

FEBRUARY 2022

THE METRO REPORT



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Clockwise from Left:
Ebony M. Turner,
Crystal L. Gayden,
MarQ Clayton
and Lesa Pamplin

Photo by Rachel DeLira

FROM THE PUBLISHERS

Celebrating Black History Month

by Anjie & Shevoyd Hamilton

Happy New Year all! Welcome back! We are excited to see a new year and a new publication.

We celebrate Black History Month in this issue by showcasing some wonderful women who are making history by campaigning in a unique way. We invite you to read again about the Fort Worth Black Chamber of Commerce's new president, Michelle Green-Ford, the first woman selected for this position. We are also pleased to tell the stories of small business entrepreneurs who made changes in their careers after working in other industries, taking a leap of faith and believing in themselves.

History is being made every day — what we do today, in 20 years will be history to our children and grandchildren. Let's do things that will make great history!

Anjie and Shevoyd Hamilton



Publishers Anjie and Shevoyd Hamilton

THE METRO REPORT

The Metro Report shines a light on women and minorities in the business community of the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex!

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SAY IT LOUD A NIGHT OF BLACK Excellence SONGS OF A REVOLUTION



February 20, 2022 at 2:00pm at I.M. Terrell Academy for STEM & VPA

FORT WORTH OPERA'S smash-hit Black History Month concert returns with a starry line-up of internationally renowned artists and a special tribute to Nobel Peace Prize-nominated "Grandmother of Juneteenth," **Dr. Opal Lee.**

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Coming out of the dark (a commentary on race relations) *by Shevoyd Hamilton*

Whether we admit it or not, we still have divisions in our nation. I've heard many people try to explain it away and the more I listen, the more I believe there is a problem. I wonder if we are making it harder than it should be for race relations to get better. It's a problem that some won't accept exists and while others acknowledge the divide, they have no interest in resolving the issue.

That being said, I believe there are many people who want to see the nation, and our city in particular, come together for positive change.

The root problem is our inability to see each other. Our view is tainted by preconceptions and prejudices that we've carried for a long time, either through personal experiences, stories we've heard or how we were raised. For things to get better, we must be willing to have difficult and challenging conversations. How hard can it be? That depends on how much we want to see and make change happen.

It begins with how we see one another.

I was the only African American student in my fourth-grade year. I was at a new school, I was terrified and didn't want to be there. Ms. Hicks, the teacher, saw my struggle and did her best to make me comfortable. My situation wasn't going to change, so I had to learn to open up and be more receptive to those around me. Along came Doug Greer, a fellow classmate. He convinced me to sign up for little league baseball. His father was one of the coaches and chose me through the draft to play on his team. Doug and I became teammates and developed a friendship.



Shevoyd Hamilton and Doug Greer in little league

After a few moments of silence, Doug sat up in his bed, looked across the room and exclaimed with a shocked voice, "I can see you!" I said, "What?" He replied, "It's dark and I can see you!" I sarcastically responded, "and you don't glow in the dark!" Doug said, "No, I can really see you and the lights are off." "And you are not Casper the friendly ghost," I said. "Now go to sleep before we get in trouble." We laughed and giggled for a while before we finally fell asleep.

In that moment, we were talking about what we thought to be true based on our preconceptions, but it was in that moment of darkness, that the lightbulb came on.

For many in society today, the lightbulb still has not come on and it bothers many throughout the city. If we are not careful, the darkness will hide the explosion waiting to happen.

If we, as adults, can come to the table, with our minds open as little children, we should be able to move the needle forward. If we will be open and honest about what we feel, know and perceive without judgement of anyone we can move the needle. If we can stop minimizing the experiences of others or disre-

garding someone else's truth and experience, then we can move the needle forward. When we can respectfully listen to the experiences of others because what they feel or have experienced is real to them. There must be sincere effort and commitment to leave our comfort zone and not offer lip service if we truly want to see change. A real honest, serious conversation, coupled with transparency will go a long way towards reconciliation.

Finally, everyone must want the gap closed. There is much that divides us: race, politics, finances, zip codes, streets and railroad tracks. We are also divided by disparities in policing engagements, judicial sentencing and health equity. It has been an us vs. them and them vs. us mentality for a long time and it won't be easy to change or break the cycle.

