



CAREER & LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

**Mark Birtha**, President, Hard Rock Rocksino Northfield Park. A real winner in the gaming industry, in his career and in life. Read his journey from humble beginnings to the top of his game!

**More Inside this Issue:**

- **"Cleveland's "Hidden Figures"** at the NASA Glenn Research Center
- **"Food for Your Soul"** by Antwan Steele
- **"Five Key Components to Writing a Successful Grant Proposal"** by Linda Styer
- **"Spring Photo Tips for Amateurs"** by Phillip Germany II



# GOING THE DISTANCE FOR OUR COMMUNITIES.

**At Dominion Energy Ohio, going the distance for our customers means more than just delivering safe, affordable natural gas.** It means being a positive force in the communities we serve. Our EnergyShare® program has raised \$6.8 million and helped more than 70,000 people in Ohio alone. These resources, combined with more than 6,300 volunteer hours from our employees, have benefited organizations as diverse as the American Red Cross, the Boy Scouts of America and the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition.



**Depend on us** for more than energy.™



## COVER

### 24 **Mark Birtha: Bringing a Passion for People to the Gaming Industry** by Montrie Rucker Adams

C L Magazine caught up with the President of the world's first Hard Rock Rocksinos Northfield Park, Mark Birtha. Get the scoop on his humble beginnings in Connecticut, love for music and how all this led him to become one of the youngest Presidents of this iconic brand. He also shares advice for career success including spending time with the people that matter most...his family!



## CAREER

### 38 **Cleveland's Hidden Figures at the NASA Glenn Research Center** These women rock!

Scientists, engineers, interns and more are doing the work that directly impacts the world around us. Check out six remarkable women inside!

### 10 **Branding Yourself: A Lifelong Assignment!** by Cher Singleton Nelson

Follow these tips and your small business could become a household name TODAY!



### 8 **Five Key Components to Writing a Successful Grant Proposal** by Linda Styer

Make your grant proposal stand out next to hundreds of applications by following these 5 simple steps!

### 30 **Don't Call it a Comeback** by Sandra Bishop

After nearly a decade-long drought, the Cleveland Chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists is BACK and they want YOU to see what they're up to!

CONTENTS continued on page 6

# CL Magazine Team

Publisher and Chief Editorial Officer  
**Alexandria Johnson Boone**

Editor and Chief Researcher  
**Simone E. Swanson**

Creative Team  
**Jennifer Coiley Dial, Sway Effect**

Senior Copy Editor  
**Tara Jefferson**

Business Manager  
**Paula T. Newman**

Assistant to the Publisher  
**Bernadette K. Mayfield**

Photographer & Photography Editor  
**Rodney L. Brown**

Database and Information Coordinator  
**Cheretta Moore**

Social Media Manager  
**Frechic Burton Dickson**

For advertising information  
please contact us at:  
[advertising@CL-Magazine.com](mailto:advertising@CL-Magazine.com)

Subscribe online: [www.CL-Magazine.com](http://www.CL-Magazine.com)



C L Magazine is published digitally on a quarterly basis by the Women of Color Foundation (WOCF), a 501 (c) (3), tax-exempt organization, for the benefit of women of and girls of all colors. Our offices are located at 50 Public Square, Tower City Center, Suite 832, Cleveland, Ohio 44113. Toll Free Phone number: 866.962-3411 (866.WOCF.411). Copyright © 2014-2016. All rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be distributed electronically, reproduced or duplicated in whole or in part, without written permission of the publisher. Subscription price is \$16 per year. Readers and advertisers may subscribe at: [www.womenofcolorfoundation.com/clmagazine](http://www.womenofcolorfoundation.com/clmagazine)

Magazine Production: GAP Communications Group



## 2017 Was An Amazing Year!

Dear Readers,

This is our first issue of 2018 and it marks C L Magazine's 4th Anniversary of publication.

It has been a journey filled with fun, excitement, challenges and disappointments; but most of all, it has been filled with recognition of our hard work!

We have tackled some amazing, controversial issues that have directly impacted our lives, families, communities and the world. We have profiled the work of Americans across the country and citizens around the globe. We have shared stories of success and comebacks, from personal tragedies to business turn arounds. We have shared stories of faith, hope, passion and triumph over temporary failures. We have shared tips for improving one's career, health, wellness and overall quality of life.

But none of this has been the work of any one individual. Hands down, it has been the work of the amazing staff, editorial team, graphic designers, photographers and writers pulling together, and moving in the same direction, to achieve the excellence we have pursued and enjoyed throughout this journey.

We promise that our 2018 issues will be more of the same. We are proud to continue our service to you.

In the spirit of the greatness in us all,

Alexandria Johnson Boone  
Publisher and Chief Editorial Officer  
C L Magazine  
and  
Chairwoman/Founder  
Women of Color Foundation



# Editor's LETTER

Dear C L Magazine Subscriber,

The great poet, Hafiz once said, "Fear is the cheapest room in the house. I would like to see you living in better conditions."

Many of us remember the first time we felt true fear. I know some of you are thinking back to a time when you disobeyed your parents and as a result feared the consequence of your poor decisions. That's not the fear I'm referring to. I can recall the first time I felt true fear. It was career day in junior high school and my teacher asked the class to go around and share future career goals. Most of my peers chose traditional careers such as doctor, lawyer and teacher. When it was my turn I said, talk show host. An awkward silence echoed the room only to be drowned out by laughter moments later. My teacher looked at me and said, "you can be anything you want to be you just have to believe." I distinctly remember the fear and pressure I felt in that moment. Fear that maybe my hidden dream had been too lofty after witnessing the disapproval from my classmates. Have you felt that same fear? Perhaps fear of chasing your career goals, educational opportunities, starting a nonprofit, taking a trip or making the big move you've always dreamed of? Take a moment and think, what if you dismissed your fears and replaced that feeling with courage?

This issue is filled with inspirational stories of people who had a vision and used courage as the gps to reach their wildest dreams. Our cover story features, Mark BIRTHA who had very humble beginnings washing windows and delivering newspapers. Now, he is President of the renowned Hard Rock Rocksino Northfield Park. We also profiled six women who pushed pass gender norms, stereotypes and geographic barriers and are being recognized as NASA Glenn's Hidden Figures.

We hope that after reading this issue, you are motivated to do that one thing you've always wanted to do but for whatever reason allowed fear to take control. Take your control back and use the people in this issue as an example that you too can do anything you want, all you have to do is believe.

Thank you for supporting CL Magazine we are four years strong! We love to hear your feedback. Catch up with us on social media.

Cheers,

Simone E. Swanson  
Editor and Chief Researcher

# contents

## CAREER



**32 Age Discrimination in the Workplace by Betsy Rader**  
Could women ages 40 and up, be experiencing discrimination at work based on their age? Check for the red flags inside...

**14 Pictures Up! Roll Camera! Action! by Kyle Wilson**  
What if there were job opportunities for children of color outside of aspiring to become the next Denzel Washington or Meryl Streep? Learn about the hundreds of people behind the camera that help make some of your favorite box office hits!

## LIFESTYLE



**20 Food for your Soul by Antwan Steele**  
Do men share the same challenges as women when it comes to being single? What if the secret to finding your soulmate was wrapped in one word...patience. Find out more inside!

**22 Duly Noted by Linda Dooley**  
The hashtag that has all of Hollywood talking, but is it being talked about in factories, corporate offices and the restaurant industry? The conversation you should be having in your workplace about the #MeToo movement.

**16 Simple Strategies for Reducing Risks that Could Lead to Traumatic Outcomes by Sherri Gatson**  
Is abandonment, addiction, lack of education and poverty the link to families of color experiencing trauma? Check out this article to see what you can do to help!

**18 Spring Photo Tips for Amateurs by Phillip Germany, II**  
Save thousands of dollars on photographs by becoming your own professional photographer this spring!

**46 Home & Garden**  
Spring forward with some of C L Magazine's favorite spring flowers and home plants.





## 5K or 1 Mile Sunday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018

at Beachwood Place • Rain or Shine

Celebrate National  
Cancer Survivors Day®



**PRESENTED BY:**



**WITH SUPPORT FROM:**



**TO BENEFIT:**

the gathering place

[www.racefortheplace.com](http://www.racefortheplace.com)

or call: The Gathering Place  
216.595.9546

- 7:30am..... Registration
- 8:00am..... Celebration Village opens  
*fun activities for the entire family*
- 8:45am..... Cancer Survivor Ceremony
- 9:00am..... 5K and 1 Mile begin
- 10:30am .... Awards Ceremony

The Gathering Place provides **FREE** programs and services for individuals and families currently coping with cancer.



## The Key Components of a *Successful Grant Proposal*

**Foundations receive** hundreds of grant applications and there are always more requests than we can support. Here are some ways to make your application stronger.

*Research:* Does the foundation fund your type of program? Go to The Foundation Center in Cleveland and ask for help. Read each foundation's grant priorities, restrictions, and guidelines. The IRS Form 990 will show what the foundation has funded in the past. Check the foundation's website to confirm application deadlines and procedures. For example, has the foundation moved to an online grant application platform?

*Statistics:* What problem/need are you addressing? Provide statistics about the issue. Find out who else is doing this work because foundations do not like to fund a duplication of services. Show how your program is tackling issues in a unique way.

*Services and collaboration:* Describe your services and who will you work with. Foundations like to see organizations working together to serve clients. Letters of support from other organizations will confirm your ability to serve the community.

*Program outcomes:* Have you served this population before? If yes, what happened? Your measurable outcomes show how you made a difference in the short run and the long run. If you do not know, track down your clients before you apply for another grant because foundations want to know you have a relationship with your clients. It is a red flag if clients leave and never talk to you again.

