

946 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd. SW  
Atlanta, GA 30310  
404.-752.6125  
shrinebookstore.com

### 3. Nubian Bookstore

1540 Southlake Pkwy., Suite 7A  
Morrow, GA 30260  
678.422.6120

## BEST LOUNGE



Boogalou Restaurant and Lounge

### 1. Boogalou Restaurant and Lounge

239 Ponce De Leon Ave. NE  
Atlanta, GA 30308  
boogalouatl.com

### 2. Studio No. 7

393 Marietta Street NW  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
404.549.9839  
studio7.com

### 3. Habanos Cigar Lounge

301 Peters Street SW  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
404.330.8669  
habanoscigaratl.com

# Best of Health & Wellness

## BEST HEALTHY CHEFS

### 1. Sepsenahki Aahkhu, a.k.a. "Chef Ahki"

800.987.1466  
gochefahki.com

### 2. Nikki Can COOK

678.829.2035  
nikkicancook.com

### 3. Charlie Hatney & Co.

404.578.0020  
charliehatney.com



Bee Lux Goods



## BEST ORGANIC SKINCARE

### Bee Lux Goods

426 Seminole Ave. NE  
Atlanta, GA 30307  
404.907.4607  
theluxbee.com

Apparel. Bath. Body. Face. Fragrance. Hair.  
Home Goods. Honeysuckle Makeup. Men's  
Products. All natural. All handmade.



## BEST SPAS

### 1. iwi fresh Garden Day Spa

341 Nelson St. SW  
Atlanta, GA 30313  
404.577.8072  
iwifresh.com

### 2. Celestial Spa

2930 Cascade Road SE,  
Atlanta, GA 30311  
404.691.2448  
celestialspa.com

### 3. Spa Flow

800.518.0080  
thespafLOW.com

## BEST HOLISTIC HEALTH CENTERS

### 1. Mind Body Spirit Wellness Center

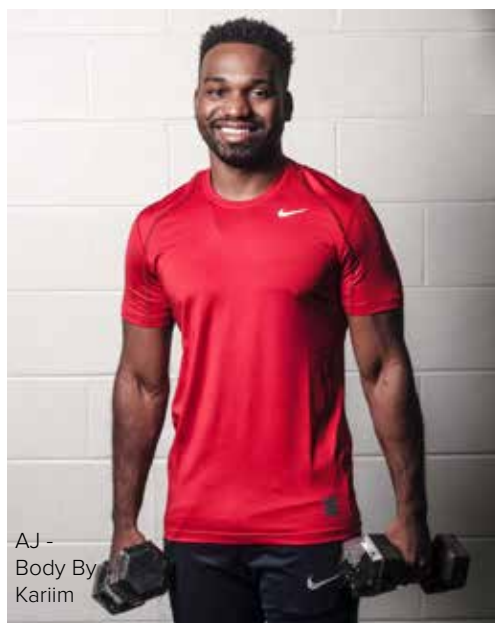
2801 Buford Highway NE, Suite T-30  
Atlanta, GA 30329  
404.478.9868  
mbswellness.org

### 2. Cooke Holistic Health

Lenox Towers  
50 Lenox Pointe NE, Suite A  
Atlanta, GA 30324  
678.395.4004  
cookeholistic.com

### 3. First Fruit Natural Healing Home

3084 Woodrow Drive  
Lithonia, GA 30038  
770.484.4745



## BEST FITNESS TRAINERS

### 1. Body By Kariim Fitness

1331 Marietta Blvd. NW, Suite A  
Atlanta, GA 30318  
404.724.9917  
bodybykariim.com



Body By Kariim Fitness trainers understand that exercise and clean eating may be foreign to most people. So they take into consideration how intimidating it may be to walk into a fitness facility for the first time. Using state of the art equipment, Body By Kariim Fitness customizes workout regimens to suit their client's fitness goals. In addition to physical fitness, clients are educated on nutrition (BBK eats). BBKF takes pride in teaching clients the importance of making health and wellness a part of their lifestyle, instead of a chore or necessary evil their results have extended far beyond the gym.

"Real people, real results" is much more than just a tagline at Body By Kariim Fitness Studios – it's a mantra.

### 2. Rahman "Ray" Grayson, "MR. SHUT UP AND TRAIN"

500 Bishop Street NW  
Atlanta, GA 30318-4380  
info@mrshutupandtrain.com  
mrshutupandtrain.com

### 3. Gymnetics Fitness

1465 Chattahoochee Ave., Suite 700  
Atlanta, GA 30318  
678.705.7581  
gymneticsfitness.com



**AT: What can customers expect from your Whole Foods offerings?**

O: Customers can expect a farm-to-skin experience. We are not just a product on the shelves, we have a Farm-to-Skin Bar with a mini refrigerator to store our fresh skin care products. We have an apothecary ice bin to display our testers to maintain the freshness. This is the first Farm-to-Skin Bar in Whole Foods Ponce De Leon that has a limited shelf life that must be refrigerated to maintain the freshness. The iwi fresh farm-to-skin bar is also DIY – meaning customers can customize and pump their own body oils. Customers can expect to see me – the Skin Care Chef – doing skin demos monthly.

