



**Black
History
Month**

Black Leaders **LEADING**

It is not unusual for us to spend part of Black History Month thinking about all the great, influential leaders who have made their mark in the world. No one can dispute the legacies of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Sojourner Truth, Booker T. Washington, and scores of others who pioneered civil rights in America.

Certainly, these and many more have been role models for African Americans in all walks of life, from the city streets to the board room. But think about this question: Who else was important to your own journey? That's the question we posed in mini-interviews with more than two dozen business leaders.

The responses to our questions give us a panoramic view of the socialization process as it relates to the leaders you'll discover in the next 27 pages. Each one is fascinating.

What's the common thread that ties all of them together? A commitment to helping others, as evidenced by their community involvement. But there's more. Between the lines are glimpses of pride for the road one has traveled—often a very hard road, indeed. Just by participating in this feature, the individuals profiled here are giving an example of black leaders leading.



VERNON G. BAKER II

Senior Vice President &
General Counsel
ARVINMERITOR, INC.

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

My father. He had a medical practice in Harlem for almost 50 years. He taught me to treat everyone with respect and to view every interaction with a person as a learning experience.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

Not different, but slightly more enhanced. I urge those I mentor to follow their own paths. My path is but one example.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

Both my mother and father. They stressed the value of a good education. They both graduated from Howard, and they insisted that my sister and I get the best education available to us.

My grandfather also influenced me. He graduated from college and worked as a Pullman porter. When I was very young, he constantly told me that times were changing and a well-educated “colored” boy could really do something.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

I have read the *Autobiography of Malcom X* over a dozen times. The evolution of this man fascinates me. No matter the obstacles—be it racism, politics or the apparent lack of opportunities—the strength of the human spirit can prevail.

How are you involved with your community?

Through my position at ArvinMeritor, I have been very active with the American Heart Association and the March of Dimes. I spend a lot of my personal time mentoring young African-American lawyers and reaching out to the legal community in an

effort to promote diversity in our profession. I have sponsored a number of 3-on-3 basketball tournaments to raise money for Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would ask the President, “Why haven’t you called me? I may be able to provide you with some additional ‘color’ on various topics of interest.”

What is your philosophy of life?

Each one teach one. We must be present and accounted for in the community. We received help, and we need to make sure we are helping others.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Having a wife and 2 sons who love and respect me.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

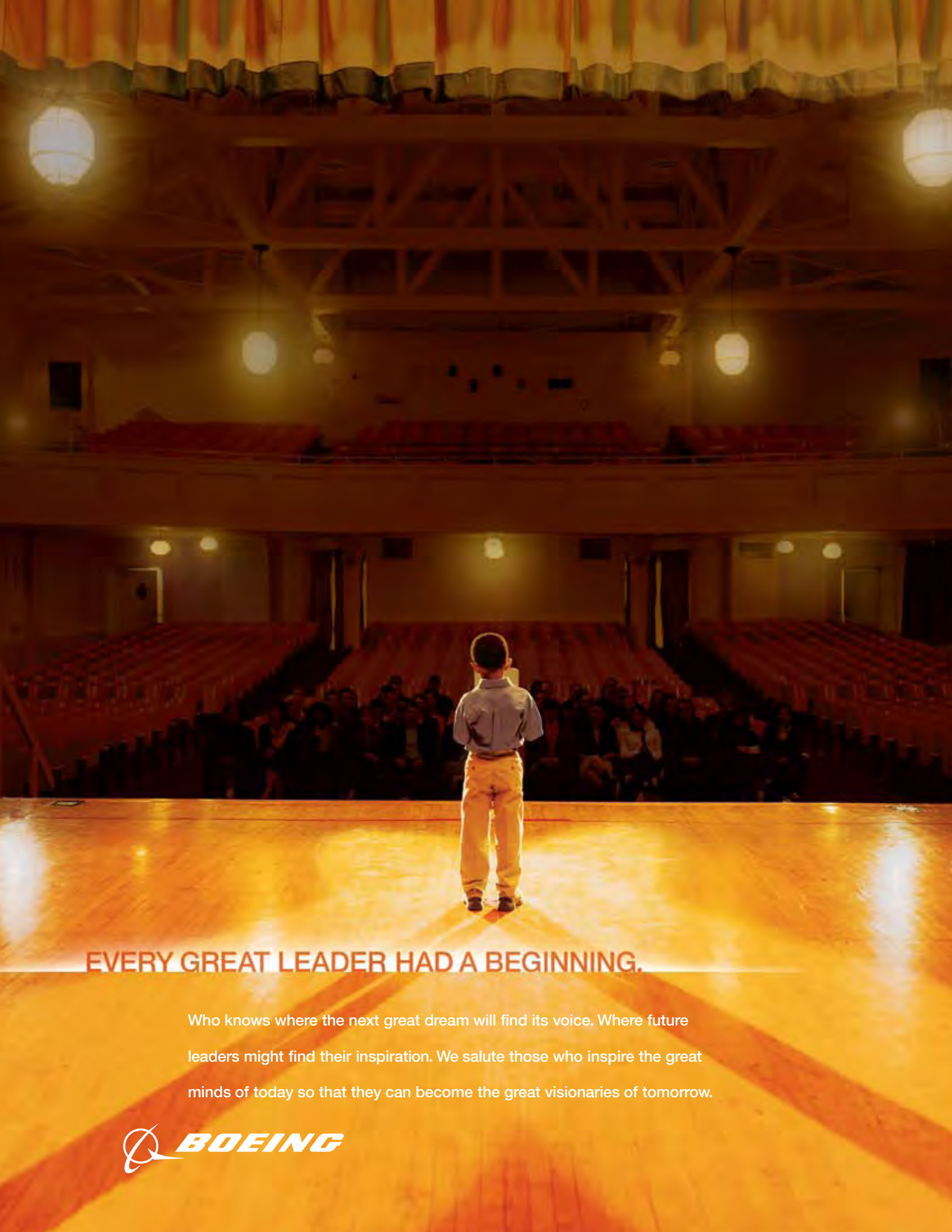
Not a darn thing.



Baker sponsors several basketball tournaments annually to raise money for Historically Black Colleges and Universities.



The rear cross-car chassis module (foreground) is a key product at ArvinMeritor’s Detroit manufacturing facility, which employs a highly diverse workforce, with over 50% female and 80% Hispanic and African-American employees.



EVERY GREAT LEADER HAD A BEGINNING.

Who knows where the next great dream will find its voice. Where future leaders might find their inspiration. We salute those who inspire the great minds of today so that they can become the great visionaries of tomorrow.

 **BOEING**

**JOHN KIRKSEY**

Senior Vice President and
Chief Diversity Officer

**AXA EQUITABLE LIFE
INSURANCE COMPANY**

Who are/were your mentors? What did you learn from them?

Early in my career, the chief HR officer at my company—a white male—took me under his wing. He taught me the unwritten rules of the organization and gave me significant projects that prepared me for my next job, which was chief human resources officer at an Illinois state university. I was just 27.

In 1971 when I started at the university, I met an African-American PhD

who had been teaching college-level business courses since the late '50s. He helped me as a young African-American senior executive at a time when there just weren't very many people of color in those positions.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

As a mentor, I try to pass on what was given to me and to do it in an inclusive way. I have mentored women and men of various races and religions. I have tried to instill in them that they have a responsibility to pass on their knowledge and experience to others.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My father. He taught me that the only real obstacles that exist are those that you acknowledge—the rest you can go under or over or around. I still think about him when I run into difficulties.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

Crime and Punishment, by Feodor Dostoevsky. This book impressed upon me that whatever you do in life,

you will live with the consequences, even if you are the only one who knows your crime.

