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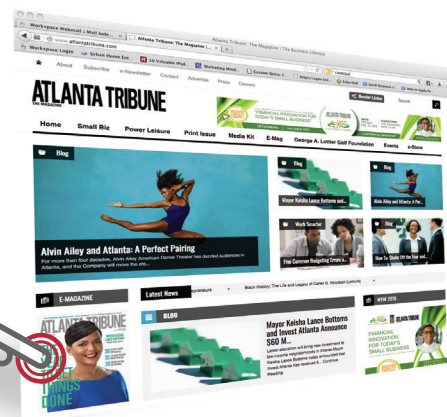
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— Hiram E. Jackson, chief executive officer, Real Times Media.



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Aha!

Inspiration can come from just about anywhere for me. I was at a casual gathering when I met Marie Dennee, a.k.a. The Curvy Fashionista. We have a mutual friend whose special occasion brought us together, and we started chatting after she complimented the boot and duster combination I was wearing. I'll insert here that Dennee doesn't meet a stranger. That was something we had in common; conversation comes easy for us. That strength mixed with ambition and curiosity will surely take you places. I'm proof of it. And I always say that interested people are the most interesting. I was already well aware of the TCF brand but I hadn't put the pieces together that this was the face or brilliant mind behind that platform. We went toe-to-toe, back and forth with questions about each other's career trajectories and what it was that brought us to Atlanta. We could likely be doing what we're doing in another metropolitan city, but this was just the place that drew us. And Atlanta has been fruitful in that not only can you find the success you're looking for, you can also readily find it reflected back to you among your peers.

This young executive issue is a bit of a departure from what we've done in the past as we went outside of the traditional sectors and professions that would typically be mined for the next movers and shakers. These, we suggest, are some to watch. George Olokun, executive director of Next Big Thing Movement, Doll Avant, founder and CEO of Aquagenuity and Jason Crain, entrepreneur in residence at Amazon. I wouldn't be surprised if you already know them. But, if this is your first time hearing their names, know that it won't be your last. **AT**



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Read crisis and risk communications manager Alice Gordon Holloway's take on what's brewing at Starbucks. "One More Thing," Pg. 36



Atlanta BeltLine Inc. to Address Affordable Housing Tenets with New Hire

Atlanta BeltLine Inc. has hired a former executive with the Atlanta Housing Authority to help deliver the agency's affordable housing commitments.

Dwayne C. Vaughn has been appointed to the newly created position of vice president of housing policy and development. Vaughn will work with the agency's chief operating officer and other members of the executive team on issues related to affordable housing.

Vaughn is returning to Atlanta from Alabama, where he headed the Mobile Housing Board, that state's second-largest affordable housing agency. Before that, he served as a lawyer in private practice in Atlanta, with clients that included affordable housing providers. He also has held several administrative positions with the housing authority.

"Dwayne is an exceptional addition," BeltLine president and CEO Brian McGowan says. "He brings creativity and collaboration to the job as ABI continues to support Atlanta's affordable housing leaders and prioritize Atlanta residents, equity, and inclusion in our housing efforts."

Atlanta BeltLine Inc. is tasked with overseeing the creation of 5,600 units of affordable housing within the Beltline Tax Allocation District in cooperation with its housing partners. To date, 2,565 affordable units have been created within walking distance of the Beltline, and 822 affordable have been created inside the TAD. **AT**



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STRATEGY SESSION

So there I was, in Shanghai, China, working as a marketing manager in the automotive industry. While there on business, I met some extremely intelligent local entrepreneurs. I had lived in the country before when I studied there for a semester. This time was different. What I learned went beyond the obvious cultural differences that I had recognized before. What I took from my experience this time was more transferable; It was also more than the #ArtificialLeanBlockchainInternetofThings and other popular buzzwords that are out there now. It was familiar; but with a savvy authenticity to it. It was pure, straight up *strategy*.

The world economy has increasingly become shaped by the emergence of global markets. In tandem, this new world economy has also opened up major opportunities that we should prepare for by taking advantage of both business prospects and potential learnings. It wasn't until I spent significant time both living and working in China that this became more and more evident. It was during this time that I learned that I could no longer ignore the impact that the global economy had in today's society. Globalization, the Internet, and information transparency have led to rapidly changing business dynamics. By preparing ourselves personally and professionally in the startup environment, we can be better positioned to succeed in the global market. I'm reminded of a few takeaways from my time in "The People's Republic" that will help get us there a little quicker.

Find Your Lane!

While meeting with a well-established female entrepreneur in Shanghai, she told me that there are two main forms of innovation. One is innovation which changes the world (fully autonomous vehicles, artificial intelligence, etc.), the other is innovation which changes lifestyles (smart phones, social media). Identifying which lane you're in helps to level-set expectations and leads to better decision-making in the early stages of a startup.

Concentrate on Lean Value before the Lean Start-Up

Fairly often, products/services fail in the market because they are packed with too many features/offerings early on in an effort to differentiate themselves. A true product development process should be heavy on research in the beginning. This allows you to get to the core of the problem and to ultimately develop a more precise product/service that targets a need very specifically. China's early focus on providing lean value was a great way to develop lean value thinking which translates to a lean product or service which translates to a lean startup. Always assess and attack the market with precision.



Create New Categories

Ever heard of the Cadillac Escalade? What about the Mercedes G-Wagon? This was a segment of the auto industry that didn't exist until it was created by the Lincoln Navigator. This came down to Lincoln's ability to identify a whitespace opportunity and rapidly exploit it as a totally new segment in the market. With technology changing at such a fast pace and willingness to try new things higher than ever, creating new categories became quite common in China. As a startup, it can allow you to leap frog the other players that are currently in the space. For example, the idea of electric vehicles wasn't a totally new idea, but rather an undefined market until Tesla attacked it with precision by highlighting the opportunity for high performance electric vehicles. Want more examples? Think Uber, iPhone, Keurig, Marvel Films ...

Be Fearless in the Process

For most businesses in China that aren't state owned, they can be pretty fearless. They use every opportunity they can to learn from others, even imitating other products. I can't remember how many "Land Winds" I saw next to "Land Rovers." Now, I'm not saying to go and copy a product that's out there and slap your brand on it. The laws in the United States obviously wouldn't allow it. But, if there's another product out there in the market that you "look up to" then ask yourself why. Do some digging on what made the market adopt that product so seamlessly. Those are the things you can quickly assess and imitate. Processes can be duplicated, not products. **AT**

Keith Wilson is a strategic marketing manager and the founder of Kompass Mapp, an app and guide to discovering and engaging in social activity through local crowdsourcing.



Atlanta Area High School Students Unveil Technology Solutions Created for Local Small Businesses

Through Verizon Innovative Learning, students across Metro Atlanta created apps, websites and more to support Metro Atlanta small business owners.

High School students from Atlanta and College Park showcased mobile apps, websites and other next-gen technology solutions they developed this year in collaboration with local small businesses through a program under Verizon Innovative Learning, the education initiative of the Verizon Foundation.

The program, developed and executed in partnership with Arizona State University, teaches students the principles of design thinking and entrepreneurship, and how to apply them to emerging technology as creative business solutions. Students participated in hands-on, elective in-school courses and worked with local small business owners throughout the school year to identify challenges, and develop products to meet their or their customers' needs.

Participating high schools in Metro Atlanta included G.W. Carver, Frederick Douglass, Benjamin E. Mays and South Atlanta high schools in Atlanta, and Benjamin Banneker High School in College Park.

Technology solutions presented during the showcase included an app, developed by students from Banneker High School for a local café that will help drive awareness of the restaurant and create a more interactive waiting area; and one developed by Douglass High School students, will assist a local catering company attract and hire employees.

Carver High School students developed an app to create social media sites, radio promotions and other forms of outreach for a local catering truck.

Mays High School students created a website and virtual augmented cards for a handmade cards company that didn't have a website or point of sales.

South Atlanta High School students created a social media marketing plan, developed flyers and created a parent newsletter to drive growth for a local youth baseball organization.

Launched in 2015, more than 8,000 high school students nationwide have participated in the Verizon Innovative Learning program, collectively developing more than 200 products for more than 75 small businesses and non-profit organizations.

On April 2nd, Verizon announced a \$200 million investment in bringing STEM education initiatives to under-resourced students through Verizon Innovative Learning, bringing the total contribution to more than \$400 million. To date, Verizon Innovative Learning has reached more than 1 million students, and has set a goal of reaching an additional 5 million students by 2023. **AT**

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The whole situation was so scary. It meant a lot to be around all that love and support. I really was at the right place.



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GILLES WALTERS, ESQ. ALL THE RIGHT MOVES

At first glance, Gilles Walters, who is a graduate of both Emory University and Howard University School of Law, has all the right schools and contacts of many successful attorneys in Atlanta (as well as other major cities). What separates him is that, while moving forward on his attorney's track in entertainment, he has also made bold moves in the world of entertainment as an artist as well. Walters, whose stage name is simply his first name, "Gilles," has had a passion for rap music since he was 4 years old. Once an education was under his belt, Walters decided to pursue his career in rap music and has since released three albums: "Successfully Lost," "Super." and his newest work, "A.L.O.T." which features industry titans, Cyhi the Prynce, Project Pat, King Los and many more.

Tell us about your current legal career?

"I kind of do my own thing. I work pretty closely with Reynolds Law Group doing a good chunk of the entertainment practice there, and then I have a few close friends in the industry so I handle all of their entertainment-related legal work too. Every now and then, I also do a bit of residential closing work with some real estate attorneys I've developed a close relationship with over the years."