**AT: How has your presence at Whole Foods enhanced your business?**

O: The Whole Foods friendship has enhanced our presence in the community. It has driven traffic to our spa. Many Whole Foods shoppers are interested in iwi fresh Farm-to-Skin products and are eager to experience our spa services. We get Whole Foods customers on a regular basis now.

**AT: In our last check-in you mentioned your immediate focus was continuing to establish partnerships with**

**local farms, gardens and farmers markets ... as well as corporations like the Atlanta Falcons – any news to share on the latter?**

O: We are and will consistently establish partnerships with local farms and corporations. We have established a strong partnership with community organizations such as The Arthur Blank Foundation regarding special iwi fresh community activities, Spelman College, West Atlanta Watershed Alliance, Aziza Enterprises, and Regions Bank just to name a few.

**AT: What's next for iwi fresh?**

O: We are focusing on promoting more men's self-care with our gentleman spa services and partnering with our men's division "Atlanta Hot Shave" on men's grooming. We are forever passionate about growing our youth division "Green Skin Girlz," teaching young girls how to take care of their skin naturally at an early age. We are also embracing the DIY component of our brand. So, we are launching a DIY mask bar where our customers can make their own face mask, hair mask, foot mask and beard mask. Finally, we are launching our iwi fresh app during the holiday season – starting with the Friday after Thanksgiving which we will now call "Green Friday." **AT**





#### 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](https://twitter.com/brentleary)

# AI, Automation and CRM can help make SAD Small Businesses Happier

Salesforce recently released their second annual "Small and Medium Business Trends" report, where they surveyed nearly 500 small business owners and leaders from companies between two and 199 employees.

Small businesses were defined as those with two to 49 employees, and a distinction was made between growing small businesses vs. Stagnant and Declining, or SAD, small businesses.

Growing businesses are defined as having more than a 1 percent growth in revenue the past two years. SAD small businesses, on the other hand, had revenue increases of less than 1 percent, or a decline in revenue over the past two years. With that in mind, here are a few things that stood out to me in looking at the numbers.

Growing small businesses value CRM/Helpdesk software, SAD ones don't

Finding and keeping good customers is always cited as top concerns of small businesses, along with not having enough time, and having difficulty finding good employees. But looking at the results of this survey, many SMBs aren't addressing customer acquisition and retention issues as if they're at the highest levels of importance, or possibly don't equate customer relationship management software as a solution to those challenges.

In general, small businesses cited productivity, financial and security software as their top three technology budget priorities. But growing small businesses view CRM differently than SAD small businesses do. CRM was the top technology budget item for growing small businesses, being more than twice as likely to prioritize it than SAD small businesses (36 percent vs. 16 percent).

Growing small businesses focus more on automation, AI and customer experience

The survey shows more than half of small businesses cite controlling the cost of delivering service as being the top challenge in supporting customers. Which is why many businesses have turned to automation software to handle routine processes more efficiently, from both a time and cost perspective. And while 69 percent of growing small businesses say they are automating business processes, only 42 percent of SAD small businesses are doing so.

In fact, growing small businesses are two and a half times more likely to use helpdesk software to help manage customer inquiries than SAD small businesses. The importance of providing customers quick answers to questions they have cannot be overstated, as it can be the



difference between a one-time customer transaction, or a long-term customer who not only spends more with you, but also refers business to you – thus lowering customer acquisition costs.

Based on the survey numbers, it looks like growth-oriented small businesses understand this, and view creating better customer experiences as a key to their long-term success. And by viewing customer support more as a cost challenge than an opportunity to reinforce a commitment to customer success, SAD small businesses end up not responding to customer inquiries three times more than growing businesses do. And nothing could be worse for businesses than not responding to customers when they need help.

Artificial intelligence is another form of automation that has begun to take hold in businesses over the past 12-18 months. But it's being used to help organizations gain a better understanding of what they can do to assist customers throughout the life of the relationship as their business needs change over time. And even though it is relatively new, growing small businesses are twice as likely to be using AI in some form or fashion than SAD small businesses.