The other is *Moby Dick*, by Herman Melville. It symbolizes the struggle with not just external nature, but human nature and the inner struggles we have.

How are you involved with your community?

I serve on the board of the Old Barracks Revolutionary War Museum in Trenton, New Jersey, which is best remembered for its role in the 1776 and 1777 battles of Trenton during the Revolutionary War. I believe in this organization's mission.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

"What is your ultimate vision for world peace?"

What is your philosophy of life?

Each of us is put here to make the world a better place. I believe it was Benjamin Mayes who said we each have a unique song to sing, and most of us will go to our graves having never sung it. We have to sing our song and share it with the rest of the world.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Working with my wife, Helen, to raise two children who care about people.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I would have hugged my father more often and told him more frequently how much I loved him.

Who are/were your mentors? What did you learn from them?

Clarence Wright began his career as a financial advisor with the company and moved from branch operations to a senior management role at corporate headquarters. I learned a lot from him—most importantly, how to play the corporate game.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

To stay consistent. I mentor a lot of people inside and outside of the company. I try to teach them that it is okay to make mistakes; that is how we learn the best lessons. What is important is to learn from your mistakes and not repeat them. Many people are afraid to take risks, because they are afraid of making the wrong decision. But you'll never know what could have happened if you aren't willing to risk.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My mom and grandmother raised me. Their contribution to my manhood is immeasurable.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

It's Your Ship, by Captain Michael Abrashoff, is a great leadership book. This book has helped me be a better leader both at home and at work. *Good to Great*, by Jim Collins, has taught me to take my performance level from good to great. I am good at leading my team, but this book inspires me to be a great branch manager.

How are you involved with your community?

Both of my kids are in public school, and I support their activities. I'm involved in my church, I'm a board member for the South Central YMCA in Houston, and I am an avid contributor and member of the United Way Tocqueville Society.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

Put the needs of this great nation before the needs of the world.

What is your philosophy of life?

Never give up on your goals and aspirations. If you give up, you will lose out on great accomplishments.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

My greatest accomplishment in my career occurred last year when the Houston Branch earned the company's President's Trophy. We placed sixth place out of more than 60 branches—Houston's best finish ever.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I have relocated twice in my career due to promotions. Each time I was separated from my family for 11 months. If I would ever relocate again, we would do it together.



LYNDALL MEDEARIS

Executive Vice President of the Western Division
Branch Manager—Houston, TX
AXA EQUITABLE



Medearis in the Rockets Run 2006.



GINA WOLLEY

Executive Vice President
BANK OF THE WEST

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

My parents were my early role models and mentors. My mom taught me about independence and being self-reliant. My dad taught my brother and me about commitment and corporate politics. I learned about the importance of being comfortable in a variety of situations with a diverse group of people, especially at work.

From one of my corporate bosses, I learned to be selective in the pursuit of what's important.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I think we have a responsibility to give back, to pass along what we've learned and to be a role model for those coming after us. When I mentor college students, I encourage them to mentor high school students.

No one gets noticed if they're shy; they must be active contributors to their company.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

I enjoyed *Song of Solomon*, by Tony Morrison, especially the character named Dead. He lived his life metaphorically that way, not taking risks, just existing, unnoticed, as if he were really dead.

I'm currently reading *Lions Don't Need to Roar*, by D.A. Benton. Although its overall focus is around executive presence, it reinforces for me the need for effective communication techniques.

How are you involved with your community?

I'm involved with the National Association of Black Accountants. As NABA's national chair of the Financial Literacy Initiative, I'm passionate about teaching financial literacy and giving people the tools to make smart financial decisions.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would ask him to break down the bureaucracy among local, state and federal governments which impedes meaningful reform. I would also ask him to bring home the troops.

What is your philosophy of life?

Family comes first. I believe in working hard and playing hard.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

My 21-year daughter is my most rewarding accomplishment. I look forward to her graduation from UCLA with a degree in world arts and culture.

I also receive strokes from young people whom I've mentored throughout my career. When they send me notes about the job or promotion they landed, they tell me how much I have touched their lives. Believe me, it works both ways.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I would have learned to play golf sooner, so I could have shared the enjoyment of the game more with my father today. Career-wise, I would love to have been a professional sportscaster for football, basketball or even golf.



PepsiCo Celebrates the Life of Edward F. Boyd

1914 – 2007

Edward F. Boyd helped place Pepsi in the hearts and hands of many Americans. And in doing so, he became an innovative leader and true pioneer in marketing.

It's been 60 years since Ed was hired to form the very first team of African-American marketers, opening up African-American communities across the nation. He defined target marketing—the way many businesses today meet consumer needs with products and services.

Brave, distinguished and endearing, Ed Boyd helped move America and business to greater racial equality. Today, his spirit still inspires us.

To learn more about Ed Boyd and all his accomplishments, read *The Real Pepsi Challenge* by Stephanie Capparell or visit careerjournal.com, go to the left column under Article Search and type in: Ed Boyd.





CHARISSE LILLIE

VP, Human Resources
COMCAST CORP.
Senior VP,
Human Resources
COMCAST CABLE

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

Three people stand out in my mind. They are the Hon. Clifford Scott Green, with whom I served as law clerk for two years; the Hon. A. Leon Higginbotham Jr., and Arthur Makadon, who is the chairman of Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP, where I was a partner prior to joining Comcast.

Each of these men taught me the value of hard work and the importance of being an expert in whatever you do. Furthermore, each of them had an extraordinary way of dealing with people. I learned the importance of treating every person, regardless of their place in the organization, with respect and humility.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I'm fortunate to mentor women and men of all ages and who are in various stages of their careers, and I stress to them the importance of balance and taking care of themselves.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My father and mother, as well as both sets of my grandparents, stressed the importance of education and hard work. In my house, you were not congratulated for an "A," you had to explain a "B!"

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

My all-time favorite book is *In The Matter of Color*, by A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. I worked as a research assistant for him and did legal and historical research on a chapter of the book.

I also enjoy the series of books and poetry by Sonia Sanchez. Her love of the African-American community and the words and rhythm of her poetry truly speak to me.

How are you involved with your community?

I've been a member of many civic commissions, including the Independent Charter Commission, the Philadelphia Criminal Justice Task Force, the MOVE Commission and the Philadelphia Election Reform Task Force.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I'd like to know why the Federal Government isn't spending more on the education of our children. I truly believe that the way to fix our country's troubles is to increase resources so that our children feel hope. Education is the solution.

What is your philosophy of life?

Family is paramount. Also, I feel that as blessed as I am, I should give back.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Leading the American Bar Association's Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I finished college in three years, so if I had the chance, I would have taken a fourth year to study abroad.



I connect the dots differently. That brings value to the work I do.

I have a passion for marketing, and I love what I do. At Hallmark, I have the opportunity to be a great marketer in an industry I believe in—one that enriches people's lives.

I work in a collaborative environment that celebrates the individual and values me as a whole person. Our multiple perspectives make our work stronger. It's a rewarding opportunity to be part of a brand that helps people define and express the very best in themselves.