There were many occasions Doug and I, along with other friends, spent the night in each other's homes. We were not afraid to cross over the tracks, in fact, it helped shape how we saw one another and built and strengthened our friendships. Doug and I still have serious conversations about most everything. We agree, we disagree and we agree to disagree, all with mutual respect for one another. We always try to learn and understand the other's viewpoint and thought process without being critical and we find most times that we are more aligned than separated.

There will be no solution if there is no understanding. Understanding comes by way of truth and sometimes, the truth hurts.

Today, Doug and I call one another "brother" and it is not a term we use lightly. Maybe we are still those same naïve, innocent 10-year-olds who played baseball and laughed a lot. I'm grateful we were able to see each for who we really are, even in the dark. This is not an effort to paint Doug as the bad guy because of his perceptions as a 10-year-old, just an effort to show that our perceptions can sometimes be wrong. Our honest conversation with one another changed both of our perceptions that night. What worked when we were 10-year-olds still works for Doug and I today, maybe it would work for everyone.



Doug and Shevoyd today

“For many in society today, the lightbulb still has not come on and it bothers many throughout the city. If we are not careful, the darkness will hide the explosion waiting to happen.”
– Shevoyd Hamilton

One day, Doug asked me to spend the night at his home. Our parents okayed the request. Doug and I did what most 10-year-old boys do; we played baseball, ran up and down the street and got into the mischief that boys do. Later, we ate and watched television until his mother told us it was bedtime. We did our bedtime preparations, turned off the lights and got into bed.



United Way of Tarrant County

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Nowhere to go, but up – Nancy Galvan *by Erin Ratigan*

Entrepreneur Nancy Galvan was only 12 years old when she realized she wanted to be a businesswoman. Growing up, she was always finding ways to make money – whether it was reselling her candy to other kids at school, selling tacos or helping Stockyards visitors find parking. Despite her age, Galvan said she felt powerful whenever she made something happen.

“That was the first feeling of independence for me because I had a gift to persuade people to do things,” she said.

Now, at 42, Nancy Galvan is the owner of Unica Enterprises LLC, a janitorial company with offices in Dallas and Fort Worth. Unica serves several local branches of the federal government, primarily the Departments of the Navy, Army and Air Force.

Founded in 2007, Unica Enterprises began as a side gig to help Galvan pay off debt. Galvan was 29, working at Bell Helicopter in Fort Worth, and said she was struggling to balance her finances.

“I was in over my head with debt,” she said. “I had school loans – that didn’t look like I was going to make a dent paying off with my regular nine to five job. So, I tried to brainstorm and think of alternatives for how I was going to pay down this debt faster.”

She needed a job that allowed her to keep her full-time day job, while making extra money at night. After talking to other business owners about her options, Galvan decided to start a cleaning service. She put together a small staff, and for that first year, Unica Enterprises had three employees. Her first job was cleaning a government building in south Fort Worth. From there, more government contracts followed.



Nancy Galvan, Owner, Unica Enterprises

and make sure you’re valuing yourself as a woman for what you’re worth and separate the emotional part.”

What started as a three-person operation is now worth several-million dollars. According to GovTribe.com (an online financial database focused on federal contracts) Unica Enterprises has received almost \$12 million in federal contracts and grants since 2009.

Galvan said that in the last five years, Unica’s revenues increased by 1500 percent. She credits this success to the quality of her leadership team, janitors and partnership with her husband.

“We’ve had to really get creative during COVID because we’re not fully staffed and work still needs to get done,” she said. “But our leadership is very good, our janitors are really loyal, so we’ve got a good team.”

The janitorial services industry has steadily grown since 2011, according to the data collection website Statista.com, with revenues for 2021 reportedly worth more than \$75-billion.

Galvan believes starting her own business has helped her grow as a person, and that she encourages all women to tap into their personal strengths. By doing so, she said confidence and success will follow.

“I believe that even if you’re at rock bottom, that’s a good place to start,” she said, “because you can only go up from here.”

“I believe that even if you’re at rock bottom, that’s a good place to start because you can only go up from here.”
– Nancy Galvan

Galvan said she faced many challenges starting her business. Janitorial service is a small, male-dominated industry and she was often the only woman at the table during meetings with competitors. This meant she had to learn to advocate for herself both as a woman and as a business owner. Among the things she said she had to unlearn was being “too nice.”