The bottom line is you don't want to be SAD when you're in business

The willingness to invest in automation, AI, and other technologies to improve customer engagement, and the ability to consistently provide valuable experiences over time, separate growth-oriented small businesses from their SAD counterparts. More automation and automation-driven customer insights can drive more top and bottom line growth, and allow companies to scale their capabilities more efficiently. Now that should turn a SAD frown upside down for your business. **AT**

## EXECUTIVE GIFT GUIDE

**Samsung Galaxy S8**

The revolutionary design of the Galaxy S8 begins from the inside out. Samsung rethought every part of the Galaxy S8 layout to break through the confines of the smartphone screen with the biggest, most immersive screen and an Infinity Display that has an end-to-end screen that spills over the phone's sides. Its 12MP rear camera and the 8MP front camera are so accurate and fast that you won't miss a moment, day or night. Iris scanning protects your phone and its contents for your eyes only; when you need to unlock really fast, face recognition is a handy option. And it's easy to hold in one hand.

From \$724.99

Samsung.com

**Figuier / Fig Tree Candle**

Related to the eau de toilette Philosykos, it intensifies the tree's qualities: the warmth of the bark, the freshness of the leaves, and the milky sap of its fruit.

\$64 (6.5 oz.)

Diptyque.com

**TOM FORD Orchid Soleil**

In Soleil, the original Black Orchid accord becomes illuminated by an aura of deftly worked tuberose, marrying the creamy, molten floral sensuality of that iconic flower with crisp, floral, and spicy elements. A high concentration of salicylate compounds offer a spicy, metallic glint.

\$122

Sephora.com

**Hello Fresh**

They shop, plan and deliver step-by-step recipes and ingredients so you can just relax and enjoy all there is to love about cooking. And eating. Classic plans starting at \$4.99 per serving  
Hellofresh.com

**Hermes Petit Baigneur Silk Twill Tie**

100 percent silk twill tie, hand-folded.

\$240

Hermes.com







### **BOSE Lifestyle 650 Home Theater System**

Enter audio nirvana with the Lifestyle 650 Home Entertainment system. Acoustics. Aesthetics. Craftsmanship. Simplicity. For your movies and music, this home entertainment system is Bose's most uncompromising five-speaker home theater system.

\$3,999

[Bose.com](http://Bose.com)



### **Tiffany Twist Knot Pendant**

\$135

[Tiffany.com](http://Tiffany.com)



### **Apple Watch Series 3**

Answer a call from your bike. Ask Siri to send a message. Stream your favorite songs on your run. And do it all while leaving your phone behind. Introducing Apple Watch Series 3 with cellular. Now you have the freedom to go with just your watch.

From \$329

[Apple.com](http://Apple.com)



### **Gold Stemless Wine Glasses**

Your favorite varietals will seem even more luxurious when sipped from our delightfully priced stemless wine glasses, featuring faceted design in gleaming gold.

\$23.96, set of four

[Worldmarket.com](http://Worldmarket.com)



### 911 Turbo | Porsche Experience

There are several turbos around but there is only one 911. This information might not be exactly new but for Porsche it is truer than ever. Because the 911 Turbo is Porsche's benchmark – for everything that it builds.

Experience Includes:

- Personal Driving Coach for the duration of the appointment
- Ability to drive one (1) Porsche vehicle
- Driving Theory session

\$800 for 1.5 hours

[Porschedriving.com](http://Porschedriving.com)



### SimpleHuman Sensor Mirror

This sensor mirror lights up automatically as your face approaches. Its tru-lux light system simulates natural sunlight, allowing you to see full color variation, so you'll know when your makeup is color-correct and flawless. And unlike traditional makeup vanity mirrors' bulb lighting, its long-lasting LEDs won't burn out or diminish even after many years.

\$180

[Simplehuman.com](http://Simplehuman.com)



### Tangram - Smart Jump Rope

Discover your new favorite workout with this Smart Rope jump rope. LEDs float data in front of you as it counts and tracks each jump, and the battery can power through 36 hours of workouts with each two-hour charge.

Sync this Smart Rope jump rope with the available Smart Gym app to document your progress.

\$79.99

[Bestbuy.com](http://Bestbuy.com)



### Grand Trunk Hooded Neck Pillow

A warm fleece hood, memory foam neck support, and attached eye shade will make inflight sleep extra comfortable and give a bit of privacy. An adjustable cordlock secures the hood in place.

\$40

[Brookstone.com](http://Brookstone.com)

### Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore D.O.C.G. Extra Dry

Meticulously produced from grapes grown in the Prosecco Superiore D.O.C.G. zone, which make this wine the finest expression possible of the Glera grape. This elegant sparkling wine appears a distinctive, luminous straw yellow, with a long-lasting bead of pin-point bubbles. Its rich bouquet is redolent of floral essences and emphatic impressions of apple and peach, with a subtle touch of citrus.

\$19

[usa.mionetto.com](http://usa.mionetto.com)





# leisure power

*Welcome to your downtime*



**Sheraton Bay Point  
Resort | Panama City  
Beach**

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# SHERATON BAY POINT RESORT | PANAMA CITY BEACH

By Katrice L. Mines

**C**ast aside everything you think you know about Panama City Beach. If you haven't stayed at Sheraton Bay Point Resort, your experience is, in a word, incomplete.