AVIVA AJMERA HEBBAR
CUSTOMER STRATEGY AND PLANNING DIRECTOR



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**BILL TOMPKINS**

General Manager & VP
MOTION PICTURE FILM GROUP,
ENTERTAINMENT IMAGING
Vice President
EASTMAN KODAK CO.

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

My first mentor, from afar, has been Ken Chenault, chairman and CEO of American Express. I met him when I was in college. He has always concentrated on results, which is critical for success in the business world.

Today, I no longer concentrate on one person. I count on Michael Jordan to remind me to smile more often, my mom to remind me to never give up, and a

former colleague to remind me to take time to smell the roses.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I practice what I preach. I follow my own advice to keep me keeping on. The difference would be that I have the benefit of providing to others lessons learned from mistakes I have made in my career.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My father. He was a physician by day but also a successful businessman. He pushed us to try harder and not give up.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

My favorite author is Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. When I read his speeches I think about hope, opportunity and a better path forward for all of us.

The second author and book are Michael Porter and his book *Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors*. I first read this book 26 years ago, but I still use it today as a reference and tutorial on how to compete more successfully.

How are you involved with your community?

Over the last twenty years I have served on about 12 non-profit boards primarily focusing on youth, the arts and healthcare issues.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would ask two things. Why do politics sometimes get in the way of good decision-making in our government? And what can he do to make a superior education an imperative for our country? We are headed down a disastrous path, especially among people of color.

What is your philosophy of life?

Two things come to mind. The first is work hard, play hard. The second item relates to aspiration. I wake up each day wondering what I can do better. There is always room for self-improvement.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Graduating from Tufts University with honors, no debt and an entry ticket to Harvard Business School.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I wish I had learned to play basketball and the piano. For the piano, its probably not too late, but I think I have passed my prime for dribbling down the court.

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MIKE GOODWIN

Senior Vice President,
Information Technology

**HALLMARK
CARDS, INC.**

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

Ray Powers, Hallmark Cards' former vice president of manufacturing, gave me insights into the new organization I was supporting in my role of business development director for the Supply Chain Group. This is advice that I still use today in forging good relationships.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

There are three things I impart to those whom I

mentor. The first is that you are the best at managing your career. You cannot delegate it.

Second, surround yourself with good people whether you directly manage them or through a networking circle.

Third, ask yourself, "How is the organization better because I have been in this role?" You should test this question periodically so you can ensure you have left a good legacy.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

I would have to say my dad. He has been a man of strong faith, values, and entrepreneurship. He gave me core values, such as commitment to excellence, integrity, compassion, and faith in God.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

The Power of Positive Thinking, by Norman Vincent Peale, showed me I have available what is needed to face life's challenges. The other is *How to Succeed in Business Without Being White*, by Earl G. Graves.

How are you involved with your community?

I serve on several nonprofit boards that provide a range of services, from affordable youth camps to providing a safety net of medical and dental services for the uninsured and under-insured.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would express great concern for the numerous social issues growing in our country. Basic issues such as access to medical care, malnutrition, racial/cultural tensions, and acceptable living conditions. We need to address the basic needs in our country.

What is your philosophy of life?

I try to live by a quotation made by O.W. Holmes. "The greatest thing in this world is not so much where we are, but in what direction we are moving."

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Being elected president of the board of directors for Wildwood Education Center. The actual election was not the most rewarding part. It was the time I spent at the youth summer camps where I saw kids of families who could not afford it still experience an outdoor educational life experience.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

If I had the chance, I would get involved in the community a lot sooner than I did in life.



Mike Goodwin at work during the United Way Day of Caring. He and others were helping to construct a community center.



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AARON WALTON

Senior Vice President
Corporate Affairs
HIGHMARK INC.

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

During my time at Highmark, I have been privileged to work for two individuals who shared their values and life philosophies with me. The first was Peg Ireland, who taught me patience, to learn all that I could from those around me and to listen first and then respond, but not react. The second was Dick Conti, who taught me the importance of honesty and integrity.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I believe that a high energy level is essential for success. Those around you will feed off of your intensity and positive attitude. I also remind people not to take things too personally. In a business environment, it is important to use criticism to better yourself and your work rather than letting it discourage you.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My father. Not only was he the most humble person I've ever met, but he also showed me to be bold and take risks. Above all things, he taught me to study human nature and to fear no one.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

The *Bible*. I am a firm believer in its philosophies and teachings and use them to better myself every day. And *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, by Stephen Covey.

How are you involved with your community?

As a leader, it is important to give back to the community. I have served on the board of directors for more than 30 organizations during my career.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would talk about two of Covey's Seven Habits. The first is Habit #4: Think Win-Win. The second is Habit #5: Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood. If the President took a moment to reflect on these two philosophies, the attitude in our country may be very different right now.

What is your philosophy of life?

My philosophy is to maintain balance and look for the best in every situation.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

I was proud to serve as the chair of the 1997 NAACP convention in Pittsburgh. In this position, I had the opportunity to work with community leaders to host what has been one of the NAACP's most successful conferences to date.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I would try to do a better job of following my first instincts about people and work to correct my mistakes in a timelier manner. Most importantly, I would make more time to be with my family and friends. I would think about what is important today, rather than putting it off for tomorrow.



Aaron Walton, with Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl, holds the finish line at the 2006 City of Pittsburgh Great Race, an annual event of which Highmark has been a long-time sponsor.



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**LORIA YEATON**

Chief Executive Officer

**HONEYWELL
INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTIES INC. (HIPI)****Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?**

I've had several mentors share their knowledge with me. Gwendolyn P. Taylor, vice president of HR for Telcordia Technologies, taught me how to maintain poise and composure in the face of adversity. Tara Allen taught me to celebrate strengths and challenges because both contribute to greatness. Professor Lawrence Bershad, formerly of Seton Hall Law School, demonstrated substantive legal theory through real-

world events, showing how law is inextricably linked to the world.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

Each of us is responsible for defining our own destiny and career success. If you're not happy with your career path, change it!

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

Growing up, I had a family and home life that encouraged me to succeed. Despite lacking college degrees, my parents were both self-starters and insistent on the value of education. My dad was the most intelligent businessman I have ever known, and my mom actually went back to school later in life to become a nurse.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

My favorite books and authors are *Reposition Yourself*, by Bishop T.D. Jakes, and various books from

Iyanla Vanzant. Recently, I've been intrigued by *The Innovator's Dilemma*, by Clayton Christensen, which is about the impact innovation and disruptive technologies have on business.

How are you involved with your community?

I serve as Honeywell's Howard University Campus Executive, allowing me to introduce students to job opportunities and to help Honeywell build its candidate pool with diversified and highly qualified candidates.

At the University of Virginia, I serve on the Industrial Advisory Board for the Electrical and Computer Engineering departments. Recently, I supported Seton Hall Law School in the launch of their giving campaign and made a presentation to students about corporate intellectual property licensing.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I'd like to know what our nation's five-year plan is and where I can get a copy. China is executing its 11th five-year plan, and has recently brought more than 400 million of its citizens out of poverty. Does the United States have a documented plan?

What is your philosophy of life?

When people tell you who they are, believe them.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

During my tenure at HIPI, we've revamped our management team, developed a solid growth strategy, expanded our customer base, launched a license agreement compliance program and more. Today, IP licensing at Honeywell is run as a customer-focused, growth business. I've accomplished a lot in my current role, but I'm optimistic that the best is yet to come!

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I'd take more risks and make more mistakes, but never be in doubt.

