UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF

EQUITY NOW, INC.
DEEN ENTERTAINMENT

CLOSING THE WEALTH GAP THROUGH
FINANCIAL EDUCATION

MILLENNIAL GALA DINNER

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 2023

YOURS TRULY DC HOTEL
1143 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20037
ORDER OF EVENTS

7:00 PM  WELCOME & SPONSOR RECOGNITION
          Musa Kamara, Shomari A. James, BJ Paige

7:10 PM  OPENING BELL ADDRESS
          Audra Pettus, SkyPoint Credit Union

7:30 PM  PRAYER & DINNER
          Music by YML Band

8:30 PM  FINANCIAL FREEDOM ADDRESS
          Ken Alozie, Greenwood Capital Advisors

8:50 PM  EQUITY NOW FINANCIAL EDUCATION
          Justin Devose, Equity Now, Inc. Director

9:00 PM  THE DEEN ENTERTAINMENT JOURNEY
          Musa Kamara, Deen Entertainment

9:10 PM  AWARD PRESENTATION
          Musa Kamara, Deen Entertainment

9:15 PM  CLOSING BELL ADDRESS
          Shomari A. James, Equity Now, Inc. CEO

9:30 PM  GALA CLOSING
          BJ Paige & YML Band
MUSA KAMARA IS A SOCIAL IMPACT ENTREPRENEUR AND GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY MCDONOUGH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS PIVOT PROGRAM GRADUATE. BORN IN FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE, HE GREW UP IN PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY, MARYLAND. MUSA IS PASSIONATE ABOUT BRINGING INFORMATION AND RESOURCES TO UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES, AND HE CHANNELS THIS THROUGH HIS WORK WITH ROTARY IN WASHINGTON, DC, WHERE HE SERVES AS THE COMMUNITY CHAIR, COORDINATING EVENTS WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS. HE IS ALSO THE FOUNDER OF HUDA STRATEGIES FORMERLY KNOWN AS DEEN ENTERTAINMENT, A CONSULTING FIRM THAT HELPS SMALL TO MEDIUM-SIZED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS.

IN ADDITION TO HIS COMMUNITY WORK, MUSA IS A BOARD MEMBER OF PROJECT 232, AN ORGANIZATION THAT PROVIDES MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND BLOOD PRESSURE CHECK UP TO CITIZENS OF FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE. HE HAS ORGANIZED COMMUNITY EVENTS, DEVELOPED PROGRAMS, AND FUNDRAISING GALAS.

WITH A FOCUS ON SOCIAL IMPACT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, MUSA KAMARA IS COMMITTED TO MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD. I AM ENGAGED IN A SUMMER PROGRAM IN COLLABORATION WITH SERVE DC WHEREBY I HAVE BEEN IMPARTING INVALUABLE JOB SKILLS THAT CAN BE UTILIZED IN VARIOUS FIELDS TO BRIGHT AND AMBITIOUS INTERNS WHO FALL IN THE AGE BRACKET OF 16 TO 21 YEARS OLD.

MUSA FIRMLY BELIEVES THAT ACTS OF SERVICE FOR UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES SHOULD BE REWARDED WITH UNDIVIDED PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT. DEEN ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDES REINFORCEMENT FOR COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NONPROFITS THROUGH BRANDING, EVENT PRODUCTION, AND STRATEGIC PARTNERING. BY CULTIVATING THE VISION AND AMPLIFYING THE MISSION, WE SERVE NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS THAT BELIEVE THEY DESERVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUCCEED AT THEIR MAX POTENTIAL.

MUSA’S HOBBIES ARE READING, WORKING OUT, TRAVELING, AND WATCHING FOOTBALL NOT AMERICAN FOOTBALL (GO BLUE – MAN CITY). HE LOVES CHANGING SCENERY WHICH BOOSTS HIS CREATIVITY AND IT REJUVENATES HIM. MUSA’S FAVORITE BOOKS ARE 5 AM CLUB BY ROBIN SHARMA, ALCHEMIST BY PAULO COELHO, CONTAGIOUS BY JONAH BERGER, AND EGO IS THE ENEMY BY RYAN HOLIDAY.
MESSAGE FROM EQUITY NOW, INC.