The beach front property, situated along the historic St. Andrews Bay, offers views of the coastal marshes and tranquil bay waters – a stretch of escape from the crowds and noise without sacrificing a good time. A quintessential Florida vacation destination, Sheraton Bay Point is the only AAA Four Diamond rated resort in Panama City Beach. Unveiling late summer after an impressive \$30-million-dollar renovation and rebranding, the Resort creates a personalized coastal experience with the highest standard of hospitality. Speckled by palm trees and encircled in natural beauty, the modern aesthetic, five distinctive resort dining options, more than 60,000 square feet of group space, and full-service spa, bring the 320-room, wellness-focused property to its peak, offering an experience rich with amenities that will fit virtually any guests' getaway desires.

Deluxe Pool View rooms provide first-floor walkout access to the main pools and Bay View rooms welcome the beauty of the Bay vistas into the room design, while the Golf Villas offer an escape from the resort campus. Family centric and pet-friendly, it's easy to settle into what is an apt stand-in for all the comforts of home, including your pup's doggie bed and the neighborhood Starbucks. Get your usual order in the Market Place just off the lobby.



Aside from lounging by one of three pools, Bay Point Lady offers multiple scheduled boat trips daily through St. Andrews Bay to Shell Island. Often escorted by dolphins, you'll arrive to the seven-mile sprawl of pristine beaches with rolling sand dunes, untouched by modern development and away from bustle of other area beaches. To replenish, Serenity Spa – featuring exclusive amenities from sauna and whirlpool to the Reflection zero-entry pool offering calming vistas of St. Andrews Bay and delivers treatments designed for full-body wellness.

A go-to destination for golfers, lovers of the game have at their disposal 36 holes of on-property championship links, including the only Nicklaus Design Course in Northwest Florida. The first 18 – the Nicklaus Course – is inundated with the legend's signature design touches. Playing an impressive 7,100 yards from the backset of tees, mastering the Nicklaus course means coming out ahead on the layout's many risk/reward opportunities, including the signature island-fairway Fifth Hole. The 6,900-yard Meadows Course is the length to test the best golfer's distance, and the classic Olde Florida layout is timeless and enchanting, with tall trees, strategically placed bunkers, tight fairways and areas of water in play at various points throughout the 18. More forgiving than the Nicklaus Course, Meadows is the perfect mix of challenge and playability to suit golfers of all experience levels. The two championship courses are woven together with a common thread of incredible scenic views.



Because the best jaunts, call for little more than a few comfortable pieces thrown into a duffel, Hammocks Beach Bar, peppered between the palms, is perfect for dinners that wind down with the sunset. In the off-season, Tides' with bold – the resort's casual fine dining option – boasts a menu of signature dishes featuring the flavors of Chef Shane Miller's culinary upbringing in the Louisiana Bayou – such as the favorite Gumbo Ya-Ya and Gulf White Shrimp & Grits. A culinary mastermind celebrated for his winning appearances on Food Network's® "Cutthroat Kitchen" and "Guy's Grocery Games," Miller introduces dishes that promise unexpected, mouth-watering flavors featuring the freshest of local ingredients.