*Financials:* Since you are requesting funds, foundations want to know how much money you raised in the past, sources of income, and other budgetary issues. Foundations may ask for a profit and loss statement for two prior years, a projected organizational budget for the upcoming year, and a program budget. This shows trends in income and expenses.

Have you passed the Internal Revenue Service's public support test? You also need to demonstrate sustainability. Start at The Foundation Center, which has classes, webinars, and tips to help you write a grant proposal.



**Linda Styer**

Senior Program Officer, Community Foundation of Lorain County

[lstyer@peoplewhocare.org](mailto:lstyer@peoplewhocare.org)

# Alexandria Johnson Boone

“Alex engaged our audience.  
We laughed, cried and celebrated!”

-National PowerNetworking Conference

“Alex connects to her audiences at their  
level. Her style is down to earth, sincere  
and inspirational. She is simply  
amazing!”

-Sisterpreneur® Women of Power Conference

*President & CEO*  
**GAP Communications Group**

*Founder*  
**Women of Color Foundation**

*Publisher*  
**CL Magazine**

## **Keynote "Conversation" Topics:**

*Owning Your Personal Power in  
Business and in Life!*

*Succeeding  
Against the Odds!*

*The Importance of Women  
Supporting other Women!*

To inquire about, or to book Alex for a speaking engagement  
please call: **(216) 391-4300 ext. 311**

or visit:

[www.gapcommunications.com](http://www.gapcommunications.com)

[www.womenofcolorfoundation.com](http://www.womenofcolorfoundation.com)

[www.cl-magazine.com](http://www.cl-magazine.com)

# BRANDING YOURSELF

## a lifelong assignment



**As the powerful** and knowledgeable individuals that we are, we want to be known and express our expertise to the world. In order to do that, you have to brand yourself. You want people to know who you are and what you have to offer.



**BEFORE EXPOSING YOURSELF** to the world and telling everyone who you are, you need to know who you are and what your brand is bringing to the table. If you are unclear about what you are offering, you will eventually flop. Take the time to define your brand.

- Ask yourself, “What are my passions and values?”
- Do research and think about what you want your message to communicate.
- Get feedback from those who know

you best. They will want you to succeed as much as you do and can provide you with critical feedback.

Soon, you will become an expert and be able to explain your brand with confidence and build your voice to build your brand successfully. Be clear on who you are and what your brand has to offer.



**ONCE YOU FIND** your brand voice and identify what you are bringing to the table, it is time to establish a presence. For example, what is your signature dish? This is the favorite or “famous” dish that you make when you go to a potluck and you are always asked if you made it. This is the same with your brand. When your brand is consistent, people have identified what you have brought to the table. Your audience likes brands that they can connect with and are considered appealing, if

continued on page 12



**Char Singleton Nelson**  
IG: @jolie\_pieds

continued from page 10

it can whet their appetite and be easy on their eyes! Remember that inconsistency can damage a brand faster than the competition. Establish your presence and keep it consistent.



**GENERATE YOUR BRAND** through different forms of networking. Connecting with people on social media will increase awareness of your brand. You want to build a loyal following on social media and learn how your brand is being perceived. However, don't just leave it to social media to do all the work! You have to work for your followers and be open to being introduced to new areas within social media to market your brand. Networking your brand offline and online will open doors to opportunities that you didn't know existed. You want to make sure your brand leaves a lasting impression. Be spontaneous and join panels,

arrange for yourself to make a guest appearance at events, and continue to get your brand out there.



**IN TODAY'S WORLD**, you just can't be clear and consistent, but your personal brand needs to be visible. People know who you are because you make yourself known and they can't help but take notice. You want your audience to know you are accessible. A solid brand is constantly visible and makes its presence known. Own your brand and own your stake in marketing yourself!



CONNECTIONS, COMMUNITY AND CAREER 2018

**16TH ANNUAL PERSONAL  
AND PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT RETREAT  
FOR WOMEN OF COLOR**

**CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

CORPORATE COLLEGE GRAND BALLROOM

**DATE: THURSDAY, MAY 17, 2018**

**TIME: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

**DON'T MISS YOUR CHANCE. REGISTER NOW!**

[www.womenofcolorfoundation.com/events](http://www.womenofcolorfoundation.com/events)



[www.womenofcolorfoundation.com](http://www.womenofcolorfoundation.com)

**THURSDAY**

**MAY 17**

**2018**



4400 Richmond Road | Warrensville Heights, Ohio 44128



(216) 391-4300, ext. 307 | Toll Free Number (866) 962-3411



You're Invited

# Anniversary Gala



Friday, April 20, 2018

The Orchid Ballroom  
The Westin Cleveland Downtown  
777 St. Clair Avenue NE, Cleveland, Ohio 44114

6:30 PM Cocktails / 7:30 PM Dinner

\$125/TICKET

\$1,000/TABLE OF EIGHT

\$1,250/TABLE OF TEN

[BUY TICKETS](#)

COCKTAIL ATTIRE / VALET PARKING INCLUDED / OPEN BAR  
SPECIAL PERFORMANCES / JERRY BRUNO ORCHESTRA

## *Honorary Event Chairs*



**Margaret L. McKenzie, MD**  
President  
Cleveland Clinic South Pointe Hospital



**Danielle Serino**  
Investigative Consumer Reporter  
WKYC

SPONSORED BY  Cleveland Clinic

10 YEARS DONE—THE TRANSFORMATION HAS ONLY BEGUN

# Pictures Up! Roll Sound! ACTION!!

**We all know** Denzel Washington. His name is as synonymous with film as Jesse Owens is to track and field. Mr. Washington has inspired many African American actors and actresses we see today on the big screen, as well as others. But this article is not about Denzel, but rather, it's about the people around Denzel who help make the whole process work.

What about the person who keeps Denzel in focus while shooting? Or the person who keeps the levels on his microphone crisp for millions to hear? Or the person who places the filter on the light above him before the director yells action? Or more importantly, the person that keeps the generator running so that the lights and camera have power? Everybody can't be Denzel. But they can maybe be part of the crew on set that helps Denzel do what he does so well.

There are sometimes hundreds of people on set that work as a team to give you what the masses see in the movie theaters. I'm not talking about extras. I'm talking about the production crew—script coordinators, gaffers, grips, 2nd AC, boom operators, art directors, sound mixers, production assistants, and so on. These are all secondary jobs that nobody talks about that must be done to finish a film.

Let us pose a question. What if kids from the inner city of Cleveland knew that there were jobs on movie sets other than acting, directing, and writing that actually have unions and guilds? What if they had the opportunity to learn those jobs from hands on experience? To have kids understand a simple term while being on set such as an apple box, tungsten light, or a C-stand.

All that's needed to shoot a short film for kids is professional film equipment, a space for various technical equipment workshops, and a professional film crew or experienced film tradesmen willing to offer their time and skillset to passionately pass on the knowledge to kids who may have never known these opportunities existed.

The program would be a group of kids being taught true production on set—cinematography, director of photography, editing, and directing, with a professional crew shooting it, allowing the kids to assist and watch first hand.

The kids will learn what everyone's role is on set. Let's bridge this gap for the inner city kids of Cleveland, so that along with wanting to be Denzel, they can aspire to have skillsets that could actually get them an entry level job on set.

Now instead of a basketball or a football, they're carrying a camera, a shotgun microphone, a C-stand, a screenplay, camera lenses, or even a four-channel mixer to shoot their own creation in their backyard of Cleveland and surrounding areas. And most importantly, they now know how to properly draw power for their equipment, how to work a light meter and adjust lights if the sun is beating down, and how to mix sound to film outdoors or in somewhat loud areas.

And for that same kid to be able to look out at a crowd of now industry peers at an award ceremony years later. Holding an Oscar in their hand saying with a sincere smile, "It all started in my neighborhood of Cleveland, Ohio."

Being a graduate of a film program at Full Sail University, I've learned so much, from building sets to sound design, that I never would have learned growing up in Cleveland. I remember my mother buying me a camcorder that took mini DV tapes when I mentioned that I was interested in film. The problem was, there was nowhere to further my curiosity in Cleveland as a kid. Let's give those creative kids the tools to understand the real nuts and bolts of working on set. Pictures up!  
Roll sound!  
Action!



**Kyle Wilson**

Screenwriter

[kmoviecinema@gmail.com](mailto:kmoviecinema@gmail.com)



**Connexions Consulting, Inc.** is an organizational development firm dedicated to creating inclusive, culturally competent workplaces. We help organizations achieve their mission, goals, and objectives by optimizing talent, unleashing creative and inclusive environments and enhancing organization's reputation in the marketplace.

At **Connexions Consulting**, we focus our services on helping our clients to define the end goals. Along the way, we tap into some, or all, of our core services, including:

- Customized strategic plan consulting
- Inclusion and Diversity strategic plans, audits and assessments
- Development and implementation of diversity councils and employee resource groups
- Alignment of talent management with diversity
- Inclusion and Cultural Competence education and training
- Community capacity building facilitation
- Human resource compliance

**Together we can achieve your mission. Find out how:**



**Charmaine Brown**

President / CEO

Connexions Consulting, Inc.

216-970-6740

[charmaine.brown@connexconsultinginc.com](mailto:charmaine.brown@connexconsultinginc.com)



## SIMPLE STRATEGIES FOR

# Reducing Risk Leading to Traumatic Outcomes

**THERE ARE MANY** factors that threaten the foundation of the black family. Absent fathers and mothers, addiction, infidelity, lack of education and unemployment are just a few. These issues create instability, insecurities and other risks that lead to traumatic outcomes for everyone, especially children. How do we protect ourselves and our families from these risk factors and avoid traumatic outcomes?