MISSION
TO DISCOVER, PLAN AND IMPLEMENT INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR PATHWAYS OF BUILDING EQUITY. FOCUSING ON IMPROVING EARLY AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, FINANCIAL EDUCATION, SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING & ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND AGRICULTURE & SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION.

VISION
TO GLOBALLY SEED STRATEGY, RESOURCES, AND LOVE TO MAKE TOMORROW BETTER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES.

FINANCIAL EDUCATION
THE IMPORTANCE OF EQUITY NOW’S MISSION FOCUS AREA OF FINANCIAL EDUCATION BECAME MUCH MORE APPARENT AND URGENT AS WE WITNESSED THE DEVASTATING IMPACT COVID-19 HAD ON OUR COMMUNITIES. WE STEPPED UP OUR EFFORTS AND EMPHASIS ON FINANCIAL EDUCATION TO HELP CLOSE OUR COMMUNITY’S GENERATIONAL WEALTH GAP BY PROVIDING FINANCIAL EDUCATION TO ALL LEGENDS CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS, K-8. WE LAUNCHED OUR MONTHLY SERIES OF COMMUNITY FINANCIAL EDUCATION SEMINARS, PARTNERED WITH FINANCIAL INVESTMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS, AND HOSTED OUR FINANCIAL SATURDAY SESSIONS. WE GAVE AWAY MORE THAN FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS TO STUDENTS WITH OUR ANNUAL STROTHER-MAXWELL SCHOLARSHIP FUND FOR SCHOLARS TO INVEST DIRECTLY INTO THEIR INVESTMENT PORTFOLIOS AND BEGIN GROWING THEIR WEALTH.

THEREFORE, WITH YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT, EQUITY NOW WILL CONTINUE TO NURTURE THE FULL CAPACITY OF COMMUNITIES, HELPING TO MOVE FURTHER FASTER, MAXIMIZING ECONOMIC AND ACADEMIC POTENTIAL TO SEED STRATEGY, RESOURCES, AND LOVE TO MAKE TOMORROW BETTER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES.

SHOMARI A. JAMES, MBA
CO-FOUNDER, CHAIRMAN, AND CEO
SPECIAL THANKS TO

VISTAGE MEMBERS & THEIR SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

Harvey Goldberg
Zongwei Tao

VISTAGE
WERIS

Scholarship Sponsor

John Geiling
Danesh Jain

JP Services
Classic Homes
AUDRA PETTUS
SKYPOINT FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

MS. PETTUS IS THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS DIRECTOR AT SKYPOINT FEDERAL CREDIT UNION, HEADQUARTERED IN GERMANTOWN, MD. IN THIS POSITION, AUDRA CREATED AND LEADS THE COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT IN EXECUTING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOLLOWING THE FOUR PILLARS OF THEIR SKYPOINT CARES INITIATIVE: AT WORK- PROVIDING FREE FINANCIAL WELLNESS BENEFITS TO COMPANY EMPLOYEES; CONNECT- SUPPORTING THE WORK OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND NON- PROFITS BY PROVIDING FINANCIAL WELLNESS AND EDUCATION TO THEIR CLIENTS; THRIVE- PROVIDING SPECIALIZED LENDING AND CREDIT-REPAIR PRODUCTS TO INDIVIDUALS IN LOW- TO MODERATE INCOME (LMI) COMMUNITIES AND SERVES VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS.

WITH OVER TEN YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY, AUDRA HAS A STRONG BACKGROUND IN LEADING TEAMS TO SUCCESSFULLY ACCOMPLISH GOALS, PROVIDE EXCELLENT SERVICE, AND INCREASE SALES AND PERFORMANCE, ALL LED BY A PASSION FOR EQUIPPING COMMUNITIES WITH FINANCIAL EDUCATION AND WELLNESS TOOLS. AUDRA HAS HAD THE PLEASURE OF WORKING FOR BOTH LARGE NATIONAL BANKS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (CDFIS). HER EXPERIENCE RANGES FROM BRANCH SALES AND SERVICE, LENDING AND OPERATIONS, TO COMMUNICATIONS, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT.