“It’s that fine balance where you have to be honest

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From oil fields to entrepreneurs *by Steve Rochun*



Nathan Faulk and Corey Connally, owners, OGUNS DFW Firearms

Photo credit: Steve Rochun

As a young man, Nathan Faulk has had a fascination with guns. Struggles in school and poor decisions in his young adult life led him to working in the oilfields where he matured and began making better life choices. After working in the industry for 20 years, Nathan became dissatisfied with the work. Mentally struggling, he realized it was time to make a career change. His love of guns, always in the back of his mind, led him to explore the idea of owning his own firearms business. He reached out to an old friend who too had left the oil field industry in 2021.

Corey Connally grew up involved in athletics. He played college football at TCU and received a bachelor's degree in communication studies. After college, he worked in the mortgage industry, but felt out of place and unfulfilled. A friend introduced him to the oilfield industry when fracking was making itself known in this area. Connally joined the oilfield workforce eventually working in several different states.

Life in the oil industry for both Faulk and Connally

“ I would advise anyone wanting to start a business to have a passion for what you want to do.
 - Nathan Faulk ”

was challenging and demanding, but ultimately not what either of them wanted long-term. “The pay can be really good, but even with a six-figure income, we both wanted something different,” said Faulk.

Connally always wanted to be an entrepreneur. “I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, but when Nathan approached me about this opportunity, I was all in,” said Connally. Prior to this venture, they had looked at potentially going into the trucking business and other opportunities as well, but nothing resonated with either of them. Connally is not as passionate about guns as Faulk but views this venture as a great business opportunity. It doesn't hurt that they both know people who are into guns and are happy to advise.

Faulk and Connally secured a location in September 2021, following all necessary guidelines and completing all necessary paperwork and the former oil field workers became entrepreneurs. OGUNS DFW Firearms officially opened for business in October 2021. Located in Everman, Texas, their store offers a variety of firearms.

OGUNS is one of only five African American firearms retailers in Texas and based on their research, of those five, is the only one that sells both online and from a brick-and-mortar retail location.

Their customers are both first-time and existing gun owners. When asked who their target client is, they replied simultaneously, “Responsible adults!” Changes in the market has more women now purchasing firearms and the OGUN owners emphasize gun safety

and education, especially when children will be in the vicinity of the firearm. The goal of the company is not just to be profitable. They want to engage with their customers, get to know who they are and make sure that each client understands gun safety whether they are an existing or first-time gun owner.

Faulk and Connally both feel they will be successful in their chosen line of business. “The keys to starting our business were knowing and connecting with the right people who could advise and share information with us and stocking enough inventory,” said Faulk. “I would advise anyone wanting to start a business to have a passion for what you want to do,” he said.

Asked about their projections on how soon they believe their business will be successful and profitable, Faulk said they are already trending towards making

a profit and don't expect to miss the income they had from working in the oilfields. “We learned a lot about life and ourselves in the oilfields, and for that we are grateful, but we don't miss it,” said Connally.

Faulk and Connally are both excited about the challenges of starting and growing a business but have another reason to be thrilled. Both are looking forward to working normal business hours and spending evening with their families – a far different lifestyle from working in the oilfields.

Visit OGUNS DFW Firearms:
311 Thomas Place, Suite B, Everman, TX 76140
ogunfirearms.com

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Anette Landeros, Florence Salazar, Rachel Arellano, Rosie Berdeja



Ish Arebalos and team Coca Cola SWB



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Rosie Berdeja, Julian Castillo, Anette Landeros