**WHEN** a mother or father abandons their children, it leaves them vulnerable to abuse, neglect or exploitation, creating a lifetime of trauma and uncertainties. When our teens and young adults enter relationships too soon and make babies before they are ready, this also creates uncertainties that can become traumatic. When we are uninformed or unprepared for adult situations, the outcome is typically unfavorable. Prevention involves education, adequate support and resources. They are available to us all.

**ADDICTION** is another assault on the black family. This behavior far too often increases the risk for physical and sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults. Addiction robs a child of the physical and emotional availability of their caretakers.

**BEING INFORMED** on the dangers of drugs and educating ourselves on the disease of addiction helps reduce the prevalence of drug use in our communities. There need to be forums for learning and sharing information throughout the black community at our local gyms, dance schools, recreation centers and church—wherever we gather regularly.

**AS REGULARLY** as we attend these venues we need to have information and resources on

hand to stay informed and reduce the risk of the social pathologies that threaten us. Black families and communities are making gains in being active and staying abreast on matters that negatively affect us. However, we need to stay diligent. Healthy individuals exercise sound judgement and decision making with the best interests of their loved ones.

**LIMITED EDUCATION** and/or unemployment and drug and alcohol addiction are among the most common causes in perpetuating a system of poverty and unfavorable outcomes for the black community, family and children. Education starts during gestation and continues through life. Black educators, nurses, doctors, social workers and others have a great responsibility to change the way we think about the life we live and the life we create.

**REMEMBER** the African Proverbs, “It takes a village to raise a child” and “We are our brother’s keeper.” We all have a responsibility to create environments that promote accountability and responsibility in the black family in America.



**Sherri Gatson**

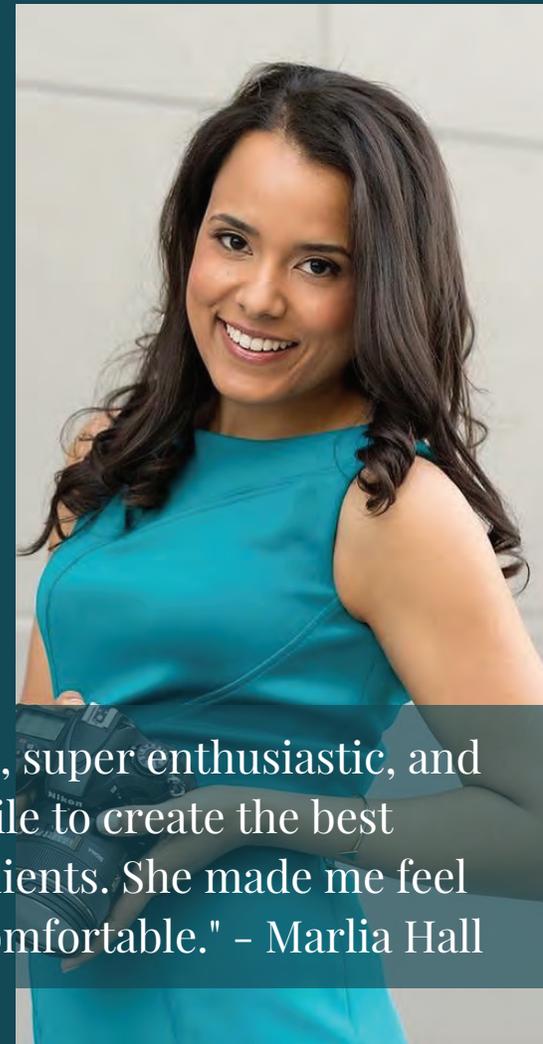
Co-Founder Therapist, Inner Change, LLC  
[www.innerchangelc.org](http://www.innerchangelc.org)



## KAMRON KHAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Kamron Khan is a photographer based in Cleveland, OH. She specializes in working with couples from their engagement through to their wedding day, and entrepreneurs ready to invest in their brand imagery. Her clean, romantic and modern style has allowed her to be featured in publications such as The Huffington Post, The Knot, and Munaluchi Bride.

Schedule your complimentary consultation!  
e. [kamron@kamronkhanphotography.com](mailto:kamron@kamronkhanphotography.com)  
w. [kamronkhan.com](http://kamronkhan.com)  
p. 216-285-0557



"She's extremely kind, super enthusiastic, and goes the extra mile to create the best experience for her clients. She made me feel so beautiful and so comfortable." - Marlia Hall



# Enjoy Spring and Impress Your Friends with These 4 Photo Secrets

*“Nothing is so beautiful as spring.”*

**That quote** is poet Gerard Manley Hopkins' recognition of the splendor of a newly minted season.

With its budding leaves, poignant perennials, and damped earth, spring ushers in events such as Easter, Memorial Day, graduations, and blossoming gardens. In order to harness these moments and take the best photographs possible, here are four ways to capture some of the elements of spring.

## Pay Attention To Surrounding Details

During spring holidays and events, chances are you'll take photos of friends and family. Keep in mind that a portrait does not have to mean a stiff pose with one or more faces. Catch the moments just before you capture your subject to add spontaneity to your photos.

Don't forget to take photos of the immediate surroundings and environment too. They add to the story that the picture is conveying. Try to see the smallest details that others may not notice.

Events produce many candid moments and expressions that happen all around us. As a family member and/or friend you know the family dynamics, as well as the history leading up to this special day. Focus on the little side moments that occur between family members, and more than likely you'll discover some of the most meaningful photos.

## Get Low and Close

Because springtime flowers can be bright and colorful, make the most of their contrast from the green and brown foliage nearby. You can do this by getting low and close to your subject. Let the intense color of the subject catch the eye of the viewer.

## Use Available Lighting To Your Advantage

Some spring events will take place outdoors. This can introduce harsh sunlight which can cause severe highlights in your photo. Shoot with the subject facing the sun so the light can fall directly on your subject.

For events that take place in the evening, take advantage of the low position of the sun. This will cast a warm hue on your subject and can make for a more interesting backdrop and silhouette. Colors will turn out softer, warmer, and more intense.

When photographing a portrait indoors, look for the nearest window light source and try to place your subject near it for quick fail-safe natural lighting.

## Take Your Time

Most people shoot photographs in a rush. This can result in a photo that is blurred and out of focus. Take your time. The extra few seconds will result in a better picture.

Following these tips will not only make your photographs works of art, but will make them springtime treasures for years to come.



**Phillip Germany, II**

[www.photoexpeditionunlimited.com](http://www.photoexpeditionunlimited.com)

[www.liviaproductions.com](http://www.liviaproductions.com)

**Embrace Consulting** specializes in providing Diversity and Inclusion consulting and leadership development services to champion employee engagement and drive for business results. Embrace Consulting is positioned to partner with your Leadership Team(s) as well as your Business Resource Networks to ensure alignment of business objectives, cultural competencies and skill development opportunities.

Creativity and innovation thrive in organizations that recognize the importance of building and sustaining a culture where all employees feel their contribution is recognized and valued. Creating and sustaining that culture is critical for businesses to grow and thrive. Embrace Consulting provides the essential foundational services to customize your Diversity & Inclusion and Employee Engagement strategic initiatives.



Contact: Renita Jefferson  
Embrace! Consulting  
[Renita@EmbraceConsulting.biz](mailto:Renita@EmbraceConsulting.biz)  
[www.EmbraceConsulting.biz](http://www.EmbraceConsulting.biz)  
440-823-8914

We provide **Strategic Planning** services, which include the design and development of your strategic Diversity & Inclusion business case, mission, vision, goals and objectives. This plan will be your roadmap to support employee engagement, inclusion opportunities and achievement of key business results.

We specialize in **Business Resource Network development and education**. Business Resource Networks, Employee Resource Networks and Affinity Groups, encourage diversity and inclusion to ensure that a range of perspectives and experiences are recognized and leveraged to achieve organizational goals. These networks provide both internal and external value to organizations by increasing employee engagement, strengthening brand awareness and enhancing leadership development.

We provide **Coaching and Consulting for Senior Leadership** to Drive for Results critical to the success and sustainability of both the strategic planning process and Resource Network development. Essential to the success of these efforts is an actively engaged Leadership Council. This Leadership Council is representative of Business leaders throughout the organization given the privilege to champion and actively lead the progression and achievement of Diversity & Inclusion goals.



**When I was** at the midway mark of my twenties, I decided that I wanted to be married and have my first child by the age of 30. I recently committed my life to Christ and knew the importance of marriage in the context of the church. On top of that, everyone from my parents to my pastor and all in between were constantly asking me the question I believe every single man and woman dreads: “When are you getting married?” And if that wasn’t enough, three of my closest friends tied the knot within a two-year period. Pressure became a daily feeling in my life.

**IF YOU’RE** in the rawness of your singleness like I was and the weight of the wait seems to be unbearable, I have one word for you: patience. Before you roll your eyes to what sounds like a cliché and skip over this article, please understand that God is working in the deep parts of your heart in order to prepare you for who He has. When we are impatient, like how I used to be, it usually causes singles to force things, lack trust in God’s sovereignty, and ultimately go out of turn. While single, God desires to see contentment, dependence and joy in Him alone. When I finally embraced that reality, things changed drastically for me. Here are three Scriptures that produced patience in me and I hope it will do the same for you.

**FIRST**, Psalm 73:25, which says, “Whom have I in heaven but



**Antwan Steele**  
IG: [@twanstele](https://www.instagram.com/@twanstele)  
[info@antwanstele.com](mailto:info@antwanstele.com)

you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.” God must be the foundation of your life. We must desire an intimate relationship with Him

above an intimate relationship with a spouse because we don’t become complete when we say “I do”; we become complete before we make it to the altar.