SINCE JOINING SKYPOINT, AUDRA’S WORK AND PASSION FOR FINANCIAL WELLNESS HAS BEEN FEATURED IN WTOP, THE NAFCU JOURNAL (JUNE 2022), THE NAFCU JOURNAL (MARCH/APRIL 2022), DC NEWS NOW, THE FREDERICK NEWS POST, MOCO 360 (FORMALLY KNOWN AS THE BETHESDA BEAT), AND AMERICAN UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE.

AUDRA IS A CERTIFIED CREDIT UNION FINANCIAL COUNSELOR THROUGH THE CREDIT UNION NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (CUNA), AN ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER FOR THE TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM AT SHENANDOAH UNIVERSITY, HAS VALUED PARTNERSHIPS WITH NUMEROUS COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND NONPROFITS ACROSS THE DC-MD-VA REGION, AND RECENTLY CO-FOUNDED THE FINANCIAL COUNSELORS COMMISSION, A COMMITTEE OF EXISTING AND POTENTIAL CERTIFIED CREDIT UNION FINANCIAL COUNSELORS FOCUSED ON FINANCIAL WELLNESS IN LMI COMMUNITIES, PROVIDING SUPPORT, BEST PRACTICES AND RESOURCES, AND CONTINUING TO PUSH THE FINANCIAL EDUCATION AND WELLNESS AGENDA TO THE FOREFRONT.

AUDRA EARNED HER MASTER OF ARTS IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS FROM AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN 2017 AND HER UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE FROM HOWARD UNIVERSITY IN 2011. IN HER FREE TIME, AUDRA LOVES BINGE-WATCHING NEW SHOWS AND MOVIES, ONLINE SHOPPING, AND DOING FUN FAMILY ACTIVITIES WITH HER HUSBAND AND THREE YOUNG CHILDREN.
KEN ALOZIE IS THE MANAGING DIRECTOR AT GREENWOOD CAPITAL ADVISORS WHERE HELPS SMALL AND MIDSIZE BUSINESSES OBTAIN A VARIETY OF CAPITAL NECESSARY TO FUEL GROWTH INCLUDING SBA FINANCING, CREDIT LINES, WORKING CAPITAL LOANS, BUSINESS ACQUISITION FINANCING AND COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE FINANCING.

HE HAS SPENT OVER TWENTY YEARS IN THE FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY AND HAS WORKED WITH LEADING FIRMS INCLUDING MORGAN STANLEY AND LEHMAN BROTHERS. HE IS A FORMER MENTOR FOR SCORE, AN ORGANIZATION THAT PROVIDES MENTORING TO SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS.

HE IS ALSO ON THE BOARD OF COMMONWEALTH NATIONAL BANK BOARD, A BLACK-OWNED BANK BASED IN MOBILE, ALABAMA. MR. ALOZIE ALSO HAPPENS TO BE A NEWLY-APPOINTED DEACON AT ZION CHURCH’S GREENBELT CAMPUS.

MR. ALOZIE IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO MAJOR MEDIA OUTLETS IN THE AREAS OF ACCESS TO CAPITAL, LENDING AND INVESTING AND HAS BEEN QUOTED IN CNBC, THE NEW YORK TIMES, BARRON’S, LENDINGTREE, MONEY MAGAZINE AND MANY OTHERS. HE IS ALSO THE AUTHOR OF TWO PROMINENT PLAYS WHICH ADDRESS THE BLACK WALL STREET OF THE 1920’S - FINDING GREENWOOD AND RED SUMMER (BOTH AVAILABLE ON AMAZON).

KEN ALOZIE EARNED A MASTERS IN FINANCE FROM LONDON BUSINESS SCHOOL, AN MBA FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN ANN ARBOR AND A BACHELORS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION FROM LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY. HE IS A CFA CHARTERHOLDER AS WELL AS A CAIA CHARTERHOLDER.
Mr. Devoe is the Director of Financial Education for Equity Now. In this role, Justin manages and administers the full circle of financial education program at Equity Now, Inc., the charter management organization for Legends Charter School. This includes implementing and managing the financial literacy policies, procedures, and curriculum within the school and providing tailored financial education resources and events for the broader community that encourage educate, and empower them on financial literacy concepts ultimately leading to financial wellness.