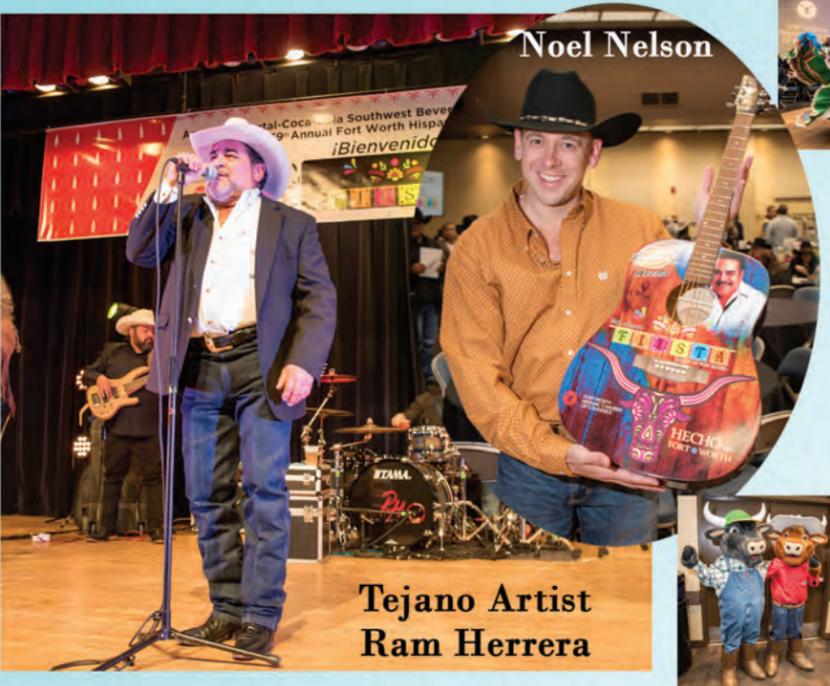
Rachel Arellano & Ron McBee

IN THE METROPLEX STYLE

Highlights from the
Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber's
39th Annual Fiesta Night at the Rodeo
at the FWSSR, January 21, 2022



Ish Arebalos and
Erin Wilde



Noel Nelson

Tejano Artist
Ram Herrera



Rosa Navajar and
The Rios Group friends



Julian Castillo,
Brad Barnes,
Carlos Flores
Rosie Berdeja,
Gloria Starling



Mayor Mattie Parker
Councilmembers Chris Nettles, Carlos Flores,
Jared Williams, Michael Crain



FWHCC Board, Committee,
Ambassadors and Team



Cassy & Hector Promotions
and Friends



Matt Blevins & Larry Anfin

Four Women – 4Tarrant by Allen White

The landscape is changing in Tarrant County and there are four women who want to be a part of that change. Lesa Pamplin, Ebony Turner, MarQuetta (MarQ) Clayton and Crystal Gayden have joined forces in one of the most unique ways; they are all campaigning for judges in the Tarrant County judicial system and they are doing it together. Under the moniker 4Tarrant, these four women are ready to be the change Tarrant County needs. The overriding desire of these women is for litigants to be heard and understood and the community to be served. They all believe now is the time for the Tarrant County judicial system to have more judges that are representative of the population.

Campaigning together might seem unusual, but they were inspired by a coordinated effort done by eight candidates in the previous election cycle. While none of them have ever campaigned for any office before, they initially came together to be a sounding board for one another and felt they could accomplish more together. Through organic conversations, they joined forces to campaign together and hopefully have a bigger impact on the voters in Tarrant County. Each



Clockwise from left, Tarrant County judge candidates Ebony Turner, Crystal Gayden, MarQ Clayton and Lesa Pamplin
Photo credit: Rachel DeLira

costs on marketing materials has been a plus and the 4Tarrant moniker also has allowed them to reach more voters among the more than two million residents of Tarrant County. One of the most important aspects of campaigning together is having someone who understands exactly what you're going through – it becomes a built-in support system.

Campaigning for any office is rigorous and time consuming. These women will attest to that but, they also find it rewarding. With Tarrant County being so massive, it is difficult to be everywhere and coordinating schedules among four practicing attorneys only adds to the challenge. The women of 4Tarrant have found that scheduling appearances together means they can be publicly visible to voters and using social media platforms to announce future appearances means voters can plan to see them at various locations throughout the county.

Though campaigning together, they still work to establish their own identity, and each has their own individual goals once elected. They have all seen the disparities in the way cases for people of color and those without financial backing are handled versus their counterparts and are guided by their desire to make a difference.

Once elected, Gayden who is campaigning to become judge of 324th District (Family) Court plans to, prayerfully, overcome the misconceptions of the cur-

rent court system in Tarrant County by ensuring that each case be given the time and attention required and uphold the application of the law to the facts of each case. "When judges have the same background, same beliefs, and have been exposed to the same things, their judgements are the same, even though none of those families or situations are the same," says Gayden.

Turner is running for judge of Tarrant County Criminal Court 6, Family Violence Court. Her platform is 'effective judgments and efficient justice.' Effective judgment means not just handing out jail sentences in the court. "I will be looking at the whole person to produce creative solutions to prevent them from re-offending," says Turner. Mental illness, disabilities, drug or alcohol addiction, or other reasons might cause an offender to commit domestic violence and all these will factor into judgements. Efficient justice means coming up with creative solutions to reduce the large backlog of cases caused, in part, by the pandemic. Turner has successfully handled thousands of cases and believes she is qualified to reduce those numbers and ensure taxpayer dollars are saved all while ensuring justice is still served.