What's left to do but check your calendar and go? **AT**



**HISTORIC BEAUFORT,  
SOUTH CAROLINA**

# **HOLIDAY SEA ISLAND CELEBRATION**

**A Gullah Kinfolk  
Christmas Wish**

**December 1 • 7 pm**

**USCB PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

805 Carteret Street

Beaufort, South Carolina 29902

**Feasting...  
Art...Full-Stage Musical**

**\*Tickets:**

\$30 Advanced

\$35 At Door

\$10 Ages 7-17

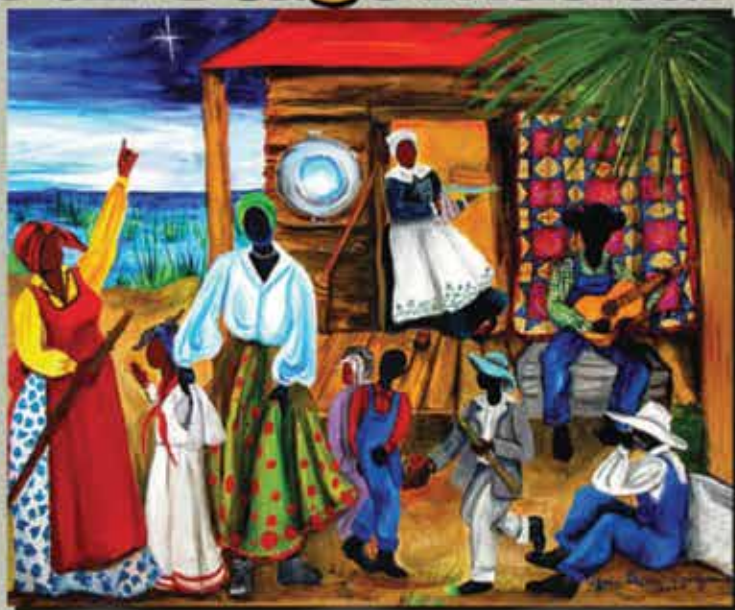
**On Sale At:**

**Black Chamber of  
Commerce**

**843-986-1102**

**www.bcbcc.org**

*\*Special Group Rates*



**South Carolina**  
Just right.





# THE LOOKOUT

*On Trend*

WHAT I'M LOVING FOR FALL

MY VICARIOUS LIFE  
MYVICARIOUSLYFE.COM



**Shiseido Pureness Mattifying Moisturizer**  
\$33.50  
SHISEIDO.COM



**Crystal Frame Horn Rimmed Glasses**  
\$10  
SUNGLASSLA.COM



**A New Day™ Plaid Boyfriend Blazer**  
\$34.99  
TARGET



**Sephora Collection Red Clay Mask**  
Energizes and fights fatigue when the daylight hours are fewer.  
\$8  
SEPHORA



**Culver Santa Monica Distressed Boyfriend Jeans**  
\$47  
TOBI.COM



**Spanx Faux Leather Leggings**  
\$98  
SPANX.COM



**A New Day™ Slim Fit Straight Leg Plaid Ankle Pants**  
\$27.99  
TARGET



**Stila Stay All Day Foundation & Concealer**  
\$34  
ULTA

I'm completely enamored with **Bite Beauty's Multistick**. For fall, I imagine I'll be constantly toggling between Anise, Honey Wheat and Cerise for a pop on the cheeks or a complete monochromatic look.

\$24

SEPHORA



**Catrice Prime & Fine Pore Refining Anti-Shine Base**  
\$7.99  
ULTA



**Kat Von D Beauty Shade + Light Creme Contour Palette**  
\$49  
KATVONDBEAUTY.COM



Love a little extra in a statement shoe.  
**Pink Court Heel with Jewel Detail**  
\$78  
MISS SELFUDGE



# Road Tripping with the 2017 Chevrolet Bolt EV

By Debbey Thomas, Ed.D.

Recently, I had the pleasure of taking a road trip to Asheville North Carolina in the Chevrolet Bolt EV. The Bolt EV is Chevrolet's first all-electric vehicle. It has been named the 2017 North American and Motor Trend Car of the Year.

Key features of the car include:

- 238 mile Battery Range: Offers an EPA estimated 238 miles of range on a single battery charge.
- Surround Vision: Four strategically placed cameras create a virtual bird's-eye view of the vehicle while maneuvering at low speed. All camera viewpoints seamlessly merge to help you see both the area behind and around you.
- Apple CarPlay/Android Auto: New phone integration features enables phone users to display certain apps and functionality from the phone on the vehicle's infotainment display and also allows one to control the apps and functions via the vehicle's infotainment system touchscreen or voice commands.
- 4LTE Wifi: Enables drivers to explore new features like a built in WiFi hotspot capable of pairing up to seven devices as well as improved access to existing OnStar safety and security services.
- MyChevrolet Mobile App: The myChevrolet mobile apps turn a mobile device into a virtual command center giving seamless control of the vehicle even when you're nowhere near it.
- Regen on Demand: With a pull of the paddle on the steering wheel, you're able to slow down without using the actual brake pedal. The helps convert energy into more electricity and then transfer it back to the battery.
- One Pedal Driving: When in low mode at any speed, the car can be slowed down and brought to a complete stop by lifting your foot off the accelerator. This feature helps transfer energy back to the vehicle battery instead of losing energy when the brakes are applied.
- Ten standard air bags

After breakfast, a brief brand orientation, and vehicle walk through, we were ready for our weekend adventure to Asheville. While loading the car, we discovered there was more than adequate trunk space for luggage with the enhanced feature of foldable hatchback seats. The interior of the car was sleek and high tech. The only drawback I saw was the manual adjustment of the seats. I thoroughly enjoyed the GPS digital display system with the large wide rear camera and surround vision that is standard on the premiere model. I currently have a rear camera view on my car, but I don't consider it user friendly. The Bolt rear camera gave a superb background view. OnStar was a definite plus, as we called OnStar to program our route directly onto the car screen until we could familiarize ourselves with the car's features. Upon starting the



car, the radio came on which was a nice feature as well as the clearly displayed mph, and the easy to reach seat belt connectors. There was also a safety mode for teenage drivers. The EV Bolt was smooth and felt like riding in a SUV.