Before his current role, Justin was ultra high-networth investment advisor (client balance $5 million+) at Vanguard. Justin has managed relationships for more than 500 HNW clients and their families to help uncover financial concerns and goals, develop investment strategies, and implement financial plans designed to meet their overall financial needs. Throughout his career, Justin has collaborated with various financial experts to provide relevant wealth management offerings designed to help grow and preserve clients' wealth and ensure their financial legacy for future generations. Justin obtained his bachelor's degree in business administration from Temple University and is certified to hold the North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA) series 7 and 66 licenses, which enabled him to provide investment advice and effect securities transactions. He regularly participates in extensive investment training as an integral component of continuing education programs. Justin is currently studying for his certified financial planner designation. Mr. Devoe is a native of Philadelphia, PA, and is a lifelong Philadelphia Eagles fan who enjoys listening to vinyl records, barbecuing, spending time with family, and exercising.

One of Justin's favorite quotes is, “One can best prepare themselves for the economic future by investing in your own education. If you study hard and learn at a young age, you will be in the best circumstances to secure your future.” –Warren Buffett
SELF-DETERMINED:

THE SECRET HISTORY OF EDUCATION FREEDOM
"LIFE IS A MARATHON RACE AND I'M A LONG-DISTANCE RUNNER." THIS IS JUST ONE OF THE MANTRAS THAT HAVE GUIDED THE LIFE OF ROGER K. STROTHER. HE COMPLETED ONE YEAR AT MORGAN STATE COLLEGE IN BALTIMORE, MARYLAND. HE RECOGNIZED THREE IMPORTANT GIFTS THAT HE HAD. HE WAS A LEADER; HE COULD MAKE GOOD DECISIONS AND HE UNDERSTOOD HOW TO FIND GOOD ROLE MODEL TO EMULATE. WITH GOD'S HELP HE WAS ABLE TO NAVIGATE THE SYSTEM. ROGER ALWAYS WANTED TO BE FINANCIALLY INDEPENDENT. HE WASN'T SURE HOW HE WOULD GET THERE BUT THAT WAS HIS DREAM. THERE WAS ALWAYS AN INNER VOICE THAT LED HIM TO BELIEVE THAT ONCE HE FOUND HIS NICHE, HE WOULD SOAR. HE LEARNED EARLY TO VALUE HIS REPUTATION, AND HE GUARDED IT JEALOUSLY. HE TOOK PRIDE IN EVERYTHING HE DID AND WOULD FINISH WHAT HE STARTED.

ROGER WAS TAUGHT BY HIS PARENTS FROM AN EARLY AGE THE OLD ADAGE: "IT'S NOT WHAT YOU MAKE, BUT WHAT YOU DO WITH IT", AND EARLY IN HIS LIFE HE PUT IT INTO PRACTICE. HE BEGAN BY INVESTING IN REAL ESTATE AND LATER EDUCATED HIMSELF ABOUT INVESTING IN SECURITIES. HE HAD FOUND HIS NICHE. BECAUSE OF HIS SUCCESS IN SECURITIES, HE LEFT HIS JOB IN 1991, AND HIS DREAM BECAME A REALITY. AS A PRIVATE INVESTOR, ROGER EPITOMIZES 'MONEY CAN MAKE MONEY', HE ALSO IN PEOPLE AND HIS PASSION TO GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY WAS FUELED BY HIS REALIZATION THAT FINANCIAL LITERACY WAS THE NEXT BIG HURDLE TO CONQUER IN THE 21ST CENTURY.

SINCE 2021, THE ROGER K. STROTHER-MAXWELL FINANCIAL EDUCATION LEGACY AWARD HAS HELPED LEGENDS CHARTER SCHOOL SCHOLARS BEGIN THEIR WEALTH-BUILDING JOURNEYS BY HELPING FAMILIES OPEN, FUND, AND INVEST IN CUSTODIAL INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS. ONE OF THE MOST IMPACTFUL WAYS TO BUILD WEALTH IS THROUGH THE STOCK MARKET AND WITH OUR COMMUNITY'S HELP, DONATIONS, AND FUNDING WE CAN HELP YOUNG SCHOLARS CONTINUE TO BUILD LONG-TERM WEALTH FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.
ROGER K. STROTHER-MAXWELL
FINANCIAL EDUCATION LEGACY AWARD
2023 RECIPIENTS