Music distribution and compensation of artists is more complicated than ever before. Do you, as an artist, lean heavily on your legal training as you consider music deals, or are you relying on another attorney?

"Both actually. I mean, I know a lot from seeing things on a day to day but one of my two managers is also an attorney and she's about as thorough as they come in this field as well. Coincidentally enough, we actually met in law school. Anyway, I try to lean on her as much as possible so I can just concentrate on creating but, as to be expected, I will certainly have opinions on things just because I've seen a ton of deals too. We know what's reasonable, what's negotiable, and of course, the things we need to stay away from."

Is it possible to grow as an attorney while simultaneously growing as an artist, or do you find one career creating roadblocks for the other's growth?

"For me, I find both to be necessary. First off, we've developed a ton of relationships from practicing in the entertainment industry. In fact, our current distribution deal came about through a legal relationship. Not sure how



many people can say that. However, perhaps the best illustration of how the two worlds have come together to work in our favor is that the legal stuff often helps to finance the initial investments on the artistry side. We get to do a lot of what we want to do because we can simply do and not wait around for someone to 'let' us. We don't have to settle as much either because we don't have to rely on other people's money and resources to create this music and present these ideas how we want them presented. The thing you learn on day one in the entertainment business is that whoever is doing the spending gets to make the decisions. Being who we are and knowing what we know allows us to take some of that power back. We're able to control our vision because we're building from the ground up."

Give us a glimpse of the career of Gilles Walters — 10 years from now.

"Lord willing, we'll have a full-fledged and functional record label, with an in-house creative direction department, marketing department [and] legal department. They don't really make those anymore. That's the big dream: To do exactly what we want and be able to employ people who will love what they do, too. I'm not knocking anyone, but, and I think Lionel Richie said this: 'I may be just a foolish dreamer, but I don't care.' My goal ... my task ... my responsibility is to myself and my team; that's to devote this energy into making our dreams a reality." **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@thesigningattonet.net or brian@esquire-connect.com.



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TaxSMARTS

Time for a Paycheck Check-up

Withholding issues can be complicated, and with the passage of the recent tax reform legislation — most of which takes effect starting in 2018 — it's important to make sure the right amount of tax is withheld for your personal tax situation. As a first step to reflect the tax law changes, the IRS released new withholding tables in January 2018; and a revised Form W-4 was released on February 28, 2018. These updated tables were designed to produce the correct amount of tax withholding.

For taxpayers with simple tax situations, the easiest way to check whether their withholding is correct is to use the IRS Withholding Calculator on IRS.gov, which is designed to help employees make changes based on their individual financial situation.

Using the Withholding Calculator to perform a quick “paycheck checkup” protects employees from having too little tax withheld and facing an unexpected tax bill or penalty at tax time in 2019. It can also prevent employees from having too much tax withheld. With the average refund topping \$2,800, some taxpayers, of course, might prefer to have less tax withheld up front and receive more in their paychecks.

Taxpayers should keep in mind, however, that the IRS Withholding Calculator results are only as accurate as the information entered. If your circumstances change during the year, come back to the calculator to make sure your withholding is still correct.

With the new tax law changes, people with more complex tax situations such as married couples who both work, higher income earners, and those who take certain tax credits or itemize might need to revise their Form W-4 completely to ensure they have the right amount of withholding taken out of their pay.

Small business owners or sole proprietors who owe self-employment tax, or individual taxpayers who need to pay the alternative minimum tax, or owe tax on unearned income from dependents, as well as people who have capital gains and dividends should contact the office and speak to a tax professional.

Using the Withholding Calculator

The Withholding Calculator asks taxpayers to estimate their 2018 income and other items that affect their taxes, including the number of children claimed for the Child Tax Credit, Earned Income Tax Credit and other items. It does not request personally-identifiable information such as name, Social Security number, address or bank account numbers, nor does the IRS save or record the information entered on the calculator. Here are the steps you need to take:

- Gather your most recent pay stub from work. Check to make sure it reflects the amount of Federal income tax that you have had withheld so far in 2018.
- Have a completed copy of your 2017 tax return handy. Information on your return can help you estimate income and other items for 2018. If you haven't filed your 2017 tax return yet you can use a 2016 tax return; however, please remember that the new tax law made significant changes to itemized deductions.
- Use the results from the Withholding Calculator to determine if you should complete a new Form W-4 and, if so, what information to put on a new Form W-4. There is no need to complete the worksheets that accompany Form W-4 if the calculator is used.
- As a general rule, the fewer withholding allowances you enter on the Form W-4 the higher your tax withholding will be. Entering “0” or “1” on line 5 of the W-4 means more tax will be withheld. Entering a bigger number means less tax withholding, resulting in a smaller tax refund or potentially a tax bill or penalty.

If you complete a new Form W-4, you should submit it to your employer as soon as possible. With withholding occurring throughout the year, it's better to take this step early on. **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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**DESTINATION I COULD
AND WOULD VISIT ON
REPEAT:** Paris, France

MY PODCAST QUEUE: “Woman Evolve” with Sarah Jakes, “How I Built This” with Guy Raz, “The Dave Ramsey Show,” “Elevation” with Steve Furtick

THE LAST TIME I CELEBRATED: I just recently celebrated the launch of my apparel line WearThrive.

**QUIRK THAT WOULD
SURPRISE MY COLLEAGUES:** I subscribe to plenty of superstitions: Don’t split the pole; if your palms itch, money is coming; breaking a mirror — bad luck!

SUCCESS 101: Success = Purpose. Working in purpose, moving on purpose, living on purpose.

**I NEVER LEAVE HOME
WITHOUT:** MacBook Air, black pumps and a blazer.

**I FAILED, BUT I LEARNED
THIS:** That self-love is supreme. Everything else flows from that place.

FAVE IG ACCOUNTS: SwitchPivotOrQuit, ABCNews, Baddassboz, KahlanaBarfield

LESSONS I’D LOVE TO TAKE: Aerial Fitness

TO-DO LIST OR NAH: To-do list, for sure

I ALWAYS TELL INTERNS: To leave something behind. Spend the summer being a self-starter, asking a million questions, and thinking about what project they can create.

APP(S) I CAN’T LIVE WITHOUT: Google Maps, Hopper, Instagram, Bible App, Vibe Ride **AT**



Tonya Peat
Cancer Survivor

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

Be the breakthrough.

Breakthroughs are the patients participating in clinical trials, the scientists and doctors working together to advance the fight against cancer, and the brave survivors like Tonya who never give up. Let's be the breakthrough. To learn about appropriate screenings and clinical trials or to help someone with cancer, go to su2c.org/breakthrough. #cancerbreakthrough



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

YOUNG EXECUTIVES



2018



ON OUR RADAR

MARIE DENEÉ

By Katrice L. Mines

MARIE DENEÉ is the fashion guru behind The Curvy Fashionista, a portal of “curvy commentary” that aims to be a resource and access point to uplifting, supportive, and style resources for every woman — but especially those who understand that their “size has absolutely nothing to do with their style.”

The plus-size style expert’s mission is to encourage plus-sized women to be who they are with confidence. Her work and reach, however, have transcended that target audience. Deneé’s Piped Piper energy has expanded the brand she established in 2008 to partnerships with Nordstrom, Marina Rinaldi, Old Navy, Gwynnie Bee, Eloqui, Ashley Stewart and Chevrolet as well as the creation of the TCFStyle Expo, an annual plus size shopping event where women and men bond over style, entertainment and empowerment, and a social media following of nearly 800K. Experienced in retail for more than 10 years, working in various retail stores as a stylist, fashion expert and manager, Deneé — who earned a bachelor’s degree in business, entertainment and tourism and an MBA in marketing — lassoed her life experiences both studied and learned to bring her dream to fruition. “I want every woman who is not the ‘magazine-model’ size to walk with her head high and her fashion on point. I’m positive that curvy women can be fashionable and fabulous because I do it every day.” Deneé has done what she set out to do through her platform and more. We’d call that triumph. But, she’s still contemplating how she’d define success. “I think once the vision is realized, the purpose is fulfilled, and I can confidently pour back into the community and pay it forward to others,” she says.

We’d call it — on pace.

Village: Gwen DeVoe for her leadership and pathways she carved out with Full Figured Fashion Week. Brandi Nora of B Memorable Design and Consulting for her business coaching and challenging me to be a better leader. Kristin McGuire who is a political strategist and who I would call “Olivia Pope.” Chenese Lewis, a community leader, who pushes me to face my fears and take leaps of faith. [And] Santara Cassamajor, who helps me navigate my walk. Each one of these women have played major roles in helping me to get to where I am today.

Instigators: The women in my family. When I think back on how I had the moxie, voracity, or tenacity to make this walk, I look back on the teachings I received from my mother, who served 23 years in the Navy and who raised my sister and I as a single mother. “Never let them tell you no.” “There is no such thing as a glass ceiling.” These words ring loud to me ... I never let go of them and this has allowed me to trust my instinct, use discernment, and leap. I look at my grandmother who snuck to go to college, while raising five children, served as Deaconess, and who never let “good” be enough. She believed in the vision. My sister, for her passion and free spirit with her gifts. The way she approaches them leaves me in awe and motivates me to continue to hone and respect my gift.

Basics: Be kind. Build relationships. Be authentically you.

The Vision: I knew the experience I wanted to create with my brand when I launched. I have always wanted to be the go-to girlfriend who knew all the details, the fashion, and the news. As we have grown, the brand has built a community of fashion curious and fashion confident plus-size women and men who want to know everything going on in the world of fashion.