Clayton, campaigning for judge of Tarrant County Criminal Court 7, plans to ensure that everyone is aware of resources available to them through the court. "I want to help reduce jail population, evaluate an individual's conditions of bond and work to reduce the clogged docket," says Clayton. She originally planned to go into contract law or sports and entertainment law, but a stint in criminal law during law school changed her mind, she found her passion working in this field and now desires to help rehabilitate and prevent "career" criminals.

Pamplin's background in law enforcement and as a criminal prosecutor have contributed to her goals. Pamplin, running for judge in Tarrant County Criminal Court 5, has expressed a desire to provide programs that benefit victims. "My plan is to hold defendants accountable and have programs to address defendant needs and do as much as possible to avoid reoffending," says Pamplin. "There are federally funded diversion programs available to help offenders and those programs need to be front and center in some of these criminal cases," she said. Her desire is to prevent repeat offenders and get help to those who need it. Service is always at the forefront of her mind.

Each of these women has a desire to serve and assist people and they believe the best way to do so is from the position of judge. From this position, they will have the ability to create programs to help defendants and in the case of family court, children. Their desire to serve is the same as many in the justice system, however, their unique backgrounds and personal experi-

ences both personally and professionally give them a different perspective and perhaps more empathy in dealing with people on a case-by-case basis.

Gayden, Turner, Pamplin and Clayton are all busy attorneys with families. In addition, Gayden and Turner are members of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority and Clayton and Pamplin of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority and all are active in their chapters. These busy women have gone all in with their campaign efforts and are also taking the time to do a little education as well. They offer Civics 101 sessions throughout the county to educate voters on the judicial structure and function. They break down judicial structure from the Texas Supreme Court down to the local municipal courts. They also take a deep dive into the Tarrant County judicial makeup and explain the role of each court. They have an election judge come in and discuss procedure at polling locations. Their presentation is engaging and you are sure to walk away with new knowledge!

A Q&A with 4Tarrant

Here is a sampling of the information in the Civics 101 sessions offered by 4Tarrant. To attend a session, visit www.facebook.com/4tarrant for more information.

Q: Can felons vote?

A: It depends, Elections Code 11.002 defines a qualified voter. Anyone convicted of a felony can vote after they've completed their entire sentence, fine, fees, court cost, probationary periods, or any other stipulations that are conditions of a sentence. You are not finally convicted if you are on deferred probation or if your case is pending on appeal.

Q: Do I have to vote at a designated polling location?

A: No. All Tarrant County registered voters may vote at any polling location in Tarrant County including on Election Day.

Q: What happens if I mess up or make a mistake on my ballot at the voting booth?

A: You actually have up to three times to mess up or make a mistake on your ballot. Simply take the incorrect ballot to the election judge or clerk and they will tear up the bad ballot and give you a new one. Please note you must alert the election judge or clerk before inputting the ballot in the second machine, which casts your ballot.

Q: What are the term limits for judges? How long can a judge serve?

A: The term limits for district and county judges is four years and district judges may serve until the age of 74.

“One of the most important aspects of campaigning together is having someone who understands exactly what you're going through – it becomes a built-in support system.”

brings a different attribute to the team and those combined attributes work well together. Running a coordinated campaign has allowed them to reach more potential voters than if they were campaigning alone. Pooling their financial resources and sharing

Junior Achievement – Preparing children for the future

by Allen White

The children are our future and Junior Achievement is working hard to prepare them for it. The mission of Junior Achievement is to inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy. Through a pool of volunteers, they present programs that cultivate financial literacy, work-readiness and entrepreneurship using first-hand learning. These volunteers inspire kids to dream big and then work to help them reach their potential. The programs offered by JA give young people the knowledge and skills needed to take control of their own economic success, plan for their futures and make smart financial choices. One of the best things they do is enable students to make a connection between what they learn in class and how to apply it in real world situations. This helps to enhance the relevance of classroom learning and increases their understanding the value of continuing their education.



Alcon in Action volunteers with high school student entrepreneurs



A volunteer helps local fourth graders participating in the JA learning experience, JA Our Region

and works with local corporations and volunteers to make an impact on the students in Tarrant County schools. During the 2018/2019 school year they were able to impact more than 18K students. Covid of course caused a drop off for 2019/2020 to just over 10K students but they were able to pivot to a digital model and provide online materials to over 6K students. JACT also launched its first ever online college and career fair, JA Inspire Virtual. Beginning March 9, 2022, JACT will relaunch JA Inspire Virtual and is expanding its JA Finance Park Virtual program to reach 1500 students courtesy of a grant from Charles Schwab. JACT has impacted students in 68 schools and has more than 750 volunteers. “We work to serve all students and actively recruit underserved students. Many of our grants require a focus on serving low to moderate income populations and students on free/reduced lunch,” said Hames.