- Kindergarten - Abigail Yahalashet & Chana Arthur
- 1st - Genevieve Ankrah & Justice Solamen
- 2nd - Yaretzi Zacharis & Royal Evans
- 3rd - Elna Ankrah & Myra Suh
- 4th - Jude Atiomo
- 5th - Emme Do, Themba Nwosu, & Ahmad Rasuli
- 6th - Andrew Crudup & Myles Wilson
- 7th - Abdul Adebisi & Carter Harrison
DEEN ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

EQUITY NOW, INC.

EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE AWARD
MR. JAMES IS THE CO-FOUNDER, CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF EQUITY NOW, INC. SHOMARI IS A SKILLED LEAN AND SIX SIGMA CERTIFIED INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING EXECUTIVE WITH MASTERY LEVEL EDUCATION. SHOMARI SCOPE OPPORTUNITIES AND DEFINES STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT APPROACHES. EVALUATING THE MAGNITUDE AND COMPLEXITY OF SYSTEM-WIDE AND CORE-PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS TO RECOMMEND SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS, WITH LESS DEVIATION AND STANDARD WORK THAT PRODUCES THE BEST POSSIBLE EXPERIENCE FOR EVERY STAKEHOLDER ARE KEY FUNCTIONS OF SHOMARI’S WORK.

WORKING FOR SEVERAL FORTUNE 500 COMPANIES, SHOMARI HAS 21+ YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING, OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE, LEAN INNOVATION, DMAIC, STRATEGIC PLANNING, STRATEGY DEPLOYMENT, AND PROCESS IMPROVEMENT.

AS AN ADJUNCT PROFESSOR AND INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY’S COLLEGE OF NURSING AND ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES, SHOMARI HAS EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN TEACHING, LEARNING, AND CONTINUOUSLY ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES THROUGH THE ASSESSMENT LOOP.

SHOMARI HAS BEEN A PRIVATE INVESTOR SINCE 1999, WITH EARLY INVESTMENTS IN MANY SUCCESSFUL COMPANIES SUCH AS UPS, FACEBOOK, APPLE, AND AMAZON. IMPACTED BY THE MARKET’S POWER, HE SHARES HIS INVESTMENT JOURNEY TO DEMYSTIFY MANY PERCEPTIONS ABOUT INVESTING IN THE MARKET. THIS LED TO A SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL MEDIA GROUP, WITH OVER 3,000+ MEMBERS FOSTERING HEALTHY DISCUSSIONS AROUND CREATING GENERATIONAL WEALTH BY INVESTING IN THE MARKET, AND A FORTHCOMING MULTIMEDIA COMPANY WWW.SHOCASTMEDIA.COM, FOCUSED ON WEALTH BUILDING.

AS CEO, SHOMARI IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OVERALL SUCCESS OF EQUITY NOW AND STRATEGICALLY FOCUSED ON THE GROWING NUMBER OF FAMILIES FIGHTING FOR ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL EQUITY. HE POSSESES A HIGH LEVEL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS TO EFFECTIVELY GENERATE RESOURCES AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE ORGANIZATION WHILE MANAGING DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS. HE WORKS TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF EQUITY NOW’S MISSION BY LEVERAGING THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS, NETWORKS, AND COMMITMENT TO WORKING ACROSS PRIVATE, PUBLIC, AND CORPORATE ENTITIES.
YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS GALA HAS ALLOWED US TO UNDERSCORE THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF FINANCIAL EDUCATION IN UPLIFTING UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES. BY EQUIPPING INDIVIDUALS WITH FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS, WE EMPOWER THEM TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS, BREAK FREE FROM FINANCIAL STRUGGLES, AND BUILD A FOUNDATION FOR A SECURE AND PROSPEROUS FUTURE. YOUR SUPPORT IS A CATALYST FOR CHANGE, FOSTERING ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE AND INSTILLING HOPE IN THE HEARTS OF COUNTLESS INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES.

Yours Truly,

EQUITY NOW