During the orientation, we were instructed to download several apps that displayed designated charging stations on the route. We had no idea how helpful the apps would become until we felt a need to recharge the car. I would recommend mapping your route in advance if driving out of town. With two of us in the car, one was able to drive while the other person searched the apps for charging stations. The apps were relatively easy to use and we quickly found a charging station at a nearby hotel. While waiting, we took time to enjoy lunch and read the car manual. We did discover the amount of charge time depended on how fast the car was driven, wind speed, road conditions, and other variables, which could necessitate additional charging time. The additional unique safety features I enjoyed included side blind zone alert, rear cross traffic alert, forward collision alert and forward pedestrian alert. Everyone struggles with crossing lanes and being on high alert for the dreaded blind spot. The Bolt alerted you of blind spots which could save lives and avoid accidents.

After a pleasant weekend, it was time to return home. The hotel had two charging stations, with only one station working. It was a little challenging to find the exact time to charge but we made it work and were able to charge our car the night before leaving. As a result of reading the manual, we were able to conserve charge driving time by keeping a steady pace. The car's navigation system gave us estimated time of arrival and digitally displayed the remaining amount of charge time. We thought it best to recharge the car before we brought it in and used our app to find the nearest charging station. The app led us to The Mall of Georgia which is the largest mall in Georgia. After the GPS informed us we had arrived, we were baffled as where the charge station was located. OnStar came through for us. The OnStar lady was most helpful and led us directly to the charging station. There were multiple chargers for various electric cars so we had no problem hooking up. It was now time for us to peruse the mall and grab a bite to eat while waiting for the car to charge. After a two hour break, the car was sufficiently charged. We turned the GPS on and continued our journey to the drop off location. The Chevy Bolt EV electric car surpassed my expectations in regards to the maneuverability, comfort of ride, wide screen surround vision attributes, safety features, and navigation system. If you are looking to purchase an affordably quality reliable electric car, the Chevy Bolt EV is the route to take.

# 2018 VOLVO XC60 T6: SUPERB EXECUTION



by Brian Armstead

With such a wide array of Crossover and Sport Utility Vehicles now on the market, wily auto manufacturers are in a pitched battle to infuse their 'Utes with the latest comfort, convenience and safety technology.

Volvo is no different. Once on the brink of extinction, the renowned Swedish brand was purchased by Chinese auto giant Geely, which wisely pumped cash into Volvo to resuscitate it, while allowing Volvo to do what it does best, build superb cars with tons of luxury and safety. The result has been a string of hits for Volvo, including the XC90, S90 and the 2018 XC60.

Let's start outside with the all-new XC60 where surprisingly, Volvos are now known for sensuous, sleek styling. Up front, "Thor's Hammer" headlights with LED technology are a "smashing" styling hit. Loosely based on the shape of Thor's Hammer from Norse mythology, these headlights make quite a statement that carries into the side styling. Along the sides, the profile sports a high character line that accentuates the height of the XC60. Deeply sculpted concave lower door panels angle down toward symmetrical, convex rocker panels. Add an upper hatch lip spoiler and optional 20" diamond-cut alloy wheels, and the XC60 is a bonafide head turner. Remember, Volvo was formerly known for safety and boring styling. Still a safety icon, Volvo's new styling themes are superb.

Inside, good things continue. The list of standard and available comfort and convenience features is comprehensive, depending on trim level. XC60s are available in Inscription, Momentum and R Design trims, with

prices starting at \$41,500.

During the national media launch for the XC60 in scenic Denver, I drove a top-of-the-line Inscription T6 model with a base MSRP of \$45,300.

Standard Inscription goodies include remote engine start, navigation with real time traffic, blind spot system, panoramic sunroof, real wood or aluminum mesh interior inlays, Nappa leather seats, hands-free tailgate, Wi-Fi hotspot and much more.

With the Inscription trim level, you can choose from three propulsion options, all with All-Wheel Drive. T5 models offer 250 horsepower, T6 models 316, and plug-in Hybrid T8 models, 400 horsepower.

Power in T6 guise is very impressive. As we wound our way through very twisty roads at high elevations in the Rocky Mountains, the T6 responded without a hiccup — a notable achievement given that automobiles generally lose power as the air gets thinner at higher altitudes.

Another achievement of note for the XC60 and for all current model Volvos is that they are fun to drive. Lighter weights, more advanced technology and a whole new philosophy drives Volvo's new commitment to performance and handling. And they are still world leaders in safety.

The 2018 Volvo XC60 is a well-executed SUV. Well done, Volvo. **AT**



# WEEKENDER

## ZIP AND STAY

By Caleb Saffo



Now, going into the course, having fun was firmly entrenched as my *second*-most pressing concern. My first, of course, was safety. Fortunately, the course tour guides (who make charmingly corny puns throughout the tour) and Amicalola's safety guidelines set my mind at ease — after I made it through the nerves of the first jump, of course.

The park employs a line system where each guest is secured on the line at the start of the tour and stays attached to the line until the completion of the course. This approach cuts out much of the potential for error and potential injury, as many ziplining accidents occur due to incorrect detachment or reattachment of the zipliner to the line. This, paired with concise and easy-to-follow instructions from the guides, allowed me to focus on other things, like the view of the landscape as I raced through the 2,000-foot-long line that the guides have affectionately named "Ralph."