Mountaintop Experience: Living here in Georgia [and] being able to build a team has been the most rewarding. Seeing myself grow ... Seeing my dreams actualize, seeing the vision turn into a reality. I never would have thought that this could be possible; for a little blog to evolve into a digital media platform, hosting signature events like my TCFStyleExpo and my TCFcruise. [It has] allowed me the opportunity to creatively explore how far we can grow!

Reset: Go offline. Seriously.

Mantra: Stand in it. **AT**



ON OUR RADAR

DOLL AVANT

By Kamilie D. Whittaker

LAST MONTH, DOLL AVANT presented her company Aquagenuity to officials from Rwanda, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Kenya as a part of a Reverse Trade Mission for the East African Trade Delegation of the United States Trade Development Agency.

This summer, she'll be speaking at the Morgan Stanley Global Summit on Sustainable Futures, and giving a TEDx talk on the subject. *Light work*. But, no matter how busy the day, she will sit at her computer and work on finishing her book, "The Great American Water Crisis: How to #PreventAnotherFlint." Aquagenuity is the first company in the world to apply blockchain at the intersection of infrastructure investment, corporate sustainability, and public health in one of the few sectors that affects every single person on the planet: water. So far, 33 cities have committed fraud by underreporting their lead levels since Flint hit the headlines. Through Aquagenuity, Avant envisions a world where water quality data would live on the blockchain, easily accessible to all; holding officials accountable and keeping the public informed.

Chain Reaction: Blockchain is a transaction technology that streamlines business networks and processes, making peer-to-peer transactions transparent and efficient. Blockchain is revolutionary, and I knew early on that it's true importance had very little to do with cryptocurrency. It is powerful because it means that information and transactions can now be decentralized and democratized. The public no longer has to "trust" the government or big corporate entities. They no longer have to "take their word for it" that they're doing the right thing. Blockchain is a public record that cannot be changed, manipulated or politicized.

The Motto: You've heard the old saying, "Power to the People;" but our unofficial company motto is "Data to the People." Because decentralized information really is power, and blockchain now makes that possible.

Data Driven: I've spent the last two years aggregating water quality data for the entire United States. This is the only database

of its kind, fueled by artificial intelligence and proprietary algorithms. Based on my research, I was named a Global Impact Fellow by Singularity at NASA Research Park in Silicon Valley. This database is our secret sauce, and it drives our innovation around a suite of apps we're developing for consumers, corporations, and smart cities. Our proprietary database has put us at the forefront of the global conversation about water and the future of sustainability.

Life Hacks: To make sure I get everything done and nothing falls through the cracks, I use the two-minute rule: if there's something I need to do (like write a note, or set a reminder, or review a document) and it can be done in two minutes or less, I do it immediately. If the task cannot be done in two minutes, I take the time (two minutes) to schedule an actual slot in my calendar for when I'm going to do it.

The Climb: P.T. Barnum once said that "Comfort is the enemy of progress." So, I live by 90-Day Dream Sprints. I try to break down my major life and business goals into 90-day projects. Once I achieve a major milestone, I do take time to celebrate. But then I immediately expand my focus and start creating new systems and setting new goals that require me to stretch farther. A great example of this is my company's financial planning. I have been able to grow my business without taking outside funding up to this point, and with our early corporate clients we are already profitable. But as my business has grown, my advisors started telling me that it's time to bring on outside investors to create the corporate infrastructure we're going to need for the global opportunities that are coming up. So I'm now in the midst of raising several million dollars for the company. It's great because we have a lot of support from amazing investors, but it's forcing me and my team to put more sophisticated tracking and reporting systems in place, which will ultimately make us a stronger company. **AT**



ON OUR RADAR

GEORGE OLOKUN

By Kamille D. Whittaker

GEORGE “MR. OPPORTUNITY” OLOKUN’S thinking on harnessing the next big idea has turned into a global movement and the premise is brilliant: Changemakers need support, a sustainable spark and heroes, too. So the Next Big Thing Movement — an actionable namesake to be sure, aims to do just that through a global collaborative ecosystem of creatives moving ideas forward while connecting with the social responsibility to the humanity of others.

Olokun designed NBTM's programming to focus on connecting individuals of varying ethnicities, socioeconomic levels, life aspirations, and career achievements — helping them to hone their ideas and creative abilities, through a supportive, global network of more than 20,000 creatives and millennial professionals.

The moniker, global change agent, suits him; because there's more. He is also a nationally ranked speaker, life trainer and best-selling author with four published books. Olokun served as the founding chairman (2010-11) and first president of the EMERGING 100 of Atlanta (2011-2013); the young professionals auxiliary of the 100 Black Men of Atlanta Inc., in addition to sitting on the board of directors for two non-profit organizations. In March of 2018, his award-winning mentorship program, Mentor One, celebrated 15 years of impacting the lives of thousands of high school and college-level students — all change agents in the making.

The Connect: Connecting with others is a gift that life has blessed each of us with. There are over 7 billion people on earth and each person embodies something that the other person does not. Collaboration is a gatekeeper of success and without it we are challenged to spend unnecessary time trying to be a jack of all trades. I relish in every opportunity I get to be the bridge of a new collaboration among people. All my life, all roads have shown me the strength and power that collaborations have. More importantly how allowing others to operate in their innermost abilities together, results in building great things faster. I'm reminded of an HOV lane; in order to navigate through traffic quickly, you're required to have at least one other person in the vehicle with you.

Measurable Impact: My greatest achievement so far has been that of being a direct mentor to several hundred people since the

moment I discovered the power that resides in mentoring. At first, I did not know how to quantify the weight of this achievement, but I am constantly reminded of the impact that my path as a mentor to others has had.

In queue: In five years, I plan to have a nationally syndicated talk show; I plan to have written another two books; [and] I plan to have traveled to a majority of the countries in the world with a focus on humanity.

Coping Strategy: When things seem to be going haywire, I have learned to be still and ask life, “What is the lesson in this?”

Noted: My belief is that anyone that is focused on building anything understands, or should understand, that the strength of what they build can only be tested if it stands even when they're not there to hold it up. There is no mountain too high, no light too bright, no journey too long when your passion meets your purpose. The last year has taught me to continue to believe in my work even when others do not believe in the work.

Smart Growth: The last challenge I took to increase my capacity was relocating the headquarters of the nonprofit social movement I founded in 2013, Next Big Thing Movement. The struggle while expanding the movement has been that of managing the rapid growth of the movement, in an effort to make sure that it did not grow too large, too fast. This, in turn, allowed for my team and I to create our own playbook and establish our own success module in a new market. By taking our growth in phases we've been able to grow through many obstacles that would have killed our movement had we been over extended by the growth. **AT**



ON OUR RADAR

JASON CRAIN

By Katrice L. Mines

TECHNOLOGY ENTREPRENEUR JASON CRAIN has had the career success many dream of two or three times over, already. His career in technology began as a digital advertising consultant at Google Inc., where he worked with Fortune 100 consumer packaged goods brands like Estée Lauder, LVMH and L'Oréal on their search engine marketing mobile and online video strategies.

From that launching, Crain founded the product marketing team at Shazam, a Top 10 downloaded mobile music application. In three years, he helped build the company's global client services' advertising capacity, which surged them to a billion dollar valuation in 2015. Next — Partpic, a visual search startup for replacement parts. Partpic's proprietary visual recognition software makes it easy for users to identify and purchase replacement parts by simply snapping a photo. As co-lead of the Partpic team pre-acquisition — COO and co-founder, Crain established key partnerships, developed operational infrastructure, and launched aggressive fundraising campaigns. Today, he is an entrepreneur in residence at Amazon, serving in the capacity of technical product manager for the hardlines visual search team based in Atlanta. Yep ... impressive on all levels.

Energy: I'm mostly driven by an innate responsibility to provide for those I love. I am a family man that wants to see his family and friends live full and healthy lives, not limited by economic access or cultural seclusion. My other passions include travel and the process of building businesses.

Steering impact: I was born to teenage parents with little economic stability. That gave me the opportunity to learn from their most life influencing experiences, successes and shortcomings with unfiltered transparency, but also with blunt guidance. I saw their resilience with clarity and walked almost equally beside them down their journey toward maturity. That connectedness with my parents established a foundation for me that was built on mental and physical tenacity, independence and responsibility.

A day in the life of an Amazon entrepreneur in residence: At Amazon, I'm working on products that are used by millions of people every day. I am a leader on a computer vision team

perfecting visual search technology for replacement parts. I'm primarily responsible for creating a data pipeline that fuels our computer vision service. I work regularly with teams in Palo Alto, Seattle and Indianapolis. I work with smart and diverse engineers who are dedicated to out of the box thinking and are capable of nothing short of magic. I'm often faced with challenging problems of scale and efficiency when it comes to the programs, products, and processes I'm responsible for creating. Amazon works hard to create an environment where I'm allowed to ideate and conceive innovative solutions for difficult problems facing our business or industry with complete support and encouragement for action.

Success: Success for me boils down to that feeling of joy and accomplishment I get when I realize the positive impact my work has had on someone's life. The more positive impact my work or actions have on people, the easier it is to identify that work or action as a success.

On my radar: I am very eager about the next generation of entrepreneurs who are creating socially conscious ventures and pursuing them with relentless passion; the ones who are bridging industries, genres and generations to solve problems and add value. I encounter many entrepreneurs who clearly see how they can build business that will impact the world and I applaud their tenacity and curiosity.