**SECONDLY**, James 1:2-3 says, “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.” You have to know that God uses our singleness to test us. As we embark on this journey, he’s developing a character that will be tried and true, and we should be joyful for the undeniable growth.

**LASTLY**, Romans 8:28 says, “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” Please know that it’s all working out. Maybe not the way you desire, but it’s aligning with God’s intent. Enjoy and trust the process. One day you’ll look back over that season and see what I mean.

**TODAY**, as I write this article, I am 200 days away from marrying my soon-to-be wife. When I look back, every struggle, every test, every moment that I had to wait was more than worth it and I couldn’t be more thankful for the process. The season I endured proved patience to truly be a virtue.

# 2018 EVENTS

## APRIL

AURORA, OHIO

2nd Annual "C-Suite" Executive Summit  
Sunday -Tuesday, April 8-10, 2018

## MAY

CLEVELAND, OHIO

16th Annual Personal and Professional  
Development Retreat for Women of Color  
"Connections, Community and Career 2018"  
Thursday, May 17, 2018 | 8:00am - 5:00pm

## JUNE

CLEVELAND, OHIO

7th Annual "Speaking of Women! A Dialogue  
Series for Women in Leadership"  
Thursday, June 14, 2018 | 1:30am - 1:30pm

## AUGUST

CLEVELAND, OHIO

2nd Annual Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS)  
Women's Leadership Symposium  
Wednesday, August 22, 2018 | 11:30am - 1:30pm

## SEPTEMBER

MARYSVILLE, OHIO

(BY INVITATION ONLY)

4th Annual Special Prison Outreach Program  
Thursday, September 6, 2018 | 12:30pm - 2:30pm

CLEVELAND, OHIO

(FOR STUDENTS ONLY)

3rd Annual PowHERful™ Enrichment  
Conference with Soledad O'Brien  
(In partnership with the Women of Color Foundation)  
Saturday, September 22, 2018 | 8:00am - 5:00pm

## OCTOBER

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

(FOR STUDENTS ONLY)

1st Annual PowHERful™ Enrichment  
Conference with Soledad O'Brien  
(In partnership with the Women of Color Foundation)  
Saturday, October 27, 2018 | 8:00am - 5:00pm

## NOVEMBER

CLEVELAND, OHIO

13th Annual Leadership Development and  
Training Institute & Awards Luncheon  
Thursday, November 8, 2018 | 8:00am - 2:00pm



*Women*  
of **Color** Foundation



[www.womenofcolorfoundation.com](http://www.womenofcolorfoundation.com)

[info@womenofcolorevents.com](mailto:info@womenofcolorevents.com)

(216) 391-4300, ext. 307 | Toll Free Number (866) 962-3411

# *Duly Noted* by Linda Dooley

**IS THE** #MeToo movement a landmark event in the quest for fair and civil treatment of women? For longer than any of us care to admit, women have been fighting for simple equality and decent treatment and yet one specific context of mistreatment and abuse has remained undiscussed, largely because of a combination of shame and the extraordinary power dynamic between the perpetrator and the victim.

**THE #METOO** movement has been in existence for more than a decade (it was founded by a black woman, Tarana Burke) but only recently became highly visible after the mindboggling number of sexual assault allegations against the famous film producer, Harvey Weinstein, became public and allegations from other men came tumbling out after.

**THE CHARACTERISTICS** of the #MeToo movement are stark. It is gender-based; it divides men and women. It affects rich and poor. It impacts both educated and non-educated. It touches both the powerful and those with no power and empowers women to come forward.

**AFTER THE** sexual assault allegations against Weinstein became public, actress Alyssa Milano encouraged women to tweet “#MeToo” to help us get a glimpse of the magnitude of the problem. In less than 24 hours, Twitter confirmed that the hashtag had been retweeted nearly half a million times. And it continues to grow every day.

**NO ONE** is immune to sexual assault and sexual harassment. Go back and read that sentence again!

**WHILE MANY** men are surprised by the pervasive presence and impact this has had on half our population, women are not. Many men with whom I have spoken, some very good friends, have said they knew sexual assault and harassment was an issue, but they had no idea how widespread it was. It is an issue that has remained hidden for far too many years out of fear, retribution, and victims not being believed. And it is time for that to change!

**THE GOOD NEWS** is we are now seeing unprecedented numbers of sexual assault offenders being publicly held accountable, many due to their fame. As they are suspended, fired, and humiliated, among other punishments, it is very important that we acknowledge this is just the tip of the iceberg. This may be a good start, but it does not go far enough. There are still too many offenders who go unpunished and more importantly, continue to abuse women going forward.

**I AM** well aware that there are issues of injustice, poverty and race that are major obstacles in speaking up. Many women who are the working poor feel trapped in an environment that is filled with sexual abuse and harassment. Women who are not in positions of power and count on every cent they make feel they cannot speak up and “rock the boat” with a



**Linda Dooley**

Freelance writer and former CEO, Domestic Violence and Child Advocacy Center  
[l3dooley@sbcglobal.net](mailto:l3dooley@sbcglobal.net)

complaint for fear of losing their job. Additionally, many communities of color have tense relationships with police, which adds to the complicated nature of reporting or speaking out.

- How do we help women who are so vulnerable?
- What do you think we need to do to help lift our voices without retribution?
- How do we tap on the shared outrage and power of women?
- Is there legislation that would help? A legal fund for women who cannot afford to fight back? Education for our young boys and girls as well as adults?
- How do we continue to shift our culture to a zero tolerance level of sexual assault/harassment for all people?

I want to hear your ideas. **WHAT DO YOU THINK?**



# #MeToo

# Mark BIRTHA:

## Bringing a Passion for People to the Gaming Industry

Most people who arrive in Las Vegas are awed by the breathtaking bright lights that make it difficult to tell the night from day.

Mark BIRTHA, president of the Hard Rock Rocksino Northfield Park in Ohio, was no different when he arrived. After graduating from the Hotel School at Cornell University, he began his career in the gaming and hospitality industry at The Mirage in their management development program.

Born and raised in North Branford, Connecticut, BIRTHA remembers life in a small town that was light years away from Las Vegas. "I've been working since I was nine years old," he said. "I delivered newspapers, washed windows on the weekends in a bakery, picked and packed fruit on farms and in orchards. In high school I worked at a catering hall. I enjoyed being part of people's life experiences and memorable occasions like weddings, Mitzvahs, corporate retreats and social parties. I was there to help them celebrate their unforgettable life moments. I loved that I had the ability to work and earn money at an early age. It was an opportunity for me to learn, grow and interact with people," he added.

Those experiences led BIRTHA to realize his passion for the guest services business. After Cornell, he was off to Las Vegas. However, an internship during his junior year on the Atlantic City Boardwalk is where he was introduced to, and fell in love

with, the energy and excitement of gaming.

"When I started in the early '90s, the Vegas strip was appealing and exciting. It's an adult Disney World when you walk in the doors of a casino," said BIRTHA. At that time Las Vegas was booming, with new properties opening each year. "What surprised me most is that the people who worked in these buildings were the ones who created the culture. They delivered great experiences. It's the people who matter. You can have a great looking building and amazing products and services, but if guests don't have great experiences provided by the teams working there, they won't come back," he cautions.

Mark's career spans over 24 years in the gaming industry. He has worked in Las Vegas, Arizona, Atlantic City, Macau (China) and now Ohio. His experience includes work in large-scale development projects, property operations and restructuring, and asset management in destination and regional markets, as well as local, international and Native American gaming spaces.

Nearly four years ago, two clear deciding factors led Mark to the Rocksino, a one-of-a-kind property that has amazing amenities and service, unparalleled growth potential, a fantastic team, and wonderful loyal guests: "Working for Hard Rock International, and working for a visionary owner. Hard Rock International is an iconic brand and organization with future expansion and



**Montrie Rucker Adams, APR**  
Visibility Marketing, Inc.  
[www.visibilitymarketing.com](http://www.visibilitymarketing.com)



**Mark Birtha** and his fantastic team. Of the 11 casinos and racino's in Ohio, the Rocksino is the only one that is locally owned and operated. **Below:** Birtha at the beginning of his career.

development opportunity around the world. Northfield Park is the best at what it does and that is clearly represented in the Rocksino. The opportunity to manage the world's 'first Rocksino' and be part of an incomparable team focused on delivering authentic experiences that rock was too hard to pass up," explains Birtha.

Of the 11 casinos and racinos in Ohio, the Rocksino is the only one that is locally owned and operated.

"When I walked into the property

for the first time I thought I was in Vegas," says Birtha. "It's definitely 'Vegas Experience. Ohio Address!' You could be anywhere in the world as the Rocksino was designed with the highest level of detail and quality in mind. The gaming, dining, entertainment and retail amenities available here are unparalleled in the region. To be part of that experience and vision and work to evolve and enhance it was a dream come true."

One of the Rocksino's unique offerings is the RockStop Gas & Wash, a new Hard Rock-branded





**Birta with** (from top): Patti LaBelle; The Temptations and his wife, Roxana; and Toni Braxton.

continued from page 25

and first of its kind, state-of-the-art gas service station and car wash. The new property amenity is the largest investment made at the property since the opening of the Rocksino. A future RockStop will debut this summer at the Hard Rock Atlantic City.

“We continually look for new opportunities to enhance the property and exceed the expectations of our guests,” says Birta. “In my four years at the Rocksino, besides the RockStop Gas & Wash we have added a new fast casual Italian restaurant Concerto, expanded our outdoor patios, increased seating in our award-winning Kosar’s Wood-Fired Grill, increased show capacity to over 90 shows a year in Hard Rock Live (including marquee iconic acts), built a new warehouse, and hired more than 100 new employees.”