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**ERIC HARDAWAY**

Vice President
Global Customer Support
Global Technology
IHG

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

My grandmother instilled in me strong core values to do the right things the right way and success will follow. Her wisdom helped shape my character.

Bonnie Manzi, a former executive with AT&T, taught me to not look too narrowly at each situation, but instead to look at the big world perspective.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I believe and teach that success in life is not measured by the number of times you fell, but how many times you got back up, what you have learned from the experience and how you have grown.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

I have to say my grandmother. She had a strong work ethic that helped her make a better life for herself and her family. She found a way to stay the course with her spirituality and work ethic despite what she faced growing up in the Deep South. She had a great love for people and was a great role model.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

The message of *Gifted Hands*, by Dr. Ben Carson, is that if you believe you can do something, then you can. It's a message that needs to be passed to young kids today.

The Making of a Leader, by Dr. J. Robert Clinton, taught me how to bring spiritual values into the business world.

How are you involved with your community?

I'm on the board of a nonprofit called Project Healthy Grandparents that helps grandparents who are raising their children's children. I also sing in the choir at my church.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

There is so much misunderstanding among the people in the country. Many people don't understand the challenges their fellow citizens are going through and if they did they could help pull them through. I believe the President sets the tone for the nation and needs to lead the healing this requires.

What is your philosophy of life?

Success does not come without putting the sweat equity or work into it.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Helping raise my nephew after his father passed away when he was young. Today my nephew is successful and responsible in life and has a family of his own. He has incorporated in his life the values that I was taught and passed on to him.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I wouldn't change a thing. I truly have been blessed. All the challenges helped build my character and made me who I am today.



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NICOLE M. LEWIS

Vice President and Industry Manager, Global Marketing
KELLY SERVICES, INC.

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

A network of mentors have taught, coached, counseled, humbled, and uplifted me over the course of my career. One of my favorite lessons was taught to me by my cousin, a retired senior vice president. He told me a story about traveling with his bosses earlier in his career, and how they expected him, as the junior professional, to “carry the luggage.” By this he meant, do your part and never think that you’re above some of the small stuff as you move up the corporate ladder.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I require those I mentor to write down their personal non-negotiables and professional aspirations. Then I ask them to compare the two lists and eliminate all conflicts of interests. The result is an “ah-ha” moment for the person, and a true career path reveals itself. The goal of the exercise is be true to yourself, personally and professionally.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My parents are the keys to my success, but my maternal grandmother was the most confident person that I’ve

ever met. She met every challenge head-on. I try to mirror her poise and self-assurance.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

Maya Angelou is my favorite author. I’ve spent half of my career in sales, and I know that beyond the relationships you build are the words you convey. Her works have been an inspiration to my career and to the relationships I’ve built along the way.

A favorite book is *Shifting: The Double Lives of Black Women in America*, by Charisse Jones and Kumea Shorter-Gooden, PhD. This book is more confirmation that black women are amazing, complex multitaskers. It’s a great read.

How are you involved with your community?

My favorite activity is the work that I do as a board member with GM2CDC, a community development corporation that focuses on low-income housing and after-school programs for the north-end communities in Detroit, Michigan. Currently, three housing development projects, totaling over \$22 million, are underway.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would ask him to explain his plans to ensure that our nation’s children will be able to compete and succeed globally.

What is your philosophy of life?

“If not now...when?” I’m always trying to capture the moment and make things happen.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

The confirmation that I’m raising two great children, 13 and 8, who are confident, funny, smart, loving, respectful, and proud of who they are.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I would spend more time reading at least three newspapers daily.



(l to r) Charlotte Allen; Minister David Akins; Lisa Thorington; James Perkins, Executive Director; Norris Polk, MD; Nicole Lewis; Reverend Betty Pulliam; Deborah A. Johnson; Ethan Vinson, Attorney; Geraldine Garry.



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FRENCH TAYLOR

Tax Partner, Dallas
KPMG LLP

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

While growing up, my parents and my pastor, as well as my high school principal, were all very influential in my life. As an adult and at KPMG, I have been mentored by many successful businessmen and women. I have learned from them to love and celebrate the greatness of the human spirit.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I teach more flexibility of thought and passion. I work very hard to not make people look like I think they should look. I want them to find their own way, using my life's experience as a guide.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

Without exception, that would be my parents. I was blessed to have two college-educated parents, so the bar was set pretty high in the Taylor household.

My mom is a passionate and committed, but fierce, competitor who taught me that everything is possible and how to balance strength with passion and compassion.

My dad's work ethic was unbelievable. He set the example by making the sacrifices day in and day out. They both taught me how to deal with adversity and how to navigate a storm when times are hard. I love them for that.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

Why Should White Guys Have All the Fun, by Reginald Lewis, taught me that anything is possible professionally.

The Millionaire Next Door, by Thomas J. Stanley, taught me to respect the power of money, not for how others view you, but for how you view yourself.

How are you involved with your community?

I have loved teaching sports to young men. I am actively involved with helping high school kids understand how to tackle life issues while never giving up on their dreams.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

Simple: just tell me the truth about everything, regardless of how you think it might change, alter, or taint my view of the world.

What is your philosophy of life?

I remember from some childhood readings the sentence, "Walk with kings but never lose the common touch." That stuck with me. I want to be exceptional spiritually, professionally, intellectually, culturally, and socially, but I never want to forget where I came from.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Making partner at KPMG is my most rewarding accomplishment because of all the family, friends, and colleagues who supported, mentored, loved, and sacrificed so I could achieve this milestone.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

First, spend more time with my family and friends, and second, travel the world during my professionally formative years.

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

My parents are my mentors. They taught me to respect others, be honest and to work hard. They also taught me not to take anything for granted and to give back to my community.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

No. The lessons I learned from my parents are timeless, relevant and very important.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My parents and grandparents had the most impact on my upbringing and success. They encouraged me to believe in myself and my abilities. They desired for me to accomplish more than what they had accomplished in their lives.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

My favorite book is the *Bible*. It provides guidance for all matters in my career and personal life.

How are you involved with your community?

I am involved in Amachi Pittsburgh, which is a program devoted to mentoring children who have incarcerated parents. As part of the program, I mentor a 13-year-old young lady.

I am also involved with the Career Literacy for African American Youth program, where I serve as a career mentor to a young lady in high school. In addition, I just completed a two-year term as the Director of Community Affairs of the Pittsburgh chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants, which is a leader in helping to expand the influence of minority professionals in the fields of accounting and finance.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would suggest that each child have access to quality education. Having access to quality education would improve the life opportunities of many children.

What is your philosophy of life?

To whom much is given, much is required. I have been blessed in my life and feel that I have a responsibility to give back to the community that is a part of who I am today. I also believe that you should treat others better than you want to be treated.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

My most rewarding accomplishment is being able to work with youth and tell them of my life experiences and various accomplishments.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I cannot think of anything that I would do differently. Everything that has happened in my life has happened for a reason and contributes to the person that I am today.



LASHAWNDA THOMAS

Audit Senior Manager,
Pittsburgh
KPMG LLP



LaShawnda Thomas with the 13-year-old girl she mentors through the Amachi Pittsburgh program.

**MAURICE D. MARKEY**

Vice President Marketing,
Grocery

KRAFT FOODS INC.

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

Two mentors from my days at Goodyear were Larry Schlosser and Jim Kruse. Larry encouraged me to fight through the obstacles I would encounter in corporate America. Jim taught me the ins and outs of the Goodyear business.