I can freely admit: *I had reservations* about Amicalola State Park & Lodge's zipline canopy tour. After all, there are several words that one could use to describe me, but adventurous is not one of them — at least, I'm not adventurous in the way that came to mind when I thought of ziplining.

That is what was so impressive about my ziplining experience.

The tour has 16 total lines, which are divided up into two levels. Level 1, which could be described as the beginner's level and costs \$59 per person, has nine ziplines that range from 100 to 1,000 feet in length and reach heights of 25 to 80 feet in the air. This package is well-suited for children, families, and first-time zipliners.

That is not to say that the course does not also have something for the experienced thrill-seeker. The Level 2 package, which includes Level 1 and the addition of seven more ziplines, features lines that stretch as far as 2,000 feet in length and carry you as high as 200 feet in the air. It costs \$99 per person, and provides a breathtaking view of the park's mountain ranges, which are as lush a landscape as you'll experience in the state of Georgia.



The ziplines alone would provide for an excellent destination, but the lodge makes the state park a weekend getaway. The 57-room lodge recently underwent renovations, and includes a gift shop and restaurant with a three-meal buffet. The crown jewel of the aforementioned renovations is a set of patios that now accompany the lowest level of rooms. The patios offer a stunning view of the mountains, perfect for watching the sun set over the range. These amenities and more upgrade Amicalola State Park from a fun one-day stop to a weekend destination.

I came to the state park cautious about ziplining, and left wanting to try out Ralph again; the emphasis on safety *and* enjoying the lines converted me. But even if you just want to dip your toes in the ziplining waters, or just watch the view of the landscape from afar on your patio, the park is still a suitable destination — Amicalola Falls has a little something for everyone. **AT**



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2017 Hall of Fame Induction  
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[Hammondshouse.org](http://Hammondshouse.org)





*Blissbeavin' in*

# VATICAN CITY, ITALY

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

As an avid traveler, I can attest that locale size is over-rated. After trekking countless world-class metropolises, it's clear that the finest treasures are often found in the tiniest of places. Encircled by a two-mile border with Italy, Vatican City is the smallest independent nation on earth (situated within the City of Rome), that covers barely 108 acres and -embodies the world's largest collection of art. As headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church, and home of the ruling Pope, Vatican City also boasts its own flag and even mints its own euros.

During a recent Roman holiday, we made the pilgrimage to Vatican City, and it was there that we ogled an stash of paintings, sculptures and tapestries. Along with thousands of other tourists, we wandered the limited acreage that's availed to sightseers, mainly the Sistine Chapel, Vatican Museum and Gardens and St. Peter's Basilica.







**The Va-Va-Va Voom Vatican Museum:** The Vatican Museum occupies much of Vatican City's wee domain, and comprises countless exhibitions. Annually, more than 6 million people swam the Vatican Museum. Springboarded in the early 16th century with an assemblage of sculptures collected by famed Renaissance pope, Julius II, the Museum has morphed into a compilation of sculpture and art, bordered by architectural grandeur.

**The Splendor of Sistine Chapel:** One of the most impressive quarters for art one can imagine is the Sistine Chapel. To access the Chapel, you must trek through the Vatican Museum's corridors of ancient art and artefacts, amongst a chaotic crowd. The chapel is small in scope, but houses the most distinguished works of Michelangelo, including his depiction of God bestowing life to Adam as their fingertips touch. Every square inch flaunts splendor that will cause climatic gasps. Heaven forbid if you should gasp but so loud. Guards are on hand to ensure silence, and to uphold a policy that prohibits photography.



**Pausing at St. Peter's Basilica:** Arguably the largest church in the world, St. Peter's Basilica sits atop a city of the dead, and is the site where Apostle Peter was crucified. Inside the ornate Basilica, we marveled at Renaissance art, mosaic works and other creations. The Basilica is a

celebrated spot to pause to rub the giant foot of St. Peter's statue, believed to bring good luck. For good measure, I gave St. Peter a leisurely heel and toe massage and then stopped to knead my own tired feet. **AT**



*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](http://www.thewritepublicist.com)





# TALK TO ME

You will soon be able to speak 40 languages with the launch of the Google Pixel Buds, which can be used to make phone calls, listen to music like normal earbuds, and most remarkably, provide on-demand, two-way translation of 40 languages with just the touch of a button or speaking a prompting phrase.

The Pixel Buds translate the 40 languages using Google's existing Google Translate technology which is built into the Google Pixel's second generation device. To talk in one of the supported languages, you use the earbuds to access Google Assistant and the Google Translate app. Hold the right earbud and say, for example, "help me speak German." When you next speak, the Buds will then play the translation out loud in German. If someone speaks to you in German, the Buds will play the translated replies via the earbuds. The live translation begins only a second or two after the person stops speaking. In a demonstration, the technology had almost no lag, and seemed to pick up the audio with ease.