Enrichment: I believe in education. I try to be a student of life, looking for the gems of knowledge wherever I can find them. Because of this, I read fairly often, mostly business books, general non-fiction and biographies. I am keen on formal education; currently I'm in business school pursuing my MBA at Kellogg School of Management. Lastly, I practice yoga, meditate, travel and paint to fulfill other holistic needs. **AT**



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Three Brands, Three Crises

7 Tips for Going Beyond the Obvious

It has struck again: A derailing, reputational business crisis. This time, the most recent three have resulted in an airline passenger's death, the arrest of two coffee shop customers and a frat offensive video gone bad.

Southwest Airlines, Starbucks and Syracuse University have brand recognition and now because of one person, one occurrence, or an isolated event, their reputation of built-up goodwill is taking a massive hit. To be successful in the future, trust must be restored and immediate actions have to be taken to restore the confidence of public opinion; therein lies the challenge.

Managing a crisis is tough and risky business. Each step is calculated. In my work, I typically see the three "U's" of what I call a situational crisis which makes them unexpected, unpredictable and uncomfortable.

Starbucks has found itself in a full blown national crisis which centers around the typically tiptoed-around topic of race. For a company that has 8,222 company operated stores, 5,708 licensed locations, and \$22.5 billion in revenue based on its 2017 annual report, any type of issue which impacts business continuity is a problem. The pervasiveness of being judged by your appearance or simply presence is not isolated but rather a pervasive, systemic conundrum faced by many people of color. In 2017, discrimination stories accounted for 18 percent of the crisis reported.

Typically, there are six possible crisis contributors. The six factors include but are not limited to narcissism, envy, naivety, loose controls, inflated ego and greed, and any or all could spell disaster.

According to the Institute for Crisis Management, employees account for 33 percent of all crisis and 50 percent caused for misdeeds of senior leadership. With these factors as a backdrop, any company wanting to ensure that its revenues stay in the black and its stock prices high, should invest in the development of their key assets — people. Until Artificial Intelligence robots can make coffee, serve you at the drive-up window, fly airplanes or pledge a fraternity or sorority, the human factor of opportunity and unpredictability will always remain.

What has gone right?

Ken Johnson, CEO, addressed this issue directly with a sincere apology and met the two men face to face. He stated clearly that Starbucks will focus on talking about race and unconscious bias, and committed to closing all its stores for an employee training in May.

In the current climate of staged protests, fluctuating stock prices and the 24-hour news cycle, the training is the first step in a list of recommendations to improve and repair its reputation, but it can do

more. I encourage going beyond the half-day training and taking a deep dive look at the culture, current business and supplier diversity practices.

So, What's Next?

Here are seven tips the Starbucks or any *Fortune* 100 or *Fortune* 1000 can consider:

1. Access the culture and subculture of the organization.
2. Analyze the hiring and selection practices at the store level.
3. Ask customers and employees for feedback and act upon it.
4. Provide a card and make a 1-800 number available at the counter to encourage customers to report good and bad behavior.
5. Encourage dialogue with on-going employee engagement sessions.
6. Access the employee tolerance level with assessment programs which provide an indication of how they would process information and make decisions.
7. Ensure that the Diversity and Inclusion officer has a budget they control, decision making ability and the power to make immediate impactful change.

Other companies can take a page out of the coffee giants' playbook. They reacted swiftly, decidedly and with a human touch — well done. Any company that is going through an issue should avoid attempting to hide or cover it up. Addressing it head-on will help a brand keep things from going from bad to worse. **AT**



Alice Gordon Holloway is an award-winning business communicator, corporate facilitator, trainer and executive problem solver for Skye Connect Incorporated. A nationally recognized supplier relations and diversity manager, and Communications and branding leader, she manages crisis and risk communications for companies, and consults on supply chain/vendor alignment strategies. Find her expressing her views on #BusinessCrisis and other topics on Twitter at @theAliceConnect. She can be reached at www.skyeconnect.com.



Finance and Health Tips for 20, 30 & 40-somethings

Your professional career is wrought with challenges and decisions, but paramount is understanding your health and your finances. At the beginning of your career, it can be tempting to overlook these topics or put them off for later in life. However, most health and financial professionals will tell you that a solid foundation in both areas is key to a not only a successful future but a healthy one. The starting point is up to you.

Wealth

In your 20s:

- **Pay yourself first.** Learn to consistently save at least 10 percent of your gross income. Additionally, "You should have an emergency fund with 3 to 6 months of savings," Timothy E. Radden, financial advisor with Northwestern Mutual advises.
- **"Don't try to keep up with the Jones'... or the Kardashians,"** Glenda Bridgforth, finance expert and the author of *ESSENCE* bestseller "Girl, Get Your Money Straight!" warns. "Don't live beyond your means."

KEY ADVICE: While it is important to establish good credit history, don't get into deep into credit card debt. If you must, obtain no more than two credit cards and pay off the balances every 30-day billing cycle.

In your 30s:

If you've established financial groundwork in your 20s, this should be a decade of building and growth. If not, don't fret. It's never too late to learn what to do with your financial plan. Start where you are.

- **Invest in a retirement plan.** Begin by taking advantage of any retirement or savings plan your employer offers, such as a 401K or pension plan, particularly if they offer contribution-matching.

KEY ADVICE: If you are living under a debt cloud amassed from student loans and credit cards in your 20s, work on ways to minimize it through conscious money management.

In your 40s:

By now, you are likely settled into your career and getting near reaching your highest potential income-earning years. It's important to continue to stay the course and not get sidetracked from your retirement goals.

- **Seek the help of a professional.**

KEY ADVICE: Create multiple streams of income. "Everyone can't be an entrepreneur, but you have more control over your financial future with your own business," Bridgforth advises.

Health

Manage stress.

- Balance work, home and play.
- Get support from family and friends.
- Stay positive.
- Take time to relax.

(Source: CDC)

Take 10,000 steps. Walking elevates your mood, challenges your heart (the best way to keep it fit) and can even help reduce food cravings. Strive to take at least 10,000 steps a day, including one brisk 30-minute walk. (Source: "10 Healthy Living Tips from Dr. Oz," HealthCommunities.com)

Keep staples on hand for quick, healthy meals. (Source: "Tips to save time, eat healthy and exercise regularly," Donald Hensrud, M.D., MayoClinic.com)

Practice safe sex. The safest sex is between two people who are only having sex with each other and who don't have a sexually transmitted infection or share needles to inject drugs. (Source: Familydoctor.org)

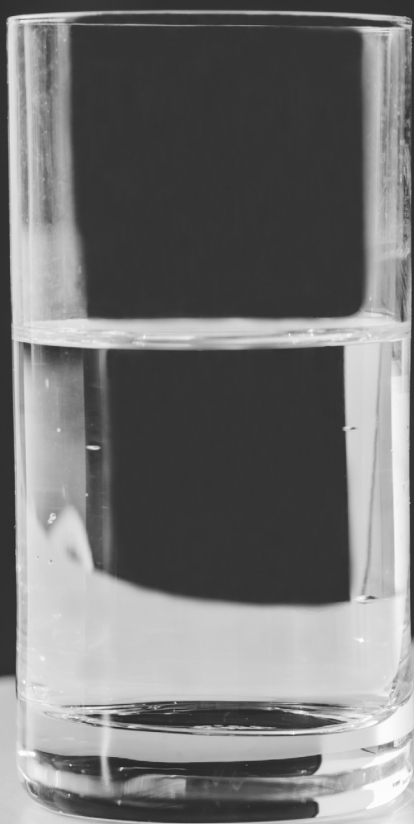
Be still

Whether you meditate or just take some quiet time to yourself, being still may help you embrace the moment and appreciate your life. (Source: Health.com)

Never skip breakfast. A survey of more than 2,000 people who lost an average of 67 pounds and kept the weight off for more than 5 years found that 78 percent ate breakfast 7 days a week. (Source: MensHealth.com)

Sleep is ground zero. If you don't get enough sleep, everything else will suffer. Sleep deprivation puts you in a pre-diabetic state, messes with your metabolism, makes you dramatically more likely to be overweight, increases your appetite, decreases your productivity, hampers your immune system, and makes you tired and moody. (Source: "10 Secrets to Living a Vibrantly Happy, Healthy Life," Susan Biali, M.D., PsychologyToday.com) **AT**





Glass Half-Full Leadership: LEADING THROUGH OPTIMISM

By Leah S. McDaniel

The proverbial phrase, “glass half empty or half full” has timeless and residual influence on a person’s life outlook. The philosophy of looking at things from an idealistic “half full” perspective, or bleak “half empty” viewpoint, has shown up everywhere from self-help books to motivational talks and workforce development. Propagated by English business magnate and Virgin Group founder, Richard Branson, glass half full leadership is the concept that positivity trickles down from the top; and that a leader should find ways to push the organization forward through optimism. “You can’t underestimate the power of positivity and the effect it can have on people around you,” challenges Branson on his popular corporate blog.

By focusing on the strengths of the team, shortfalls can be turned into opportunity areas improving the greater good of the company. The method is industry agnostic and relatively easy to implement, but must be embraced by senior management to thrive.

Highly rated Atlanta IT staffing company, Agile, employs this philosophy within its organization and through the individuals placed externally. For Matthew Marini, branch director, it all begins with finding people who actually want to work for your organization and who are also a good fit.

“There’s no sense in being miserable day to day at work,” he says. “You should assess where your life is and if you’re happy where you’re working.”