At Kraft Foods, former senior executives Paula Sneed and Todd Brown were particularly influential. Paula encouraged me to have a broad-based network

throughout the organization. Todd Brown taught me to “never let them see you sweat” and always maintain my composure.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

Many of my messages are similar. I encourage my mentees to have a plan for their careers and not to measure their success through others. I may differ in my delivery, as I am much more candid and frank to ensure they receive the message.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My parents, Napoleon and Mary, with eight kids and sixty-plus years of marriage. They instilled in me a strong work ethic, to be consistent and accountable, and to have a passion for something.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

The *Bible* and Colin Powell’s *My American Journey*. There hasn’t been a situation, either professionally or personally, where I have not found guidance from the *Bible*.

Colin Powell’s story is both fascinating and inspirational. I have incorporated several of his leadership principles into my professional approach.

How are you involved with your community?

I participated in a tutoring project led and funded by my church, which prepared third graders in an economically disadvantaged area for their first standardized test.

While in Asia, my daughter’s first grade project led to an amazing experience for my entire family in which we adopted a school in Cambodia.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

Failing a portion of our population in education and health care is not a sustainable model. These two areas need to be addressed if we hope to maintain our leadership position in the world.

What is your philosophy of life?

“To whom much is given, from him much will be required.” Luke 12:48. This scripture keeps me grounded. It is a constant reminder of my obligation to others.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Professionally, my assignment in Singapore was a highly rewarding accomplishment. My family and I were able to rise to the challenge of moving to the other side of the world, and thrive in a different environment and culture.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

It’s natural to want to erase the mishaps, but those were the times when I learned and grew the most; as such, I wouldn’t change a thing.

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

I have had many mentors throughout my career, both in- and outside of the workplace. My single most influential mentor remains my husband; he challenges me to think big and never allows me to be my own worst critic. He always encourages me to embrace my strengths, learn from my mistakes, and celebrate my accomplishments.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

As a mentor I try to encourage young marketers to be courageous and not afraid to make mistakes. If nothing ever goes wrong, you are probably not pushing yourself far enough. The difference between good and great is not what happens but how well you anticipate and respond to what happens.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

I come from a very artistic family. Most of my youth was spent in performing arts schools and activities. With all those performers under one roof, you had to be very comfortable both in the spotlight and in the audience cheering others on.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

Stephen Covey's *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* serves as a manual for me that I return to whenever I need a little refresher. Much of my career has been spent working with and leading teams. The book offers insight on how to maximize your interactions with people by bringing out the best in yourself.

Dr. Seuss's *The Butter Battle* is another favorite. My mother gave me this book as a young girl and it was very powerful. It showed me the importance of tolerance, and how easy it is for people to get so carried away in their own beliefs that they are willing to sacrifice everything for something as simple as how to butter their bread.

How are you involved with your community?

I have always tried to serve as a mentor for young women and girls in the African-American community. I do this with various Chicago-based community organizations.

If you had lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would ask if he is proud of his terms as President, and if given the chance what decisions would he like to go back and change?

What is your philosophy of life?

My philosophy is to be open to whatever comes your way. I always try to remember that in periods of doubt, fear, or adversity, you learn how to live life to the fullest.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

My most rewarding accomplishment has been maintaining and nurturing happy and healthy relationships with my friends and family.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

Nothing—I'd do it all again in a heartbeat.

**KATIE WILLIAMS**

Marketing Director,
Pizza
KRAFT FOODS INC.



WILLIAM M. PHILLIPS III

Director, Office of
Counterintelligence

**LOS ALAMOS
NATIONAL LABORATORY**

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

My mentors include Dr. Sherman Beverly, Jr., a now-retired professor of African American History at Northeastern University; Dr. Don N. Harris, a research scientist and community activist in Somerset County, NJ; and Gary Cooper, a three-star Marine General who I worked with when he was Ambassador to Jamaica in the 1990s.

George Simcox, a master in Ki Aikido, taught me the way of mind and body coordination. George

died in 2002, but his impact on me for 13 years will last a lifetime.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

One must always take pride in his/her work and strive to excel.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My parents, Dr. W.M. Phillips, Jr. and Marie Beverly Phillips, helped me to understand the importance of personal discipline and that service to community was critical to one's well-being and blackness.

What are a few of your favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

The Dhammapada and *The Panther and the Lash*, by Langston Hughes, and *Proflective Poetry, Volume IV*, by Waldo Bruce Phillips. Phillips uses poetry to describe the plight of African Americans in the United States.

I think *The Collected Poems and Plays of Rabindranath Tagore* is a book many more people should read from a literary point of view.

How are you involved with your community?

I serve as an Assistant Scout Master for a local troop and as a Merit Badge Counselor for the Emergency Preparedness Merit Badge. I am active in my church, participating in the Outreach Committee and I 'chair' the global advocacy subcommittee therein. I also am a mentor in our church confirmation program for teens.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would ask that he attempt to get a better understanding of the core of American values, the diversity of those values and not just be attached to the values of his own party, or political supporters.

What is your philosophy of life?

I believe that we are here on God's earth for an extremely short time. There is no time to procrastinate. Love, kindness and mindfulness are also rare in today's world. I try to bring those ideas into every contact I have with a human being.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

To have been involved in the eradication in a South American country of over 220,000 acres of coca whose derivative, cocaine, was bound for the U.S. and Europe during the course of my work with the Federal Government.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I would have spent more time in helping people understand the preciousness of the time we have on Earth.



William Phillips talking with the headmaster of a school for Tibetan refugees in Dharmshala, India.



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GARY MAYO

Vice President of Energy and Environmental Services

MGM MIRAGE

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

I have two mentors, both from Ford Motor Company: Mr. Elliott Hall, former VP, Government Affairs, and Mr. Ron Goldsberry, former VP, Customer Service Division. Each provided invaluable insights on leadership and professional development as a corporate executive.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

My advice for those I mentor focuses on work ethic, continuous learning, and holding oneself to the highest ethical standards possible. I also talk with them about responsibility, accountability and giving, as well as expecting, excellence.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

Both my mother and my father had a tremendous effect on my life. My dad kept me grounded and taught me about leadership, developing a solid work ethic and my responsibilities as a father.

My mom taught me understanding, compassion, how to be a giving person, and, of course, politeness.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

The Fifth Discipline, by Peter M. Senge. I have known Peter for a number of years, and through personal interaction and reading his books, I have honed my personal leadership skills in the area of organizational learning.

Synchronicity, the Inner Path of Leadership, by Joseph Jaworski, is another. As a friend and informal mentor, Joseph has helped illuminate some ambiguous situations.

How are you involved in your community?

I have been a volunteer of the Civil Air Patrol for approximately 35 years as a pilot. I hold the grade of Colonel, and most recently served as the Wing Commander for the State of Michigan.

Civil Air Patrol is a volunteer, nonprofit, benevolent organization, dedicated to humanitarian activities. It is also, by law, the official auxiliary of the United States Air Force.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would ask questions to better understand his approach to key domestic issues, especially as it involves one of our most precious assets, our children. I would also inquire about policies related to sustainability and future generations.

What is your philosophy of life?

I lead a principle-centered life based on the pursuit of excellence in all that I do, with a mindset that I can accomplish anything I set out to do.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Raising my two daughters (14 & 16) to be the beautiful young ladies that they are today far outweighs any of my professional accomplishments.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I never regret my past actions and don't look back second-guessing things I cannot change. I am on the exact path that I was destined to be on. I learn from my past experiences and apply those learnings moving forward.



Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons you learned from them?

My long-time mentors are Dr. Verdun Trione and fellow MGM MIRAGE Human Resources executive Miriam Hammond. From both I have learned that good leaders are humble and very diverse in their skills and knowledge.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I continue to teach a version of the same, adding that a true leader must first serve in order to lead.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My father. He is a very kind man, a saint on earth, who has a very special relationship with God. This relationship allows him to meet, interact with, and accept others where they are, physically and emotionally. No one is a stranger to him.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

The *Bible*—the older I get, the more I understand and believe that its words do contain all the answers we seek. My favorite author is Dr. Wayne Dyer, who has become more spiritual as he has matured in life and practice. Both of these have touched my life, because both reinforce for me that being passionate means taking risks. They both help me better understand and live my life with the knowledge that if I change my thoughts, I can change my life and the lives of others. Both provide me with inner peace.

How are you involved in your community?

Recently moving to my new assignment in Detroit, Michigan, has not yet afforded me the opportunity to become involved. I do support our team member efforts in my community and look forward to working with youth programs, especially those related to literacy.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would ask that he strongly reconsider his views on the subjects of our position in Iraq, his position on our environment, and his position on the state of health insurance for our lower income families, especially those with children. All of these have great impact on our future.

What is your philosophy of life?

Go out on the skinny branch. Eleanor Roosevelt said we gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience when you really stop to look fear in the face. “You must do the thing which you think you cannot do.”

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Giving birth to my two daughters and watching them grow into incredibly wonderful human beings.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I would have faced my fears earlier. I believe I have lost some ground, both professionally and personally. That being said, I don't look back; I only go forward.



DEBBIE THOMAS

Vice President
of Human Resources
MGM GRAND DETROIT

**LAUREN GARDENER**

General Manager of
North America HR
MICROSOFT

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

My last formal mentor was Tanya Clemons, corporate vice president of People and Organizational Capability. Tanya helped me learn how to navigate the inner workings of Microsoft when I first joined the company. Tanya also gave me career guidance, especially in helping me craft my own path.

Do you teach anything different to those you

mentor? If so, what is it?

I believe strongly in reverse mentoring. That is to say, I believe it is important to learn as much from the mentee as the mentee learns from me. What is their story, both personally and professionally? How can I use this information to improve myself as a leader and to better educate them?

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

Indirectly, my maternal grandfather had a large impact on me. As an African-American physician born in the 1890s, he inspired me to reach for the stars. Whenever I doubted my career ambitions, I remembered him and how daring he was for his time.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

I'm a big fan of Maya Angelou and Toni Morrison, and in particular the *Song of Solomon*. Books with biblical overtones and deep irony have helped me reexamine my thinking of the African-American community. I'm an avid reader of the *Bible* and I constantly seek new ways to examine it.

How are you involved with your community?

I tend to focus most of my personal efforts with my local church. My husband and I are currently leading its capital campaign, which is a new and exciting effort for us.

Moreover, Microsoft's Math Matters is a personal passion of mine since I believe we are letting too many children graduate without adequate math skills. I think that programs like Microsoft's are absolutely vital to ensuring that high standards remain in place with better teaching techniques so that our children are equipped for the future marketplace.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I believe that we need to reexamine our budgetary priorities. Personally, I am very concerned that we are spending too much on foreign endeavors instead of building a better domestic infrastructure. I think we should focus more on education and health care.

What is your philosophy of life?

I would say my life philosophy is learn, have fun, and get things done! I do believe in the power of prayer!

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Personally, it's being a proud mother and being blessed with a wonderful family. Professionally, it's building a solid career at Microsoft.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I would do very little differently. My mistakes have taught me more than my successes.

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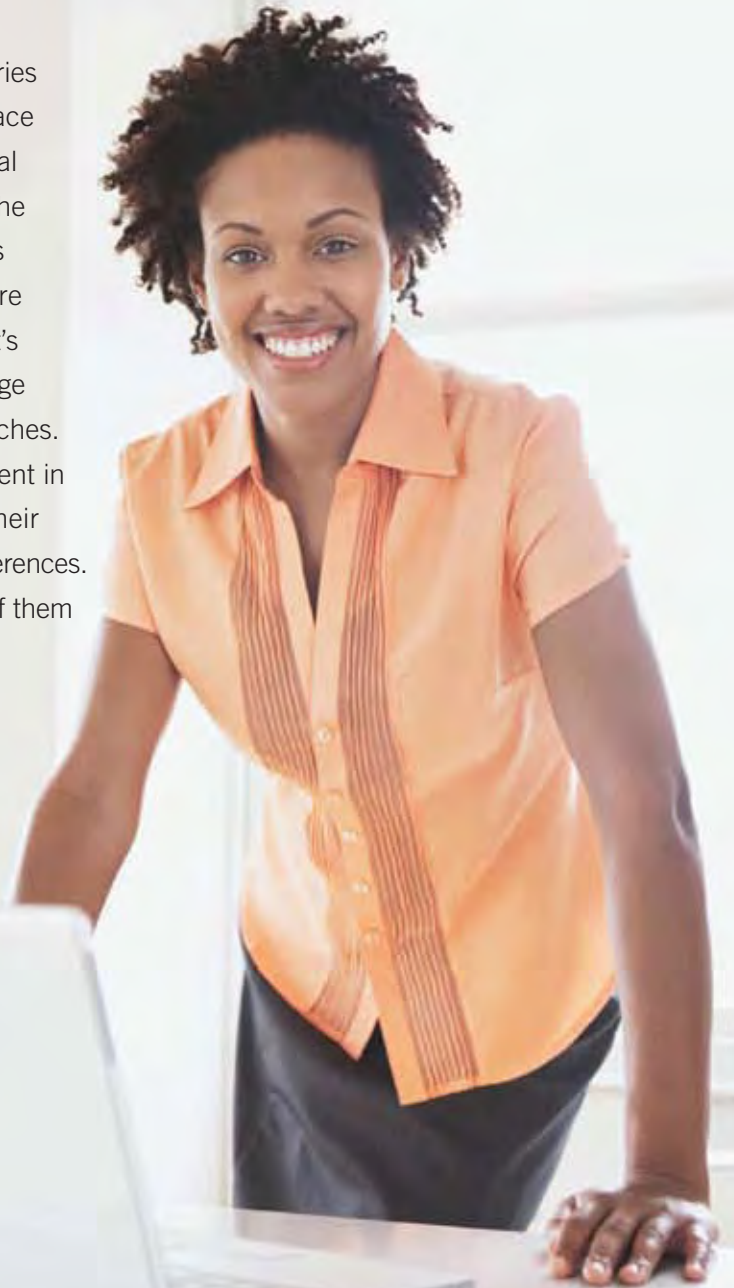
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LISA P. JACKSON

Commissioner
**NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

Two role models that I remember fondly were Dr. Bertha Wexler, a Jewish woman and my family pediatrician, and Fr. Dudley Darbonne, a black priest from my parish church. Simply by her presence, Dr. Wexler opened my eyes to the possibilities of life. Fr. Darbonne taught me that to fail is not the end of the world. Rather, it is an opportunity to learn and to experience the power of love and forgiveness.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I try to impart the same lessons I learned: Do not fear failure, and keep an open mind about the possibilities in your life.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My mother, Marie Perez Rieras. Her faith in the power of a good education and her refusal to accept the notion that my race or sex would hold me back from accomplishing anything put me firmly on the path to my present success.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

The top of the list is Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. I relate to it on many levels—as an African-American, as a woman and, most particularly, as a mother.