Additionally, the Rocksino announced a comprehensive military program designed to increase employment opportunities for veterans who served in the United States military, members of the National Guard and Reserve, and military spouses.

“Since our property’s opening in December 2013, our recruitment and community outreach strategy has consistently strived to hire, promote, and support military personnel in our workforce and our local community. At the same time we have a recognition program with benefits for our military guests and team members. The difference now is we’re bringing everything together as one robust vision and amplifying our services in every way. It is just part of our more than \$2.7 million philanthropic commitment to our NE Ohio community.”

continued on page 28



**ForestCity**  
the power of place

## Inspired by tomorrow

At Forest City, we believe diversity and inclusion are critical components of “the power of place” that defines all great communities. That’s why we work today for a better tomorrow.

---

*Forest City is one of the nation’s leading mixed-use placemakers, envisioning, owning and operating inspiring real estate where people, businesses and communities thrive.*

continued from page 26

From being named best regional gaming property to the top Steakhouse in Northeast Ohio, as well as dozens of other awards, the Rocksino continues to deliver a truly unique entertainment experience. Birtha's favorite recognition: Top Workplace in Northeast Ohio two years in a row. "We would not be successful without our people. They make all the difference and having their passion and hard work recognized makes it all worthwhile," Birtha adds.

His advice for career success? "Walk through doors you never thought would open...don't be afraid. Learn to become invaluable. You want to stand out for going above and beyond and doing the things that others don't want to," advises Birtha. "Don't be afraid of failure. You will be given a guaranteed learning lesson. Be patient. If you do a little bit every day, it's a lot easier to get from points A to B. It will allow you

to build a long-term career that is solid and will sustain the test of time."

Mark is married with three children and enjoys dining, wine, golf, travel, and skiing... and of course live music entertainment! Although quite a transition from Las Vegas, living in Northeast Ohio has been an amicable change. "There are so many things here that remind me of when I grew up in Connecticut. It is nice to have the seasons again and the schools are some of the best in the country. People here are friendlier and there is a great sense of community and values and that is critical to raising a family," says Birtha. Birtha went on to compliment all the incredible experiences here, from attending the World Series and the NBA Finals, to visiting the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and hosting the Republican National Convention. "It's a great time to be in Northeast Ohio!"



**Mark Birtha, Bernie Kosar, Roxana Birtha, Justin Birtha, and Jack Birtha** at *Cleveland Magazine's* Silver Spoon Awards party at the Crawford Auto Aviation Museum. Kosar's Wood-Fired Grill has won a Silver Spoon Award for three consecutive years for Best Fine Dining in 2015 and Best Steaks in 2016 and 2017.



Need to increase your social reach?



## **SOCIALLYCHIC** AT YOUR SERVICE!

**Owner** of C7Branding.com *Digital Marketing Company*

**Co-Owner** of MarketingAndMimosas.com *Women's Professional Networking*

**Committee Member** of Lake Communicators

Social Media Management | Website Design | Email Marketing | Brand Development | Social Media Coaching | Strategic Market Development |

**[SociallyChic.net](http://SociallyChic.net)**

Don't call it a comeback:

# GCABJ *has been here for years*

After nearly a decade-long drought of having no local representation of the NABJ —disbandment as a result of attrition from members moving in and out of the city—the Greater Cleveland Association of Black Journalists officially re-established in spring 2015.

“Often we don’t feel like our voices are legitimate, but our voices need to be heard,” said chapter president and WOIO Channel 19 news anchor/reporter Harry Boomer, speaking on the importance of the GCABJ’s presence in this market. “Our point of view is important. We are the voices that will chronicle our existence.”

Boomer estimates this current chapter has more members than the previous one. He served as president of that chapter, as well. Current members represent print, radio, television and online media outlets.

As an affiliate chapter of the NABJ, the mission of GCABJ is to serve and strengthen the community by honestly reflecting on the past and accurately reporting the present with perspective as well as providing support, inspiration, fellowship and opportunities for working and aspiring journalists of color.

Within a year of re-assembling a chapter, NABJ’s regional director and the national headquarters

took notice of GCABJ’s drive and initiative by selecting the chapter to host two networking mixers and a one-day regional conference, attended by students from as far as Detroit.

GCABJ secured non-profit status and was named the 2016 Chapter of the Year by NABJ. It is also worth noting that the Cleveland chapter has become the model for new chapters to emulate.

Boomer said winning chapter of the year has been the highlight of his tenure.

Going forward with GCABJ, Boomer would like for people to join our organization, be active and call us with ideas. He would also like to see the chapter provide scholarships to young people desiring to enter the field of journalism. “Kids need to see us and know what we do,” he said.

Kevin “Chill” Heard, GCABJ vice president and print and managing editor of the Call and Post newspapers, says the key to GCABJ’s success upon its return after a long hiatus is the convergence of several members working on different media platforms dedicated to the goals of the group.

“Also to our benefit,” says Heard, “we have a great mix of seasoned veterans joining younger journalists who are successfully working in print and broadcast journalism.



**Sandra Bishop**

Secretary, Greater Cleveland Association of Black Journalists  
[www.sandrasaidit.com](http://www.sandrasaidit.com)

It will be our organization's ability to continue attracting young working journalists as well as students of journalism/mass media that will promote meaningful growth."

Diondra Heard, a recent Cleveland State University graduate who studied film, television and digital media, said being a member of GCABJ has been beneficial. "I've learned a lot about what I'm about to get myself into," she said. "I can do the research and learn about salaries and stuff like that but, here, I get information about the experience of being a journalist - by hearing all of

the journalists' stories."

She thinks one-on-one mentorships in the journalism community should be more abundant. "A lot of student members have said they want one-on-one mentorships; to have an ally who has been there, and done that. Before coming to GCABJ, I was alone out here."

Her dream job is to become a sideline correspondent, covering sports. She looks to GCABJ for guidance and direction in an increasingly competitive industry where people of color are still few and far in between.

"Diversity shouldn't just be a buzzword," Boomer continued. "We are here to be a voice, a resource to tell our story. We must realize that black voices matter."

GCABJ meets every first Saturday from 10 am until noon, with the exception of holiday weekends, at various locations throughout Greater Cleveland. Other officers include Leon Bibb, Sandra Bishop, Rachel L. Hill, Joe Stills and Ben Holbert.



# Age Discrimination

## in the Workplace

**Age discrimination** is real and invidious, particularly for women. I see this discrimination regularly in my employment law practice. Our phone rings daily with calls from men and women over 50 who have been abruptly terminated from long-term jobs, despite good performance reviews. But while men may find other (albeit lower-paid) jobs, women typically experience extended or permanent unemployment despite desperate job searches.

A 2015 study by the National Bureau of Economic Research demonstrates that my anecdotal observations about older women are grounded in hard facts. The study was based upon callback rates from over 40,000 job applications in various occupations. For instance, in the profession of administrative work most dominated by women, the callback rate was a startling 29% lower for middle-aged women (ages 49–51), and 47% lower for older female applicants (ages 64–66) than for younger women.

**Over 40 years ago**, writer Susan Sontag identified the reasons why age discrimination impacts women more than men. Sadly, not much seems to have changed since then, and no one has come up with a better explanation for the bias against older women. First, Sontag noted society's emphasis on women's appearances. "Being physically attractive counts much more in a woman's life than in a man's, but beauty, identified, as it is for women, with youthfulness, does not stand up well to age." Second, Sontag described the qualities most valued in women: "'Femininity' is identified with incompetence, helplessness, passivity, non-competitiveness, being nice. Age does not improve those qualities." From ancient times, women have been sorted into three categories: the maiden, the mother, and the crone. Unfortunately, the discrimination statistics demonstrate that once a woman passes childbearing age, she is viewed as a crone — not an appealing image to an employer.

Sontag's explanation may help describe what happens to women in the legal profession. Almost half of law students are female and they enter private practice as associates at nearly those same percentages, around 45%. Yet only 20% of law firm  
continued on page 34



**Betsy Rader**  
Candidate for Congress, OH-14  
[www.betsyraderforcongress.com](http://www.betsyraderforcongress.com)

**WIP**

Women's Inflection Point.

# It's Me Time!

**SPEAKERS WHO CREATE INFLECTION POINT OCCURRENCES**

**Friday April 27th - Saturday April 28th, 2018**



**Bonita Hatchett-Bodle**  
Strasburger & Price LLP  
Partner



**Dr. Lezli Baskerville**  
National Association For Higher  
Education Opportunities  
President & CEO



**Jennifer Bratter**  
Rice University  
Associate Professor  
of Sociology



**Aracely Panameño**  
Center for Responsible Lending  
Director of Latino Affairs



**LaShawn Reed Kendricks**  
Essentials 4 Success  
& Success Her Way  
President & Founder



**Patti Cotton**  
Women Who Take the Lead  
Founder & Executive Coach



**Rachel Fowler**  
Yoga Wellness  
Speaker



**Jacquelyn Aluotto**  
Pick It Up Pictures, NIMBY,  
Real Beauty Real Women  
Founder



**Jayne Ingram**  
Advocate, Motivator  
Change Agent  
Co-Founder, Women's March

**TITLE SPONSOR**

# BBVA Compass

**BLOG SHARE: <https://itsmetime199225389.wordpress.com>**

**TO REGISTER: [WWW.WOMENINFLECTIONPOINT.ORG/EVENTS](http://WWW.WOMENINFLECTIONPOINT.ORG/EVENTS)**

*The “old boys’ club” still exists. Although the numbers have improved in recent years, women still hold only 16% of board seats in the S&P 1500.*

continued from page 32

partners (and only 17% of equity partners) are female. At the 200 largest law firms, only three managing partners are women.