Marini believes that people who aren’t happy in an organization should move on to one they would enjoy. “It snowballs when everyone in an organization is happy working there and when you take that approach you don’t have a lot of people want to leave.”

The glass half full approach is credited for the organization’s retention numbers: Only one person has left within the last three years, allowing the company to work hard on its culture and people, fostering the type of

environment that leadership is exemplifying.

Keys to implementing this type of leadership strongly focus on keeping all employees involved in the management process. The mentality of leading at every level allows employees to have a vested interest in the organization's strategies and goals, which helps push the culture forward. This could involve having a team of core leaders that help inform the senior management team on decisions, but are comprised of those at lower levels with seniority in the company. It can manifest in something as simple as company surveys or a suggestion box, or be more far-reaching like the Culture Day that Agile has implemented.

"Annually, we take a full off-site day to reassess what is important in our environment and if priorities have changed which helps us be sure we're making decisions based on what employees really want," Marini explains.

This practice has helped Agile identify challenges within the organization that would have otherwise gone unnoticed and helps keep employees highly motivated.

Other methods to increase employee motivation through the glass half-full leadership style are focusing on what matters most to the employee. This goes beyond base incentives that employees expect and helps to carve out an ideal work state based on implementing the best parts of past work environments. This includes making objectives clear, measurable and achievable.

"In our organization, we create vision cards that focus on

each employee's unique and specific goals, which helps the business grow, but also motivates by making clear what matters most to them."

With the positive results affirmative leadership seems to provide, it almost seems silly that all companies wouldn't adopt the practice. However, there can be challenges to implementation. First, the leadership style depends largely on having the correct leader in place to enforce it. Having an optimistic outlook can be a task, especially if the business is not performing well. In these times, it is imperative that leaders hold on to their larger plan and don't allow themselves to be hindered by feelings. According to Branson, "it's all about the journey and not the destination," meaning, the time that you spend with your staff is most meaningful, not the end result.

Also, it is critical that your staff is aligned to the principles that your organization has set forth. Glass half-full leaders operate in high trust environments and typically need workers to be self-motivated.

"Our risk is about 80 percent of people thrive in our environment," Marini says about the culture at Agile which has taken on a nimble approach when employees aren't a good fit. "But we have to have hard conversations with the other 20 percent if they can't handle the freedom."

Ultimately, leaders must find what's best for their organization, but leading with a lens of optimism has far reaching benefits. **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

The Voice-First Economy is Moving Full Steam Ahead – Don't Get Left Behind

In last month's column, Google's Lawrence Cole said small businesses "absolutely need to be at the forefront of any trend that comes out," because being nimble provides an advantage against larger companies with more resources. And that first mover advantage can provide big opportunities as tech-savvy consumers adopt new tech faster than ever before.

One example of this is our growing fascination with smart speakers like Amazon's Echo, Google's Home and Apple's HomePod. For a device category that has barely been around three years, the numbers are staggering:

- From 2014-2016 a total of 7.85 million smart speakers were sold, but by 2020, that number is projected to grow to more than 138 million units sold.
- The amount of smart home devices shipped worldwide will more than double by 2022 from 433 million in 2017 to nearly a billion.
- Also by 2022 voice shopping – the ability to tell your speaker to buy something for you – is expected to hit \$40 billion.

These numbers illustrate just how quickly people are buying these devices, but they're not just snapping them up to play music on them. Once people buy them they're changing their behavior to use them in many different ways, as illustrated by the following figures:

- 31 percent of smart speaker owners have controlled household devices (turning on and off lights or controlling the thermostat) with a smart speaker in the last week, according to a survey from NPR.
- 72 percent of voice-activated speaker owners use them on a daily basis.
- 34 percent of smart speaker owners say they are replacing some of the time they spend doing things with their phone by using their speakers.



Voices Carry

It's kind of ironic that people are using their smartphones less and less to speak to each other, and the power of the voice is being amplified by smart speakers. But that is exactly what's happening, which is why Cole's words are important for small businesses to consider. Voice-first devices like smart speakers are disrupting consumer behaviors, activities and expectations. And it's happening at an accelerated rate because they are loving these devices. In fact, because of the human sounding voices and human sounding names like Alexa, a Google study found that 41 percent of people who own a smart speaker say they feel like talking to the speaker is like talking to a friend or another human. Think of that: Talking to a device is now like talking to a friend. And we don't even want to talk to our friends on the phone anymore, but people are talking to their devices because of their friendliness.

It's this growing level of comfort and familiarity with voice-first devices like Alexa and Google Assistant that presents an opportunity for small businesses able to get in front of the curve. Amazon makes it relatively easy to create "skills" that people can use with their smart speakers to do anything from asking what time it is, to doing things like ordering a pizza or even telling you what your latest blood pressure reading was. And companies are beginning to create content like podcasts and flash briefings to make it easier for people to quickly get an update on important news and information.

When it comes down to it, these devices may be smart speakers, but more importantly these are new communications platforms that are providing a new path to engage customers and prospects. And now is the time to beat the competition to the path. **AT**



In schools to encourage healing.

As if dealing with his mom's death wasn't hard enough, Sean had to adjust to a new home and new school. It was a lot to handle, so he struggled emotionally and academically. Lee from Communities In Schools helped Sean develop coping skills by finding positive outlets for his feelings. As his attitude improved, his grades followed—going from D's to B's. Now, he's focused on football and a promising future. There are millions of at-risk kids like Sean who need a caring adult to help them stay in school and succeed in life.

See how we help all kids succeed. | **[CommunitiesInSchools.org](https://www.CommunitiesInSchools.org)**





The Ambrose Foundation Inc. is hosting a golf tournament fundraiser for Students Without Mothers. Proceeds will be used to fund scholarships for students who are without their mothers due to death or other unfortunate circumstances.

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HACIENDA ENCANTADA RESORT & RESIDENCES

The Best of Cabo San Lucas

By Katrice L. Mines

It's not out of the ordinary to hear someone describe an individual as one "who never meets a stranger." I've not heard a place pronounced as such. But, I'll be saying it about Cabo's Hacienda Encantada Resort & Residences from here on. A dramatic destination that ensures seclusion, while still close to the best of the Baja — Hacienda Encantada sprawls above the sea along a rugged coastline. Perched in the Baja cliff with 360-degree views, the all-suite resort blends Mexican culture and architecture with opulent details. This is substance from start to finish. Cozy, cool studio and private suites with bursts of color, handcrafted textiles and furnishings from Guadalajara evoking traditional Mexican style have sensational vistas of Cabo and the Sea of Cortez for remarkable



TRAVEL

WEBSITE:

haciendaencantada.com

TELEPHONE:

855.484.4790

PRICE:

High season (December-April) \$450 plus tax and service; low season \$300 plus tax and service (with all-inclusive plan)

sunset views. First impressions are well-established as warm tones are the backdrop to vibrant paintings, colorful and hand-crafted accents from the gathering spaces to private quarters — everything coalescing within this inviting retreat, hand-selected by the matriarch of the Macias family, it's owners. The family's philosophy is quality service with a personal touch, and no place is that more evident than in the attention to detail given to each element of the luxury resort. Luxe suites include whirlpools, sitting areas, and kitchenettes, while the ultimate escape — a four-bedroom penthouse suite — offers a choice of two king or four queen beds, expansive living room, full kitchen and dining area, and a decadent balcony complete with a plunge pool, BBQ grill and — of course — incredible views. At no level, are accommodations a concern to be had here. And neither is the food portion of this dream-like retreat. Dining is elevated to art at three hacienda-inspired restaurants, casual eateries, and chill pool and tequila bars. The resort's internationally trained chefs craft traditional foods of Mexico with the freshest ingredients and bold flavors. La Pergola has Baja style fish tacos or shrimp and scallop ceviche; all of it, a must. Skip the gym and power walk up a sun-bathed corridor from the reception area to the property's gates, where nature as well as a view of the beautiful Residences at Hacienda Encantada maximizes this getaway. If privacy is the aim, the Villas offer that with a picturesque view of the world-famous Land's End in the distance alongside the ultimate outdoor oasis to showcase the stunning surroundings of Los Cabos' coast. Inside, lavish interiors are infused with Mexican culture including hand-carved furnishings and exotic decorative accents. Prepare for the itch to upgrade.