Another favorite is *The Giving Tree*, by Shel Silverstein. While described as a children's book, it is an ageless lesson in what it means to love, and it gave me a great appreciation for the sacrifices my parents made as I was growing up.

How are you involved with your community?

Most of my community involvement revolves around my sons. My husband Kenny and I stay engaged with their schoolwork and athletics.

I also participate and help organize activities for my local Jack and Jill club. While I appreciate the diversity of my hometown's population, I also think it's important for Marcus and Brian to gain an understanding of and appreciation for our cultural and ethnic heritage.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

My first instinct would be to ask how his administration could so miserably fail the people of my hometown of New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. But I suspect my concerns, like those of so many others, would fall on deaf ears and so I would probably respectfully decline the invitation.

What is your philosophy of life?

"There, but for fortune, may go you or I."

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Without a doubt, the fine young men my two sons have become.

If given a chance, what would you do differently?

I don't know that I'd do anything differently. Why would I want to tempt fate by changing anything?



Commissioner Jackson speaking at a bill-signing ceremony this past summer. The gentleman in the background is New Jersey Governor Jon S. Corzine.

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

I have always tried to adopt the highest qualities of individuals that cross my path, so my mentoring has been mostly an amalgamation of many professional traits and influences. I honestly can't point to any individual mentor, but have enjoyed many people across many interests.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I believe that the Emotional Quotient (EQ) is one's most important professional attribute. Sure, top-flight education and training are important, but the application of what an individual has learned in the workplace is what makes one successful.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My late father John S. Watson was a statesman and community leader. He taught me the importance and value of giving to your community. With regard to my passion to protect New Jersey's environment, I give credit to my uncles, who had me in the forest, along a stream, or out on a bay constantly. Those exposures make you understand the responsibility of individuals to be good stewards of our planet's limited resources.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

A Sand County Almanac, by Aldo Leopold, is considered to be a landmark book in the conservation movement and integral in framing a "land ethic" as we still understand it today.

Another is *The Lorax*. Though a children's story written by Dr. Seuss nearly forty years ago, its applications ring true for anyone conservation-minded today. The story has been a popular metaphor for those concerned about the human impact on the environment.

How are you involved with your community?

I serve on a number of community organizations. The one that I am most involved with currently

is a mentoring program designed to expose high school students to practical applied sciences and relevant environmental issues and potential careers.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

How is it that, in just a few years, you have lost the goodwill of so much of the world toward our country?

What is your philosophy of life?

I try my best to treat others like I expect to be treated. Seek personal excellence. Work hard. Play hard. Most often that is a good formula for everyday living.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Professionally, it is being appointed Deputy Commissioner of NJDEP, working under the first African American to serve as New Jersey's top environmental official.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I think that I would probably have taken advice better as a young man when I thought I knew everything. Looking back, now I know that I didn't!

Deputy Commissioner Watson with a bald eagle monitored as part of New Jersey's Threatened and Endangered Species Program.



JOHN S. WATSON JR.

Deputy Commissioner
**NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**



**GEORGE NICHOLS III**

Senior Vice President,
Office of
Governmental Affairs
NEW YORK LIFE

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

I would say my mentors include Jesus Christ, who showed us to lead by example and to serve others; my mother, who with a fourth grade education taught me that common sense was more important than book sense; my wife, who helps me find the good in everyone; and my previous bosses, who challenged me to be the best professional and taught me the importance of focusing on the details.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I do not teach anything different than mentioned above, but the focus with those I mentor is how they apply those principles within their own lives.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My parents have had the most impact. My mother's philosophy was that it is better to be of good name than of great wealth. My father taught me the importance of personal responsibility.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

The *Bible* provides direction for both my personal and professional life. Books that have had an impact on my career are *Good to Great*, *The Art of War* and *Who Moved My Cheese?* Each one provides approaches on how to navigate today's workplace.

How are you involved with your community?

I am actively involved in church and as a volunteer with community organizations. I also am in oversight roles with colleges and universities from which I hold degrees.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I want the President to understand that with great power comes great responsibility, and that our leadership should not be dictated by political philosophy, but instead be based on a humanitarian view, whereby all people should be respected for their cultural and social differences. I believe in a strong United States guided by the principles of our Constitution. We should use our power and resources to lift all boats of those who are of good intentions, and we should govern by faith and mutual respect.

What is your philosophy of life?

Proverbs 3, 5 and 6: Trust in God with all thine heart and lean not to your own understanding. Acknowledge him in all that you do and he will direct thy path.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

It is the small contribution that I have made to the lives of my wife, children and people whom I have met and worked with. I pray I have helped make them better.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

The path that my life has taken has been wonderful. I believe my life is preordained, and with that comes happiness and an inner peace about my place in the world.



George Nichols III visits Morristown Neighborhood House, an agency providing child-care and other services for families. It is one of the many nonprofit organizations that will benefit from the annual fundraising campaign at New York Life.

Robes St. Juste, African-American
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ISOBEL ANDERSON

Sergeant
OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

My first mentor was Phyllis Agnew, an elementary school teacher who saw an injustice being done to me. I was made to sing behind a curtain while a lighter skinned child mimed on stage. Phyllis's words ("Never ever let anyone put you behind the curtain again.") have stayed with me to this day.

My mother taught me to seek the lesson behind every event and not only to learn from it but guide others.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

Ever since my daughter asked why God did not allow us to forget when we forgive, I answered that history would continue to repeat itself. I teach others that forgiveness takes the sting out of remembering.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My parents taught us to take pride in being ourselves and that one of the best ways to effect change is from within, by being educated.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

Two recent favorites are *The Book of Negroes*, by Lawrence Hill, and *The Tipping Point*, by Malcolm Gladwell.

How are you involved in your community?

I currently serve on three boards: Ontario Women In Law, Ottawa Community Immigrant Service Organization (OCISO) and Leadership Ottawa. I believe that in order to police effectively, you must have a relationship with the community.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

That he should find more balance in his approach. People who chose to live in North America should not suffer for resembling people who are trying to harm Americans.

What is your philosophy of life?

I do not allow the world to define what I should be as a person. I have a choice as to how the new chapters of my life will be written, and how I will respond to what happens to me.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

In 1978, I crashed the gate of apartheid to become the first black police officer to join the white ranks of the Rhodesian Police Force; in those days there were two rank structures—one for whites and one for blacks. I led my community into an arena where they had never had a voice before.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I cannot think of anything I would do differently. Life to me is a gift, and I try to live every day without regret, using life's lessons to help me navigate the future. If we leave large enough footprints, others can follow without faltering.



Sergeant Anderson mentoring community members.

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

My mentor was and still is my mother Phyllis. She taught me that I could achieve anything I wanted, as long as I pursued it with passion and dedication. She led by example, earning her nursing license at the age of 50.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I teach those I mentor that they and only they set the standard for how others will treat them.

We need to take pride in ourselves. Stand tall! This will allow us to remember that the prize is straight ahead and within reach.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My mother had the most impact on my life. As a new immigrant and single parent raising four young children, she made sure that all of us understood the importance of getting a good education.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

One of my favorite books is *The Book of Negroes*, by Lawrence Hill. This book allowed me to appreciate and understand the struggle and perseverance of my people. It showed that giving up is never an option.