"It's like you've got your own personal translator with you everywhere you go," wrote Pixel Buds product manager Adam Champy.

The earbuds are buttonless and you can adjust the volume by swiping or change music tracks by swiping. They connect to your phone wirelessly, but the two earbuds are tethered together by a cloth-like cord. The Pixel Buds come with a case that's also used to charge them. Buds can play music for about 24 hours without needing a re-charge.

Just in time for holiday shopping. \$159 **AT**

## Atlanta Beltline Names Erica B. Gwyn as Vice Chair, Tax Allocation District Advisory Council

Erica Brantley Gwyn has joined the Atlanta BeltLine's Tax Allocation District Advisory Council as vice chair. The TADAC was created through the Atlanta BeltLine legislation as part of its Community Participation Framework to ensure ongoing and meaningful citizen input into the planning, design and implementation of the Atlanta BeltLine – the most comprehensive transportation and economic development effort ever undertaken in the City of Atlanta and among the largest, most wide-ranging urban redevelopment programs currently underway in the United States.

It's a project that has molded Gwyn's philanthropic spirit, "previously as a benefactor and now as a philanthropist," she says.

The Atlanta native has 20 years of experience in program development and management. She currently serves as CEO of The Nonprofit Guru LLC, a fundraising consultancy assisting female-owned social enterprises with the tools necessary for scalability.

Gwyn has worked for organizations such as Spelman College, Fulton County Schools, Atlanta Habitat for Humanity and the Partnership Against Domestic Violence. She holds expertise in the acquisition, management and closeout of more than \$20 Million in federal, state and local grants. Gwyn serves as the executive director of Kaleidoscope Kids Camp and Careers Academy which provides STEM College and career resources for youth in grades K – 12, and is also a past diversity fellow with the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Atlanta Chapter, and currently serves as the fundraising chair for the Women of UGA Leadership Council.

Gwyn received a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from the University of Georgia and a master's in Health Administration from Central Michigan University. **AT**





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# {YOUR BEST THANKSGIVING YET!}:

## A Two Week Countdown and Guide

Several years ago, I waded into uncharted waters and prepared my very first Thanksgiving feast. It was for a client (and good friend) who was hosting Thanksgiving dinner for a party of 12. Hence, the word 'feast'. While I had contributed dishes to the family meal, and even hosted Thanksgiving dinner before, I had never prepared the entire meal. But my love for food and sharing made this the perfect job for me, and one I'll never forget. I planned a menu intended to delight and wow in the same bite. From there, the heavy lifting of shopping and prepping ... cooking and baking, and related tasks began.

It was a labor of love that required thoughtful planning, timing, and not too few tried and true tips and advice to get me to destination complete: having the entire meal ready to serve for my client and his guests at the designated meal time. And so, for this Thanksgiving season, I want to pass along some of tidbits that helped to make that movable feast an ultimate success.

From start to finish, here's my fast and easy guide:

### **Step 1: Secure the headcount**

You'll want to aim at confirming the headcount as soon as possible so that you can appropriately plan your menu – including number of servings needed, quantity of ingredients and other essentials.

### **Step 2: Plan the menu**

With the headcount secured, you can begin to plan your menu – including the number of courses to be served, dishes you (and/or guests) will prepare vs. buy, etc.

### **Step 3: Take Inventory**

Before you make your shopping lists, take stock of what you already have on hand—including ingredients, tools, special equipment, dinnerware, glassware, linens, etc. From there you'll have a good take on what you need to buy altogether, supplement, or even possibly borrow.

### **Step 4: Make Your Shopping List and Get Going**

For items that are perishable or don't freeze well, you'll want to hold off until closer to your preparation date, but for everything else, plan to complete as much of your shopping in advance as possible. This will save you the sure-to-come stress of being at the crowded market with everybody else on Thanksgiving eve.

### **Step 5: Do-Ahead!**

Scour your menu for those dishes that can be made in advance (whether a week, a day or even several hours) and prepare them in advance. For instance, most soups, and even pastry dough, can be made ahead and frozen until you're ready to thaw and use. Blanching and storing veggies overnight for sautéing the next day is another example. This, by far, is the greatest stress buster and time saver for me in planning any event.

### **Step 6: Final Check-Up**

Revisit steps 1-5 a couple of days before the big day to account for any last minute changes or needs that might arise. From there, you should be well on your way to enjoying a stress-free, un-hurried, and truly delightful meal and gathering that's nothing less than your best Thanksgiving yet.

Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Eating! **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](http://dmrfinefoods.blogspot.com) and other media outlets, while maintaining a career as a *FORTUNE* 500 legal executive.



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