Arguably one of the most innovative holistic spa approaches in Cabo, the resort's more than 20 unique body and facial treatments are each designed to reveal and re-enliven the best version of yourself. The Full Moon Temazcal — an unparalleled experience — is an indigenous steam bath that uses aromatic herbs traditional to Mexican and Central American cultures and available only on evenings when there is a full moon, as the moon is considered to provide more healing energy in this phase. The treatment brings together the four cardinal elements — earth, fire, wind and water to cleanse the body and soul, and aid in relaxation, hydrating and moisturizing hair and skin, fighting insomnia and arthritis, releasing negative energy and reducing muscle tension and stress. Stretch that euphoria aboard a chartered boat ride to take in views of the sparkling Baja Peninsula and the Arch of Cabo San Lucas. Everything you need and more than you expected, a few days at Hacienda Encantada and, just like that, you're ideal of a getting away will never be the same. **AT**



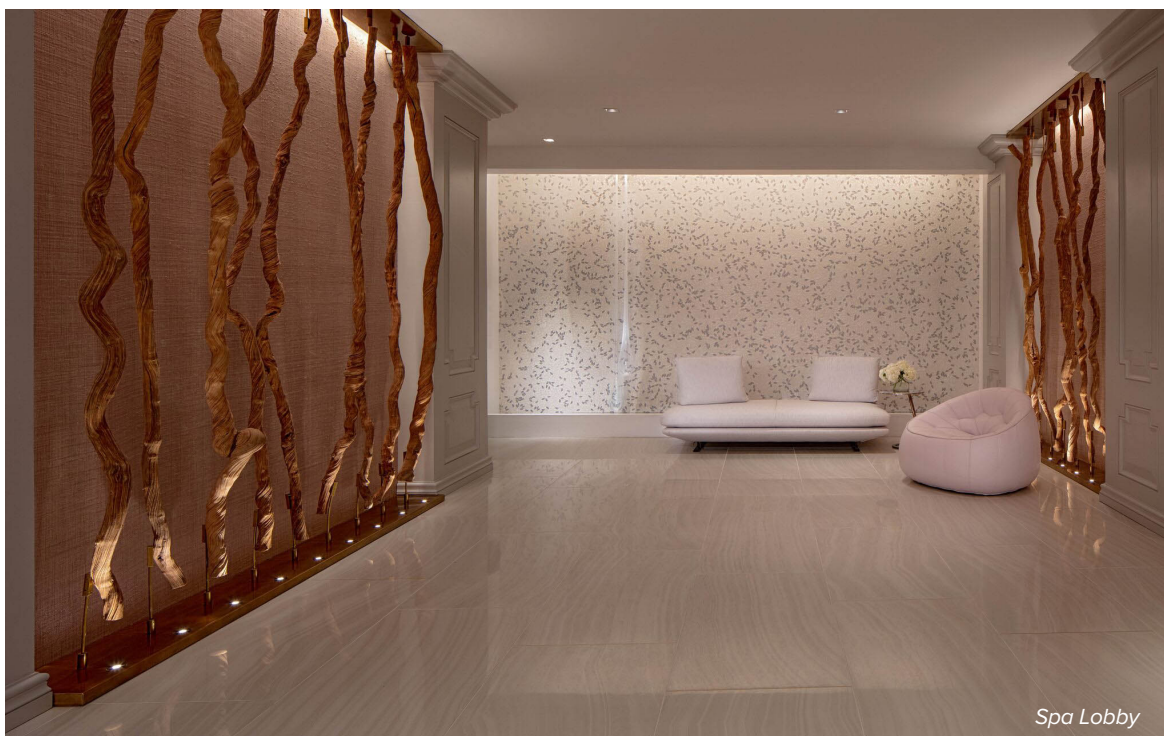
Beau Nash

FIVE WAYS TO FALL IN LOVE WITH *DALLAS*

By Kamille D. Whittaker

*B*eau Nash is where it begins. The swank champagne bar and cocktail lounge that abuts the Hotel Crescent Court lobby is literally the crescent of the ongoing \$33 million revitalization that has steeped the uptown icon in Texas charm. Designed as the place to see and be seen, there's sounds, generous pours and banter until 'round midnight, every night. *Start here.* Hotel Crescent Court mirrors its vibrant

surroundings and has aged well alongside its uptown address. Steps from the Dallas Arts District, the nation's largest, it is a portal to haute couture shopping, elite dining and an ever-growing list of ways to evade dull moments. Think: The exclusivity of a city club effortlessly yoking classic elegance with a touch of contemporary élan — with always accessible touchpoints for the locals to call their own.



Spa Lobby

The Look

Inspired by the Royal Crescent in Bath, France, the landmark's neo-French classical design and crescent-shaped contour holds more than 10 different types of marble from Italy and Spain, and is also believed to possess the world's largest assemblage of cast aluminum from the ornate décor and cascading trellises that adorn the hotel's exterior. Included in the 226-room count are 40 graciously appointed, one-or two-story suites, many touting spiral staircases and hardwood floors – each with an abundance of thoughtful amenities, neutral tones and luxe touches.

The Shopping

Stanley Korshak – of the notable Stanley Marcus of Neiman Marcus fame – is known as the largest independent department store in the country and exclusive to Hotel



Laura Owens, Dallas Museum Of Art

Crescent Court. Beginning with the Rivolta Camignani Italian bed linens, through the “Dressing Room to Guest Room” service, a capsule of couture clothing, complete with shoes and accessories for any occasion, will be delivered directly to a guests’ room/suite where they try on the threads, keeping what they please for purchase.

The Spa

Awaken the senses with a private, 45-minute yoga class in the Garden Room. In the spa, along with staple treatment and amenities – take your pick: The Ginger-Coconut

Body Scrub treatment offers invigorating and energizing aromas, with nourishing coconut and Argan oil to leave your skin hydrated and perfectly polished. The Stone Therapy Massage combines the use of Basalt stones with therapeutic massage techniques to relieve tension and stress, radiate warmth and balance energy. No wrong choice.

(Continued on page 60)



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THE LOOKOUT

MY VICARIOUS LIFE
MYVICARIOUSLYFE.COM

Cabana Ready

Bikinis are totally my thing. But, for this season, I wanted to chic one-piece. Check.



Only Chance Embroidered Crop Top
\$28
Tobi.com



Let's Connect Dark Olive One-Piece
\$56
Tobi.com



Carry-on

The **Macbook Air** has completely changed my working on-the-go routine.

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I SHOULD
~~PROBABLY~~
GET A
RIDE
HOME.

BUZZED DRIVING
IS DRUNK DRIVING



2019 VOLVO XC40: SHATTERING EXPECTATIONS



By Brian Armstead

The consumer Website for Volvo in the United States has a clear mantra stated for the all-new 2019 XC40 — *Shattering Expectations*.

It's not that Volvo, the iconic Swedish brand now owned by Chinese automaker Zhejiang Geely, has flipped the script for the most recent releases from the company such as the XC90, V70 Cross Country and super popular XC60. As one would expect from a company that's built its legend based on safety, the new XC40 is among the safest small Crossover Utility Vehicles on the market.

What is most remarkable about the transformation of Volvo that continues with the new model is that today's Volvos are just plain sexy. That's right, I said the "S" word, and I mean it. Flowing lines, strikingly sharp angles and curves, and an intense fusion of the finest woods, leathers and metals all commingle in the new Volvo paradigm.

The ground-up build on the 2019 XC40 continues this amazing and highly successful theme. Remember, just a few years ago, Volvo was on life support, seeking a buyer to keep it afloat. Geely has wisely infused billions into the brand, giving the renowned automaker the spark it needed to propel it into the future, which includes two bold proclamations: 1) That no one will be killed or seriously injured in a new Volvo car or SUV by 2020 and 2) Beginning in calendar year 2019, all new Volvos will be "electrified," meaning that conventional hybrids, plug-in hybrids and full electric cars will be the new normal for the brand.

During the National Media Introduction for the XC40, it's clear that excellence in ride quality, interior comfort and convenience, and safety were critical benchmarks, yet the XC40's base MSRP \$35,200 would indicate to some buyers "stripper" status.

I'm happy to report that for your \$35.2K, you get a real Volvo with the requisite

safety and reliability you've come to expect over the years. A 12.3" driver's display, wireless mobile phone charging, 18" alloy wheels, power tailgate, Apple CarPlay/Android Auto, Hill Start Assist/Hill Descent Control, leather upholstery, premium audio, "Clean Zone" air quality system, "Thor's Hammer" LED headlights and a gaggle of safety and convenience gear are among significant standard features.

New for Volvo is the "Care by Volvo" Subscription Service. Starting at just \$600 per month, Care by Volvo is the all-inclusive way to enjoy the XC40. With no negotiation necessary or long-term commitment, the service provides car payment, insurance, maintenance, road hazard protection and normal wear-and-tear all rolled into one flat-rate monthly payment.

Call it a super lease, and call it brilliant. With such an attractive offer, expect the XC40 to be a huge success for Volvo. **AT**

WEEKENDER

ACHIE'S | ATLANTA, GA

If I'm completely honest, Achie's had me at "hello." Without even tasting a morsel of food, I knew that the Omni Hotel at The Battery Atlanta's signature restaurant would be one of my new favorite places to dine in Atlanta simply because Achie was the name of my maternal grandfather (same spelling, different pronunciation). I expected great things from this bit of serendipity; Achie's — helmed by James Beard Foundation Award-winning chef Hugh Acheson and named for his grandfather — delivered. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, soulful selections like Elote Cornbread (Griddled Cornbread, Smokes Tomato Aioli, Corn, Peppers, Queso Fresco and Cilantro) and Low-Country Fritters (Georgia Shrimp, Andouille Sausage, Corn, Scallions, Jalapenos and Old Bay Mayo) mingled with something new, the Grain Bowl (Quinoa, Wheat Berries, Sausage, Sunny Egg, Radish, Avocado and Almonds), are central to what make the restaurant's eclectic menu of Southern-inspired dishes so interesting.

Acheson, also chef-owner of Empire State South, has developed a style of his own forging together the beauty of the South with the flavors of Europe influenced by his travel around the world. Just steps from the Atlanta Braves field, grab a cocktail or coffee or settle in for a multi-course meal that will leave its mark on your palate. **AT**



Elote Cornbread



Grain Bowl





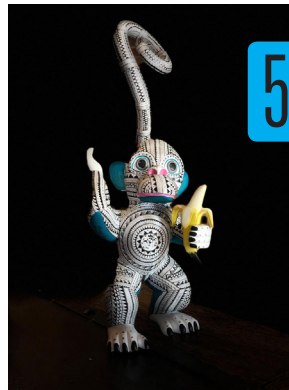
5.1

Get out and enjoy the weather on a self-guided Atlanta **STREET ART WALKING TOUR** through Cabbagetown, Little 5 Points and East Atlanta.