My second favorite book is *Leadership Wisdom from The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari*, by Robin S. Sharma. This book provides insight into becoming a visionary leader inspiring others to want to make a difference.

How are you involved in your community?

I am an avid community volunteer. I mentor school-aged kids by teaching them to read and being a guest speaker on topics such as peer pressure, bullying, drugs and alcohol abuse.

I also volunteer my time as an Ottawa Police Outreach Recruiter. I truly believe that our police service should be a true reflection of the community

we proudly serve. When I am not speaking or mentoring youth, I am out recruiting co-workers, community members and family to participate in community fundraisers.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would suggest to the President that our number one priority is the family unit. A healthy family positively changes our world.

What is your philosophy of life?

We are all responsible for our own destiny, and giving up is not an option when things get hard.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

I have been blessed with several important and rewarding accomplishments. My family, my promotion to the rank of Sergeant and lastly, being awarded the 2007 Ontario Women in Law Enforcement (OWLE) Mentorship award.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I would have taken the time to enjoy being a youth, instead of having to grow up so fast.

**DEBBIE MILLER**

Sergeant
OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE



Volunteering at Jaku Konbit kids' summer camp 2007, in Ottawa.

**TRACY CARMEN-JONES**

Vice President, Retail
Community Marketing
and Involvement

RELIANT ENERGY INC.

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

Father Thomas Swade, the founder of Link Unlimited and a Catholic priest, was instrumental in the development of my moral compass. I was mentored by Dr. Adrienne Bailey as part of the Link Unlimited program, which got me thinking about professions.

From a professional standpoint, Carla Hills, the managing partner at the law firm Latham, Watkins, and

Hills where I worked while attending Georgetown, was also a mentor.

Key lessons I've learned include the need to put in the work to create high impact results, being true to oneself, treating people genuinely and being willing to evaluate things from multiple perspectives.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I impart lessons that are similar to those I learned from Father Swade and Carla Hills. I also include lessons about being clear on what you want and having the will to make things happen.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My grandmother, mom and dad have had the most impact on my upbringing. My grandmother and mother taught me the love of life and the ability to be positive, even in the face of adversity.

My dad fostered a strong work ethic, perseverance and the ability to keep pushing forward that lives with me today.

What are your two favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

In Search of Satisfaction, by J. California Cooper, is one of my favorites. This fictitious story shows how the definition and pursuit of satisfaction differs greatly from one person to another.

From Good to Great, by Jim Collins, is another favorite. Collins teases out the drivers and concepts behind some of the most successful companies in American and how to apply the concepts in the workplace.

How are you involved with your community?

As the leader of Reliant's community marketing efforts, I create and implement programs for ethnic groups, seniors and low income persons throughout Texas.

I mentor a new student as part of the Link Unlimited program, and I'm involved in mentoring as part of the Texas Executive Women organization.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would suggest that we develop a strong educational emphasis to provide high quality instruction and resources to all schools, irrespective of the tax base and attentiveness of the parents.

What is your philosophy of life?

Live life as a demonstration that God is alive and walking among the living. Go after what you want out of life with an unwavering focus and commitment.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Being a part of a strong family that loves, nurtures and supports each other.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

Worry less, laugh more and genuinely contribute more fully in every interaction.

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GINNY CLARKE

Partner, Global Leader,
Diversity Practice

SPENCER STUART

Who are/were your mentors? What were the lessons learned from them?

My father was my mentor. We used to talk every Sunday morning, and after he passed away, I learned that he kept notes from our conversations. In addition to many other parts of my life, he chronicled my career and kept notes on all my bosses, important meetings and presentations that I had. He was helping me drive my career by staying in touch with the details.

My father taught me to tell people what I want.

Don't assume that doing a good job is enough. You have to say what it is that you are seeking and tell people what you can bring to the table.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

I tell them that every aspect of your life is about communicating. You have to assess yourself and your current position and tell your manager what kind of job or assignment you want next.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My mother had a huge impact on my life and my success. She was a bold, confident woman who balanced her professional life with motherhood and parenting. She was an incredible role model and supporter.

What are your favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

One of my favorite books is *The Fifth Discipline*, by Peter M. Senge. It talks about the corporation as a learning organization and how it must be adaptable, like a living organism, in order to truly optimize its talent.

How are you involved with your community?

I support a handful of different charities, including my alma maters. However, my involvement in my community begins at home with my son. If I bring my son into the world as someone who is discerning, kind, fearless and committed to serving others, then that's the greatest gift I can give my community.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would ask why we haven't been able to eliminate hunger in America and genocide in other parts of the world. Given that we are the global power, we should be able to influence these and many other world ills.

What is your philosophy of life?

I create my own choices for my life and I try to live without fear. So whatever comes to me, it is to some extent of my own making. I own it and I deal with it without being afraid.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

Becoming a partner at Spencer Stuart. I work with a high quality and very committed group of people.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

Early in my career, I sometimes felt the need to hold back so I could get by and be included. Now my view is, "Let me tell you what I think and how I feel."

Who are/were your mentors?

I am fortunate to have interacted with numerous individuals who provided me with guidance. The one who perhaps served more as a mentor than the others is a gentleman who recruited me to Pennsylvania Blue Shield named Robert L. Owens. A retired U.S. Air Force Major, Mr. Owens provided me with lessons that were obvious; and some that were not so obvious.

Do you teach anything different to those you mentor? If so, what is it?

Those that I assist receive the same messages I did. The delivery mechanism is different, but the message is the same.

Who in your family had the most impact on your upbringing and success?

My parents had the biggest impact on my development. However, when she passed at age 104, my maternal grandmother was the oldest living graduate of South Carolina State University.

Both sets of grandparents strongly endorsed the concept of education. As a result, I have numerous aunts and uncles whose successes I tried to emulate.

What are your favorite books/authors and what impact have they had on your career and personal life?

My reading patterns are quite eclectic. I list among my favorite authors James Baldwin, Alex Haley, James Clavell, Robert Ludlum, Walter Mosely, W.E.B. Griffin and John Sandford. In truth, the list could go on and on.

How are you involved with your community?

My community service activities have been varied. Past activities include coaching youth and club soccer, vice chairman of a community college's board of trustees, chairing the local American Red Cross chapter's board of directors, and chairing a regional United Negro College Fund telethon.

Currently, in addition to being a member of the local United Way board and conducting free dental clinics for economically challenged children,

I have elected to take a behind the scenes approach by directing corporate funds to those groups I believe are the most deserving.

If you were to have lunch with the President of the United States, what would you ask or suggest?

I would suggest his administration develop a means to reduce the economic stress currently being endured by an overwhelming majority of United States citizens.

What is your philosophy of life?

Work hard. Be ethical. Enjoy life.

What is your most rewarding accomplishment?

In addition to being a responsible husband and father, I am happy to have been effective in corporate America without sacrificing my personal values.

If given the chance, what would you do differently?

I would have worked harder on my natural science courses and pursued admission to medical school.



HARLON L. ROBINSON

Corporate Vice President,
Human Resources &
Administration

**UNITED CONCORDIA
COMPANIES INC.**



United Concordia's Harlon Robinson (second from right) joins Phoenix colleagues to plan

one of many free clinics offered throughout the country each year for uninsured and underinsured children and adults in need of dental services.