Why are female lawyers apparently more successful in their early years? Perhaps it is because a recent law school graduate is likely young, eager to please, and submissive to the partners’ authority, poised to take notes and run errands. This is consistent with the traditional female stereotype, and if the woman is also smart and hard-working, then she may well be successful as an associate. But as the female lawyer ages and becomes more confident, assertive, and competent, the potential for discord increases in many work environments. Confidence is characterized as bossiness, while assertiveness is viewed as abrasive. Reaching for the brass ring does not comport with the note-taking team player of the early years.

Furthermore, as female lawyers get older, the emphasis on generating business becomes greater, especially if they want to be considered for equity partnership. Here, women face serious obstacles.

**The “old boys’ club”** still exists. Although the numbers have improved in recent years, women still hold only 16% of board seats in the S&P 1500, and only 21% of the top legal positions in Fortune 500 companies. The basketball and golf outings, cigar bars, alumni connections from private boys’ schools, the hero worship of men who played certain college or professional sports — these all create hurdles for women attempting to be rainmakers.

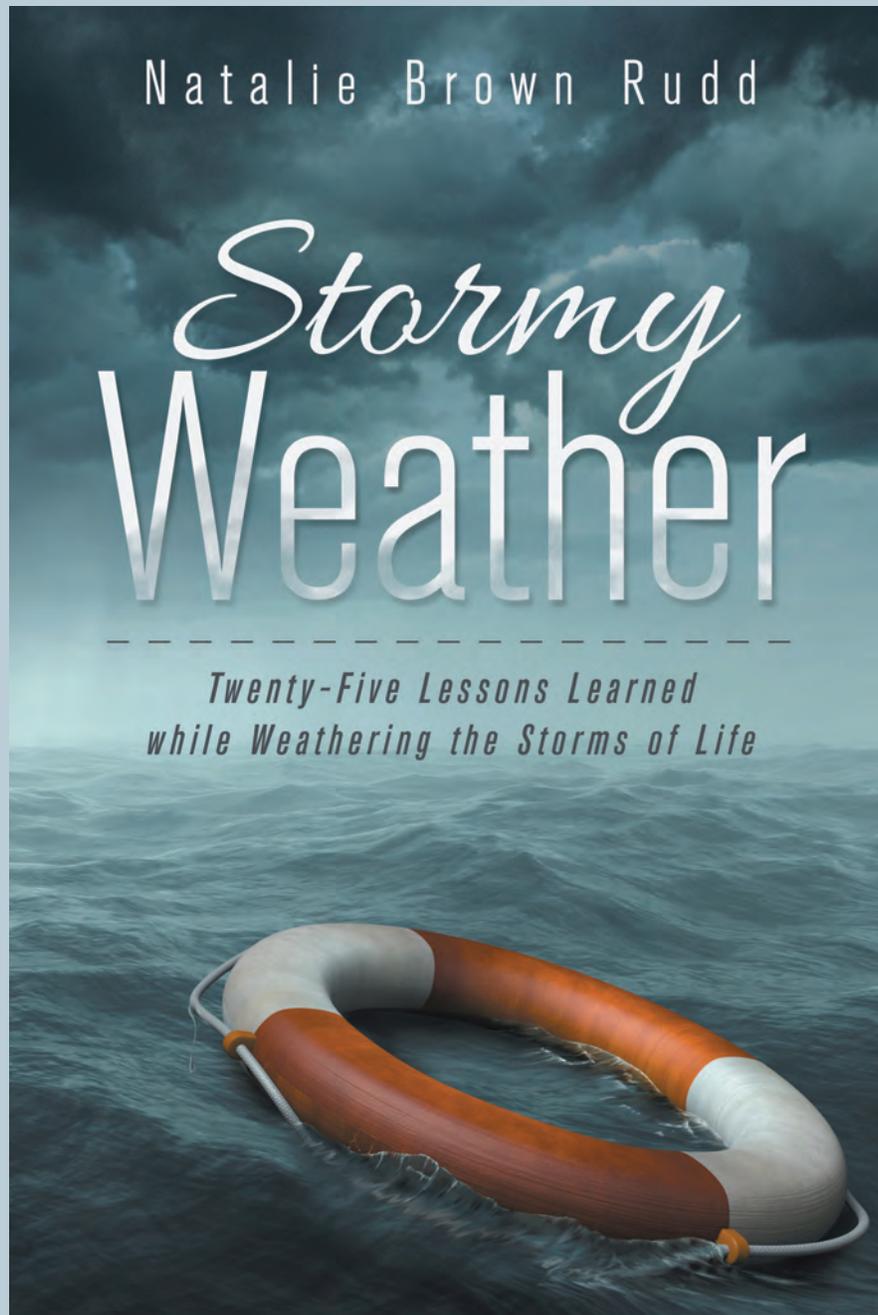
And, of course, as women age, they often must make choices about having children and taking time away from work to care for them. They do not have the option to wait until they are well into their 40s and well-established before having small children. Men are still far more likely to have a spouse who is the primary caretaker, enabling them to keep up a demanding work schedule. Women may choose to work part-time, flex-time, telecommute, take time off, or move into a less demanding specialty or a non-equity track. These choices often impact women’s career standings, and financial footings, as they enter their 40s and 50s.

**The heart-wrenching irony** for many women is that just as they are ready to ramp up their careers and create a nest egg in their 50s or 60s, they are hit with the cold reality of age discrimination. For women who managed to maintain their career momentum throughout their early years, many anticipated a career trajectory that continued indefinitely, only to find themselves suddenly demoted or terminated long before they had planned to retire. Indeed, many people plan to work past what used to be considered “retirement age.” Fewer people have pensions than in prior generations, and many older workers have not recovered the savings they lost in the Great Recession. The government has increased the age at which full social security benefits vest and that age may increase even further.

Public policy should encourage people to work as long as they want; continued employment means less dependence

continued on page 36

**On Sale Now!**



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

“I felt myself in my own storm feeling exactly what Natalie has written.  
**Amazing!**”

– LaToiya Muse

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

“This book has blessed me tremendously! By the end of the second chapter I was in tears.  
**Awesome testimony!**”

– Bridgette Hamilton

Find your copy on **Amazon, Barnes & Noble** and **Westbow Publishing**

*Natalie Brown Rudd is an associate minister at Antioch Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio. She is the founder of Because of His Grace Ministries, which seeks to influence the spiritual growth of women. She is a sought-after speaker and teacher.*

**For more information, visit:**  
[www.becauseofhisgrace.com](http://www.becauseofhisgrace.com)



continued from page 34

on government-funded social programs, greater income, and more tax revenues. But the harsh reality is that employees often do not have the choice to work as long as they want or need to work — especially women.

An important finding of the NBER study is that where age discrimination laws are stronger, the evidence of discrimination is weaker. In particular, the study found a correlation between lower discrimination rates and larger damages available under state law. Given the many benefits to allowing people to work as long as they are able, this would support strong age discrimination laws.

Unfortunately, age discrimination laws are generally weaker than other anti-discrimination laws at both the federal and state levels. For instance, in order to obtain the full range of damages in an age discrimination case under Ohio law, the employee needs to file suit within just 180 days. This is an incredibly short statute of limitations. Someone reeling from an unexpected termination may not even consult a lawyer within this amount of time. People terminated after long tenures often have no idea that they will never work again or that they will only be offered jobs at half their former pay. By the time they realize this, it is often too late to sue.

The Ohio age discrimination laws are particularly confusing. If the employee is attempting to navigate these laws on her own, she may file a charge with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission and unwittingly give away some remedies. To make matters worse for victims of age discrimination, a bill has recently been introduced in the Ohio legislature that would limit non-economic and punitive damages to levels well below those available for other types of torts in Ohio.

At the federal level, the judiciary's interpretation of the Age Discrimination

in Employment Act (ADEA) has made it more difficult to enforce than other anti-discrimination laws. In 2009, the Supreme Court interpreted the ADEA in a way that complicates proving causation for age cases in comparison with other federal civil rights statutes.

**Age discrimination** against older women is also more difficult to fight because it does not fit cleanly into a traditional age discrimination or sex discrimination analysis, since the company may well treat younger women and older men fairly as compared to older women. It is the intersection of age and gender that leads to the most pernicious discrimination. Fortunately, some courts have recognized “intersectional” discrimination, also sometimes called “age plus sex” discrimination: “The point behind the establishment of the sex-plus discrimination theory is to allow Title VII plaintiffs to survive summary judgment when the defendant employer does not discriminate against all members of the sex.”

All of us will become old eventually, and so everyone has a very personal stake in ensuring that older workers are protected from illegal discrimination. Unfortunately, most people pay no attention to these types of laws until the day they are told to clean out their desks in 15 minutes. Rights without effective remedies are meaningless, and so the age discrimination laws should provide employees with a reasonable statute of limitations for bringing claims, and damages in amounts that not only make employees whole and pay their attorneys' fees, but also deter employers from violating the law in the future. Age should not be permitted to play any role in a decision to demote or terminate an employee. To lose a job in their 50s or 60s is often a tragedy from which a person will never recover. Strong, enforceable laws will help prevent this from happening illegally to women and men.

Sources: *Gross v. FBL Financial Services, Inc.*, 557 U.S. 167 (2009)  
*Arnett v. Spinnaker*, 846 F.Supp. 1234, 1239 (E.D. Pa. 1994).