5.8 **NetworkNite**
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Expand your network with **NETWORKNITE** for Speed Networking ... like 'Speed Dating' without the 'Dating'. networknite.com

Dothis
MAY 2018



5.11

It's the 2nd Friday; That means **THE CASTLEBERRY HILL ART STROLL** is on.

Festival season is in full swing.

SWEET AUBURN SPRINGFEST

is a celebration of nearly three decades of great festivals on Auburn Avenue. Swing through.

5.11



5.17

Join the **NATIONAL CENTER FOR CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS** to pay homage to deserving organizations and individuals that are committed to upholding the universal human rights for all.

5.19

NAMASTE + EAT TACOS ... because tacos are always a good idea. Bring your own yoga mat or a beach towel and a bottle of water, and join Dancing Dogs for some yoga in Old Fourth Ward. (10 AM)

5.25



Kick off this Memorial Day weekend with a celebration of Caribbean culture, cuisine and costumes during the **ATLANTA CARIBBEAN CARNIVAL** in Central Park, downtown Atlanta.



5.20



If you don't have tickets for **ATLANTA UNITED TICKETS VS. THE NEW YORK RED BULLS**, we're sorry about your luck.

5.25



Explore Piedmont Park and visit vendors displaying some of the city's finest arts and crafts, food and drink and **ATLANTA JAZZ FESTIVAL**.

5.22



The hottest thing in town: The award-winning musical **HAMILTON** at the Fox Theatre.



Blissbehavin' at **KING CHARLES INN** Charleston, S.C.

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

Upon entering historic King Charles Inn, my imagination journeyed back into the mid-1800s. The restructured inn was originally the Pavilion Hotel — the accommodations of Edgar Allen Poe, who allegedly penned “The Gold-Bug” during his sojourn at the hotel.

The modernized edifice re-energizes the iconic address at the junction of Meeting and Hasell streets. Occupying a prominent position within downtown Charleston, on the Museum Mile, the contemporary façade lends the corner a distinctive outlook and vantage point for exploration.

A stay at King Charles Inn offers the ideal sightseeing environment, with retailers, historic landmarks, galleries, restaurants and bars mere steps away.

<https://www.kingcharlesinn.com>



All Penned Up: Channeling King Charles Inn’s most famed writer-in-residence Edgar Allan Poe, I cozied into my King guestroom with pen and journal in hand. Nothing arouses the creative juices quite like a stopover in one of the Inn’s 91 intimately anointed guest quarters, many with almost 300 square-feet of plush space, which included a bed fit for royalty, a sumptuously appointed bathroom and a writer’s station. All rooms feature complimentary wireless high-speed Internet access, iHome iPod/iPhone Docking Station, a 40” LCD TV and more.

Coffee at the hotel’s onsite BREW Pub and Café was the perfect way to start the day. An Oatmeal Parfait with cinnamon, yogurt and berries and Housemade Quiche proved to be a breakfast fit for a King or Queen.

A morning lap in the outdoor pool rejuvenated the senses. One would never guess that beyond the sheltered expanse of the hotel, the pool is framed by urban cityscape.



Bedroom

Writer's Block: A must-walk trek for history buffs and writers alike is the area neighboring King Charles Inn. The Historic District in the heartbeat of Charleston is the best writer's block (pun intended) to spark inspiration with antique shops, eclectic architecture, sidewalk bistros, and by-passers offering up Southern greetings. If you're lucky, you'll chance upon the occasional Gullah-accent, a creole language, that's still spoken by many in South Carolina's Low Country. In the area you'll experience the fêted City Market, Charleston's most visited site. In the historic Market, I mingled with hundreds of artists, craftspeople, and vendors, selling quaint and flamboyant wares. I walked away with amazing finds like a sweetgrass basket, an indigenous handicraft of African origin, woven using locally-harvested marsh grass that grows wild in the soil of Lowcountry.

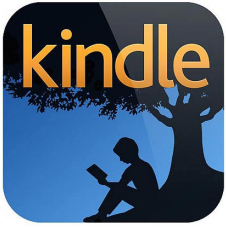
www.thecharlestoncitymarket.com

The Royal Treatment: The Inn features an innovative and ever-changing array of specialty guest packages. If, by chance, you didn't get invited to the royal wedding for Meghan Markle and Prince Harry of Wales, King Charles Inn is celebrating its British heritage by presenting the invitation we all deserved. The two-night Royal Wedding Package (May 18-19, 2018) includes transportation in a British 1965 Silver Cloud Bentley, an exclusive gala viewing soirée, Queen's Guards and other regal trappings. **AT**

Pool, King Charles Inn



Blissbehavin' In covers top bliss destinations where busy executives go 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



The Kindle App Is Even Better

The Kindle reading app puts over a million eBooks at your fingertips — and you don't need to own a Kindle to use it. Last fall, the app was re-introduced with a completely refreshed design that makes the reading experience on your phone or tablet just as good as reading on an actual Kindle. Promising to take you beyond paper to more immersive, built-in features, personalizing your reading experience is multidimensional from adjusting the screen brightness and font size to your pages' margin width and line height. While books purchased on Amazon will immediately sync with your iOS app and appear on all of your compatible devices, only books can only be purchased directly within the app on Androids. The bottom line — you can buy a book once, everywhere. Need ideas on your next purchase? Good Reads gives you access to discussions and suggestions from a community of readers. And when you can't read, listen. Just pop in your headphones, tap the button, and keep the story going ... in the car, in the gym, in the kitchen, or wherever your day takes you. Whenever your eyes are occupied but your mind is free, your story is ready for listening.

Got a Kindle Fire HD or an Android device? If so, add another dimension to your Kindle app experience with Immersion Reading and that's what it does: immerse you in a story by narrating and highlighting the text as you read. *Free **AT**

TIDBITS

Author Tayari Jones Joins Emory University Faculty

New York Times bestselling author and critically acclaimed writer Tayari Jones will join Emory University's renowned Creative Writing Program this fall as a member of the English faculty in Emory College of Arts and Sciences.

A native of Atlanta whose hometown features prominently in her writing, Jones is the author of four novels, most recently "An American Marriage" (Algonquin Books, 2018), an Oprah's Book Club Selection this year.



Jones's other books include: "Leaving Atlanta," based on her experiences growing up during the Atlanta Child Murders; "The Untelling," also set in Atlanta and the recipient of the Lillian Smith Book Award; and "Silver Sparrow," selected by the National Endowment for the Arts' Big Read Library of Contemporary Classics.

"This appointment at Emory is truly a homecoming for me as a Southern writer. I'm thrilled to return home and teach creative writing at one of the best universities in the nation and the flagship for higher education in the South says Jones, a graduate of Spelman College, where a class with Atlanta playwright and author Pearl Cleage her sophomore year fostered a passion for creative writing that set the course for her career.

"A major draw for coming to Emory was the opportunity to teach and mentor undergraduates, and to foster the next generation by helping young writers find their voice and their path," she says.

Jones also is a graduate of the University of Iowa and Arizona State University. She joins Emory from Rutgers University-Newark where she was a founding member of the university's MFA program in creative writing.

She has spent the 2017-18 academic year as the Shearing Fellow for Distinguished Writers at the Beverly Rogers, Carol C. Harter Black Mountain Institute at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. **AT**

Credit Check: Four Steps to Clean Up Your Credit Report

Just as you would clean up and re-organize your home, you should spend quality time making sure your credit reports are clean. Your credit history is the very foundation of your financial life. The information in these credit files are the basis for your credit scores, and thus used to decide whether you get a loan, how much you pay for the loan – even how much you'll pay for other products, including your insurance.

Here are four steps to help you to clean up your credit reports.

1. Be proactive. Know what is in your credit reports.

The law, according to the Fair Credit Reporting Act, entitles everyone to a free copy of our credit reports once every 12 months from each of the major credit-reporting agencies: Equifax, Experian and Trans Union. You can get a free copy from all three bureaus at AnnualCreditReport.com; or creditchecktotal.com and scoresense.com for only \$1.

If you're rejected for a job or credit, or you don't get the best interest rate on a loan, you have a legal right to review your credit report at no charge. The letter you get notifying you of the decision will include a number to call.

The most important part of your credit report is your personal information: Your name, address and Social Security number, date of birth and employment history. A serious error such as an incorrect Social Security number can have major consequences – it can cause you to be turned down for new credit, regardless of how high your credit score is.

2. Check your report for discrepancies

Search for hard inquiries, public records items, and accounts you don't recognize and verify that any accounts containing negative information belong to you. It's possible someone else's account information can be accidentally merged into your credit reports. A glaring red flag is an account with a much higher balance than what you carry which could indicate mistaken identity or identity theft. Most negative information – whether accurate or not – stays on a credit report for seven years, and Chapter 7 bankruptcies remain for 10.

3. Dispute any and all inaccurate account information immediately

If you find a major error in how an account is being reported, order your credit report from all three bureaus to determine whether the problem is limited to just one report. Then, determine



whether you need to take up your dispute with the credit-reporting bureau or directly with the creditor. If someone else's information is on your report, or you're unfamiliar with accounts listed, contact the credit bureau. All three bureaus have online dispute forms, which is faster than snail mail for resolving credit-report problems. If there is negative information that's more than seven years old or an outstanding balance that has been paid off, contact the creditor directly.