## bringing you technology for the future

we have an in-depth understanding of emerging technologies  
and their commercial applications for your *business*

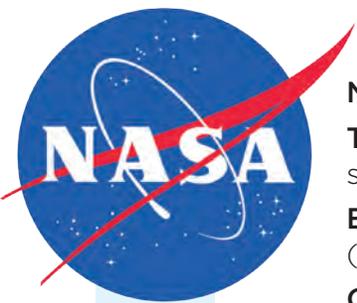


**HOWSE SOLUTIONS**

technology solutions that work

Technology\_Installations | Consulting | Data Backup\_Recovery | Video\_Surveillance  
Cybersecurity | Training | Networks\_Computer Lab Configurations

17325 Euclid Avenue, Suite 2030 | Cleveland, Ohio 44112 | 216.352.4282 | info@howsesolutions.com



**Name:** Catherine Lee Castro Alvarado

**Title:** Rising senior undergraduate chemical engineering student

**Education:** BS in Chemical Engineering (Expected Graduation May, 2019)

**Civic Engagement:** For me, it is very important to give back to the communities and make a difference. I have participated in different outreach activities to encourage young girls and minorities to study STEM related fields. Also, I've had the opportunity to help some communities in Puerto Rico by collecting donations and renovating classrooms of schools.

**Her mantra:** Always believe in your dreams and never give up, keep trying, learn from your experiences and inspire others to follow their dreams too.



### EARLY LIFE

**Do you remember your first school science project? If so, how did that experience shape your dream to become an engineer?**

During high school, I had the desire of working in something different for my science fair project. Unfortunately, I knew that my school didn't have enough resources in the laboratories to do science experiments. Looking for a solution, I talked with a teacher and I contacted different universities to express my interest to work in a laboratory facility. Thanks to the help of my teacher, and a near university, I was able to experience being in a research laboratory for the first time in my life.

### CAREER

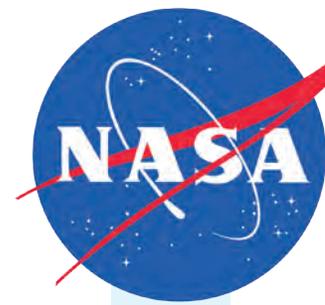
**Throughout your internship, what have you found most shocking and why?**

Having a project related to the development of a new generation of batteries was something that impacted me because I understand the importance of having technologies capable of supplying energy demand even during natural disasters, like a hurricane. I received the NASA Glenn Research Center internship offer about a month after Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico. By that time, I was without electricity in my home and with minimal internet signal at the moment; even accepting the offer letter was a challenge. For me it was shocking all the research related to power and energy conversion at GRC and how it impacts the progress of our actual world. Knowing that I will be able to contribute to this mission fills me with much excitement and enthusiasm.

### FUN FACT

**If you were writing your memoir, what would this chapter of the book be called and why?**

"Living the Dream." I have been an admirer of science and space my whole life. This opportunity is the realization of a dream. I remember all the moments that I was at my home looking up at the sky at night to see the International Space Station pass by over Puerto Rico. I feel so happy and motivated to support NASA's mission with my work. I am lucky to work along with very talented people that work every day to make this world a better place. My words fall short to express how grateful I am for this life changing experience.



**Name:** Grace A. Gaskin

**Title:** Aerospace Flight Systems Engineer, Trainee

**Education:** B.S.E. in Chemical Engineering from Case Western Reserve University (Graduating May, 2018)

**Civic Engagement:** I'm a GED Tutor at Seeds of Literacy and I've volunteered at the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center.

**Her mantra:** "If I am comfortable, then I am part of the problem." I strive to always be outside of my comfort zone. That's where life stays interesting and challenging and I know I'm growing.

## CAREER

### **How did your previous role as a paratrooper and cryptologic linguist in the U.S. Army prepare you for your current role as an intern supporting the Flow Boiling and Condensation Experiment at NASA?**

My time in the U.S. Army constituted some of the most beloved and challenging years of my life; those years shaped me both personally and professionally. My military service taught me how to remain flexible and handle daily stresses and challenges without getting derailed from the task at hand. I learned confidence under pressure and to trust my instincts. Most of all, I learned the value of teamwork. I believe these lessons enabled me to really hit the ground running when I joined the Flow Boiling and Condensation Experiment project at NASA. It also helps that the team is stacked with some incredible individuals who engineered an elegant system in pursuit of broadening the modern understanding of gravity-independent thermodynamics. The project is fascinating and I'm so happy to be able to contribute.

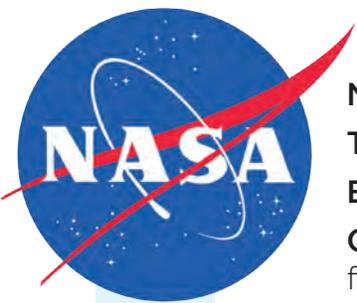
### **Are there any engineers that inspire you? Why?**

That's easy: Dr. Jesse Wainright, a research professor of chemical engineering at Case Western Reserve University. Now, I've learned from quite a few professors, instructors, mentors, and leaders in my adult years and Dr. Wainright tops that list. He's taught two of my engineering courses and I've gained so much technical knowledge, professional advice and real-world engineering expertise from him. He excels in effectively communicating the difficult concepts where many professors struggle. But most of all, he works really hard for his students. He's passionate about teaching but also manages to balance his research, which focuses on state-of-the-art energy storage. I am inspired by the effort he invests and have witnessed firsthand that students will work harder, and subsequently learn more, from a professor or boss who works hard for them.

## FUN FACT

### **If you could fly anywhere in the world, where would it be and why?**

Well first of all, I'd like to go to the Moon, or better yet to Mars! As for here on Earth, it's a tie between Nepal and the British Virgin Islands. Someday I plan to summit Mt. Ama Dablam in Nepal (and hopefully a few other Himalayan peaks). As for the Virgin Islands, I've been listening to my Dad rave about his sailing adventures for years and when he retires, I'd love to spend some quality time together in the islands.



**Name:** Robyn N. Gordon

**Title:** Director, Center Operations

**Education:** MBA, Cleveland State University

**Civic Engagement:** I serve on the board of directors for Cleveland Public Library Foundation, Girl Scouts of Northeast Ohio and Sisters of Charity Foundation. I also serve as a community trustee for Cleveland State University.

**Her mantra:** Be yourself; everyone else is already taken.



### EARLY LIFE

**As a child did you dream of working for NASA? If so, what did you see yourself doing? If not, what was your career of choice?**

I wanted to work in fashion as a designer but realized I was not very adept at visual and spatial drawings. As an undergraduate I became very interested in labor law and labor history and found my way to a career in Human Resources and Operations Management.

### CAREER

**Share one of the biggest lessons you've learned professionally.**

There is more than one correct answer to a problem and you don't have to always be the one to give the answer.

**Is it possible to have balance between career and personal life? If so, how do we achieve this? If not, what should we be striving for instead?**

If it is possible to have perfect balance I have not found the key to making this happen. I prioritize what is important at the time and try to give my full attention to whatever I am engaged in, whether it is my personal, volunteer or professional commitments.

**Describe the characteristics of an effective leader.**

The most effective leaders are multi-dimensional people who easily adapt to their current situation. They are visionary, flexible, have a sense of humor, demonstrate patience, courage and tenacity, have a positive outlook, willing to do the work necessary and accept responsibility for their decisions and actions.

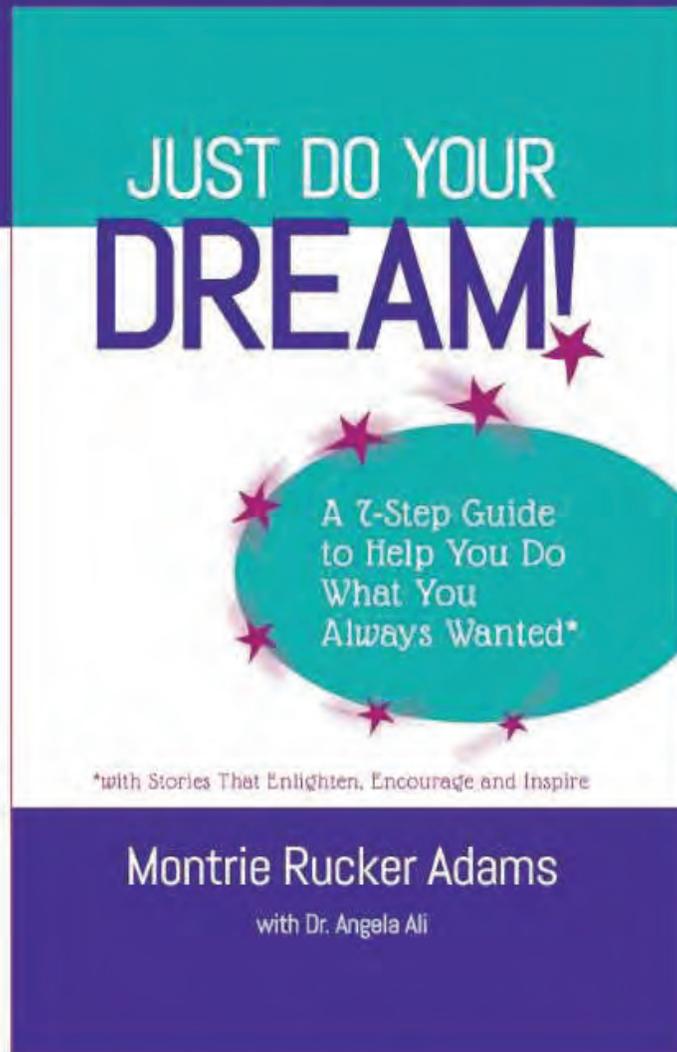
### FUN FACT

**What was the last thing you Googled?**

A recipe for chicken tortilla soup.

# Get Inspired to Do *Your* Dream in 2018!

Read the Book That Can Be Your Catalyst for Change



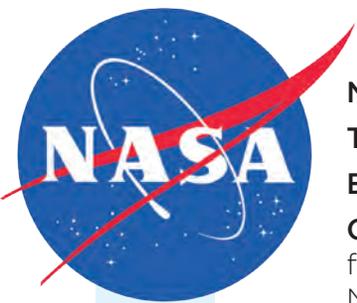
"Montrie has not only written a best seller, she's launched a movement. She gracefully points out that every great life begins with a great dream. We need only to open our heart, step out boldly, and give our dreams wings."

~Dr. Dennis Kimbro, author of bestsellers:

*Think and Grow Rich, A Black Choice, What Makes the Great Great and The Wealth Choice Success Secrets of Black Millionaires*

**On Sale Now**

**JustDoYourDeam.com**



**Name:** Marisabel Kelly

**Title:** Research Chemical Engineer

**Education:** Ph.D., Chemistry, Clark Atlanta University

**Civic Engagement:** I serve as a role model and mentor for younger generations including Girl Scouts of Northeast Ohio and NASA interns.

**Her mantra:** Every day is like a big canvas that give us the opportunity to make a masterpiece of our lives.



## EARLY LIFE

### Who inspires you?

Growing up, the person who inspired me most was my mother, Luzzette Colón-Casillas. I'm the middle child of three. My mother raised us with strong values, and she set an example with her hard work and determination. She taught me the significance of dreams and goals and the importance of perseverance.

## CAREER

### What is the most challenging part of your current role?

Anyone in the sciences will tell you that pushing the envelope to continue the progression in their field is a challenge in itself. In my role, as a researcher, I must focus on keeping an open mind, for without an open mind, creativity is limited and science cannot progress.

### What award are you most proud of and why?

While I truly treasure every award and recognition I've obtained in my professional career, my favorite has been the recognition of providing support to NASA's summer interns and faculty. I feel the urge to pay it forward due to the immense support I received from my mentors.

### Why are groups such as NASA's Hispanic Advisory Group (HAG) important and how has being a member impacted you professionally?

The mission of HAG at the Glenn Research Center is to advocate and communicate the concerns and interests of current and future Hispanic employees and to further NASA's mission by interacting with the public through multicultural awareness programs and educational outreach activities.

Being an active member of HAG has provided me the opportunity to educate others about the importance that science, technology, engineering and math represents in our future within Hispanic communities.

## FUN FACT

### If you had one superpower, what would it be and why?

I would like to have super power, super speed and super time like, "The Flash." This would make it much easier to perform at a high level professionally, have plenty of quality time with family, and pursue multiple hobbies.



**Name:** Mary J. Lobo

**Title:** Chief, Test Facility Management Branch

**Education:** B.S., Mechanical Engineering  
Case Western Reserve University, 1999

**Civic Engagement:** I'm a member of the Greater Cleveland Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (a public service sorority with a primary focus on programs in the Black community); I mentor and tutor students; and I participate in outreach events promoting involvement in math and science fields.

**Her mantra:** Busyness is the enemy of effectiveness.

## CAREER

### What professional accomplishments are you most humbled by?

In recent years I have been asked to speak at NASA-sponsored events, scholarship banquets, and school programs. I am absolutely honored by these requests. In the past, I never considered myself to be a person of influence, but those opportunities make me realize the impact that I can have on others by sharing my story and my perspective. Whether it's talking about perseverance through personal obstacles and rising above expectations, working against unconscious bias in a STEM career, or explaining my role at work and its importance to accomplishing NASA's missions, I represent what any individual can do through preparedness and resolve and I know that I can inspire someone because they can see themselves in me.

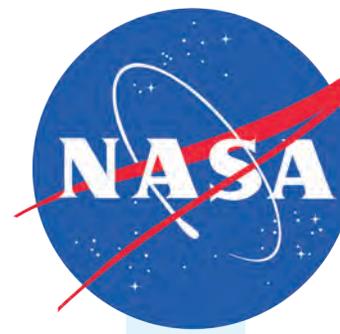
### Where do you draw courage and confidence to challenge barriers within your industry?

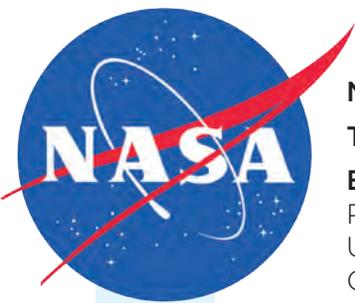
I have always had a strong support network to help encourage me. My support network was once just my family, then I added a small group of college friends (other Black women in a variety of careers), and now I have a few associates at work that have similar shared experiences and professional mentors who provide guidance and advice. At different times in my life I lean on them for different needs. Sometimes I need my husband or mom to say "I believe in you" to remind me that I already have what it takes to succeed, or I need a friend to say "Girl, the same thing happened to me at work" to help me rationalize that something that happened may not have been a personal attack and instead a result of bias that is pervasive in multiple workplaces. Other times I need a mentor who might say "I understand your challenge—have you considered this alternative" so that I can devise a plan of action. They are my team.

## FUN FACT

### Laptop or tablet and why?

Tablet. I'm a minimalist at heart so I love to pack light.





**Name:** Marla E. Pérez-Davis

**Title:** Deputy Director, NASA John H. Glenn Research Center

**Education:** B.S., chemical engineering, University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez; Master's, chemical engineering University of Toledo; Ph.D., chemical engineering, Case Western Reserve University.

**Civic Engagement:** I frequently participate in speaking engagements to motivate students to pursue science, technology, engineering, and mathematical (STEM) fields. Also, I serve on ad-hoc committees as needed to address technology and engineering topics.

**Her mantra:** Everything happens for a reason.



### EARLY LIFE

As I reflect on my early years, there are several key memories and experiences that I believe started shaping my future. The first step of my journey was set in motion by my mother. She worked very hard to enable me to have an education. She articulated the value of an education, followed by her expectations and our responsibilities toward achieving it. I went to school in a small town in the mountains of Puerto Rico. Although school resources were limited, they had excellent teachers. My early years can be described as a hands-on training in determination, discipline and the importance of doing your best. I was in ninth grade when I came across the definition of a chemical engineer and that was it. From that moment on, I started my journey to be an engineer. I still remember my excitement when I received the acceptance to the chemical engineering program at the University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez (El Colegio). At that time, El Colegio was the only institution with an engineering program in Puerto Rico. In looking back at my early years in Puerto Rico, I realize the positive influence provided by my family and, later on, by my professors and mentors who shaped my professional development.

### CAREER

#### Where do you find inspiration in your current role?

In my current role, every day is a new day – meaning that no two days are the same and consequently, my source of inspiration varies. Two common themes that keep me motivated and inspired are the brilliant people I work with and being part of an amazing organization, NASA, and our technical contributions in space exploration and aeronautics.

#### How has the industry of science and technology changed since you began your career? Where would you like to see it in the future?

The changes in science and technology fields have occurred in many dimensions—from new emerging technologies, new engineering fields such as bioengineering and new discoveries, to name a few. Those advances in science and technology have influenced our society, creating new markets and solutions to problems. We've improved quality of life, aviation, and our understanding of Earth and space exploration. Equally important is the increased representation and contributions of women and minorities in STEM fields. It is important that we continue sustaining U.S. technical leadership in space exploration, aeronautics and new discoveries, while embracing a diverse and inclusive workplace.

Subscribe today!

# {CODE}m MAGAZINE

The global male experience.



[www.codemediagroupllc.com](http://www.codemediagroupllc.com)

For more info email us at:  
[bilal@codemediagroupllc.com](mailto:bilal@codemediagroupllc.com)



## Outdoor



*Photo courtesy of Pinterest*

### **PANSY**

**Growing condition:** sun or part shade

**Height:** 10 inches tall



*Photo courtesy of Healthy Eating Food*

### **LILAC**

**Growing Condition:** full sun

**Height:** 20 feet tall



*Photo courtesy of coolphotojapan.com*

### **CHERRY BLOSSOM**

**Growing Condition:** full sun, partial shade

**Height:** 20-40 feet

# Home & Garden

## Indoor



*Photo courtesy of IndiaMART*

### **JASMINE PLANT**

**Health Benefit:** helps you sleep better!



*Photo courtesy of Cottage Life*

### **RED EDGED DRACAENA**

**Health Benefits:** removes toxins and reduces stress



## CORPORATE COLLEGE — YOUR TRAINING PARTNER

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Corporate College provides training and development for professionals through open enrollment courses. Our talented team brings a wealth of experience that will help take your skills to the next level.

### CUSTOMIZED TRAINING

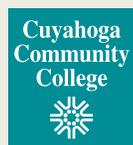
Corporate College understands your organization's unique challenges and provides customized solutions that meet strategic business goals. We strive to improve individual, team and organizational performance.

### CONFERENCE CENTERS

Corporate College provides world-class accommodations for business events of all sizes. With locations in Warrensville Heights and Westlake, we offer leading-edge technology, award-winning catering services and business amenities that will help to take your next meeting or event from good — to great.

**CORPORATE COLLEGE**<sup>®</sup>

A DIVISION OF  
CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE



*Premier Training and Conference Centers*

[www.corporatecollege.com](http://www.corporatecollege.com) | 216-987-2800

# ENERGIZE

## YOUR MORNINGS



And stay connected to us all day!