4. Document everything! Keep records and follow up

If there is a negative or incorrect item on your credit report that is very old, the creditor may have been bought, merged or gone out of business, which makes documenting everything important. If you dispute an account with a creditor and the dispute letter is returned to you stamped "return to sender" you can contact the credit reporting agencies giving them copies of the returned letter, and they will remove the account.

Keep notes on the people you speak with at the credit bureaus and lending institutions including when you contacted them and the date any corrective action is supposed to be taken. Check your credit report after that date to make sure they followed through. The three credit bureaus "talk" to each other electronically, so a correction made on one report should be reflected on the other versions, too.

Remember, your credit report is your financial resume to future creditors. You determine how you are seen by future creditors. **AT**



James Hunt is a wealth management and credit expert based in Buckhead. He specializes in credit repair, assisting clients by addressing negative accounts, successfully disputing inaccuracies and raising their credit scores to a healthy level.



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Distinctive in its rich red color, robust flavor, and succulent tender flakes, our traditional alder smoked Sockeye salmon offers the quintessential wild Northwest smoked salmon experience.

Each fillet arrives in our award-winning gift presentation.

Discount limited to one per order. Offer expires December 31st 2017 or while supplies last.

PURE

NATURAL

WILD

HANDCRAFTED

SMALL-BATCH SMOKED

{TOAST WITH THIS!}

Strawberry Spritzer

Enduring the eventual summer heat is a lot more bearable when you're sipping on a cool, effervescent and refreshing drink that boasts the season's bounty. And with that in mind, I recently added another favorite to my mocktail repertoire.

Inspired by my love for homemade *everything*, I set about to create a strawberry puree, accented with a hint of fresh lime juice. And can I just tell you — it was so good. (Like, spoonfuls in the middle of the day, straight from the container, kind of good. Don't judge me.) From there, the possibilities became endless for how to make the most of the berry-licious concoction.

Freeze into sorbet. Spoon over ice cream. Make into a seasonal spritzer. The latter of these was my immediate go-to, but the other options are still very much alive.

And this "non-recipe," recipe of sorts, couldn't be easier to pull off — or transform with additional or alternate flavors. One technique x endless options = happy cooking at its finest.

So, cheers to more of the season's luscious flavors ... and to Happy Sipping!

STRAWBERRY SPRITZER

Ingredients:

1 lb. fresh strawberries, hulled and halved
Juice of 1/2 lime, plus more to garnish as desired
1/2 cup sugar
Club soda
Ice cubes

Method:

Place strawberries in a blender or food processor and blend into a puree. Strain puree through a fine mesh sieve.

Add in sugar and lime juice and stir well to combine. Store in an airtight container for 8-12 hours or overnight to chill mixture.

Mix together 1/4 cup of puree and 3/4 cup of club soda. Pour over ice, serve and 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.

FIVE WAYS TO FALL IN LOVE WITH DALLAS

(Continued from page 47)



A Wolfgang Puck Creation at
Fifty Sixty

The City

An eclectic outlier, **Deep Ellum** is one of Dallas' hippest and historic neighborhoods that's home to some of the city's most iconic outdoor art, from murals and street art to stainless steel sculptures. It's also the residence of BrainDead Brewing, which combines craft beer with Latin-infused pub gourmet fare. The soup of the day, every day: Beer.

Discover Dallas via the free, McKinney Avenue Trolley, known as the **M-Line**, running between the West Village and Downtown. Hop on and off to explore shopping and must-see sites.

The **Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden's** new edible food-and-herb garden offers a "A Tasteful Place," with a view of downtown Dallas and White Rock Lake. Rolling beauty as far as the eyes can see abounds; this year, with more than 500,000-plus spring blooms, glances of Spanish-style architecture and the feeling you have the grounds all to yourself.

The **Dallas Museum of Art** at the heart of the Dallas Arts District, which spans 68 acres and 19 blocks in the heart of the city, features key acquisitions that make up its collections derived from West Africa, Central Africa and Ancient Egypt. Some works in the collection were created as symbols of leadership and status, while others express concepts related to the cycle of life. Highlights of the collection include a Benin plaque of copper alloy over wood depicting a warrior chief, a carved wood Senufo rhythm pounder from southeastern Mali, and a Congo standing power figure studded with ritually embedded iron nails or blades.

The Food

BREAKFAST:

Fuel-up in **The Conservatory's** courtyard, complete with a build-your-own bubbly bar for mimosas; or call for a house car to take you to **Public School 241** — a playful, culinary take on academia, complete with Composition Notebooks and Scantrons as menus. Its Chicken and Waffles — green chile and corn bread waffles, to be precise — is always the right answer.

LUNCH:

Settle into **Savor Gastropub** for lunch at the only restaurant situated in Klyde Warren Park, a beloved, downtown green space perfect for people-watching and chef-driven shared plates; or stroll over to **Moxie's Bar & Grill**, situated inside The Crescent complex — owned by Dallas Stars owner and hockey fanatic, Tom Gaglardi — for fresh, house-made food, quality wines and spirits.

DINNER:

Five-Sixty on the 50th floor of the Reunion Tower has floor-to-ceiling windows and a 360-degree rotation, offering unforgettable city views and celebrity chef Wolfgang Puck's creative, contemporary take on Asian cuisine; or take all the perks and dine at **The Crescent Club** reserved for members and hotel guests only, with an exclusive multicourse dinner complete with fine wine pairings, also overlooking the dazzling Dallas skyline. Guaranteed to be said at some point in the evening: A sanguine, sentimental, "Texas Forever." **AT**

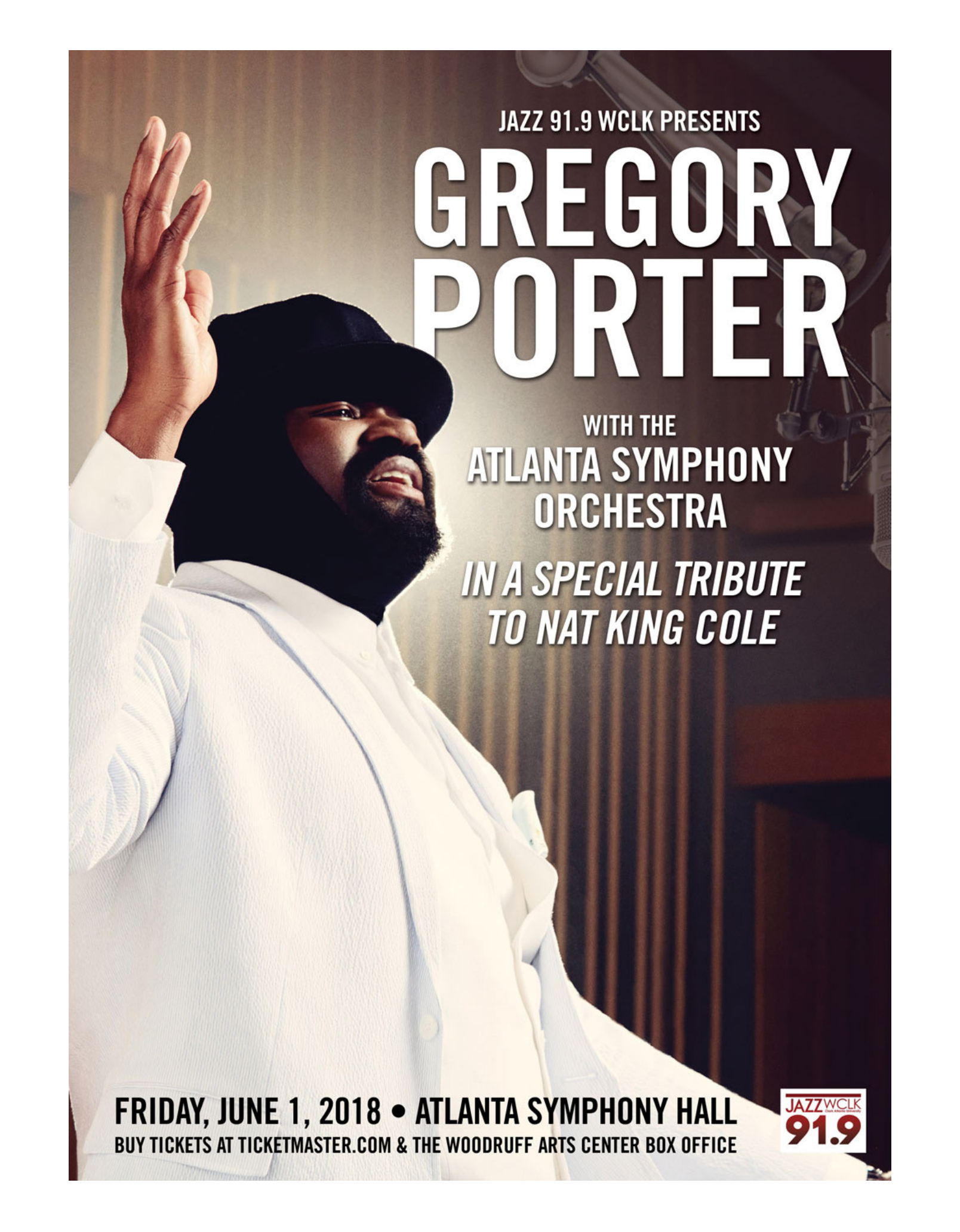


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A photograph of Gregory Porter, a Black man with a beard, wearing a white suit jacket and a black fedora. He is looking upwards and to the right, with his right hand raised in a gesture. The background is a dimly lit recording studio with wooden paneling and a microphone stand visible on the right.

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