She continued, “Though FWISD is not the only district we serve, it is the largest one, and 84% of FWISD

“We truly are working to prepare today’s youth to deal with tomorrow.”
– Cindy Hames

Junior Achievement, a nonprofit organization, is the oldest and largest youth-service organization in the world working to provide students with the tools and resources needed for success surrounding the mission of JA. The programs provided are designed to meet the following certain objectives, which include:

- Expose students to exciting careers to excite them about their future.
- Stress the importance of staying in school to a students’ ability to obtain an exciting career.
- Teach students how to effectively manage their personal finances to help them succeed in life.
- Provide skills that help students acquire a livable wage career.
- Provide students the interpersonal skills to succeed once in the workplace.

The local branch of JA, Junior Achievement Chisholm Trail (JACT) is headed up by president, Cindy Hames

FWMBCC Chooses first female president

by Bob Ray Sanders

The board of directors of the Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce (FWMBCC) has chosen businesswoman Michelle Green-Ford to be the organization’s new president and chief executive officer. She will replace the late Devoyd “Dee” Jennings, longtime Chamber executive who died last July.

In announcing Green-Ford’s appointment, Board Chair Reginald Gates said, “She has executive leadership and business ownership experience that prepares her to produce superior results for the Black Chamber.”

He added, “Her selection is historic in that she is the first female president in the Chamber’s more than 40-year history.”

Green-Ford, who holds a bachelor’s and master’s degree in business administration, recently served as Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer for JPS Health Network which has more than 7,000 employees.

“As a result of Michelle’s leadership, her department at JPS increased spending with small, minority, veteran and women-owned businesses,” Gates said. “She



Michelle Green-Ford

improved access to vendor registration and provided vendor education seminars.”

Glenda Thompson, who chaired the board’s search committee, said Green-Ford did “an outstanding job” working with the community, and supporting the FWMBCC’s PATHS Forward Mentorship Program.

“I feel honored to serve in the capacity of assisting business owners to achieve their goals,” Green-Ford said. “My overall focus is to partner with others to create a community where everyone can thrive.”

Green-Ford, who owned a training and consulting company for 18 years, has served on the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce board of directors and the US Pan Asian American Chamber of Com-

merce Southwest Corporate Advisory Board. Her business experience includes working with clients such as DFW Airport, American Airlines, City of Fort Worth and Shepherd Airforce Base.

She is an experienced professional speaker who has addressed audiences in Puerto Rico, England, Canada and the Dominican Republic.

students have been identified as low- to moderate-income, based upon their eligibility for free or reduced lunch according to the Texas Education Agency’s Academic Performance Report.” The impact on these students means the current and future generations will be able to have a significant economic impact in the workforce.

Celebrating its 65th year of service, JACT receives its funding from corporations and foundation support and hosts two events per year to supplement this funding. They will host their 24th Annual Trinity Invitational Golf tournament on May 16, 2022 at Mira Visa golf course and their Empower the Future Breakfast will be held on October 4, 2022 at Omni Hotel in downtown Fort Worth.

The volunteer force of JACT comes from companies who support them as well as parents, PTA/PTOs, local colleges/universities and other volunteers. According to Hames, “the demand for the programs provided by JACT far exceeds what they can handle. Educators see the benefits of the programs and the quality of the JA curriculum that aligns with state standards,” she says.

There are three superintendents serving on the board of JACT. In the state of Texas, JA serves 100 counties and has offices in Abilene, Amarillo and Midland impacting a significant number of student in the state.

The impact of the programs provided by JA has been so successful that JA Worldwide has been nominated for the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize! JA was nominated by a distinguished professor of law and international affairs who was impressed by the organization’s global reach, success in delivering economic empowerment to youth and the ability to find unity in diversity. For centuries, unemployment and poverty have led to political instability, violence and war. By economically empowering youth on all continents, JA serves as a conduit for peace.

Tomorrows are truly more important than ever. “This is one of the most fulfilling positions I’ve held,” said Hames. “We truly are working to prepare today’s youth to deal with tomorrow”.

For more information about JACT visit their website: <https://chisholmtrail.ja.org>

SPOTLIGHT ON:

Crystal L. Gayden

Name, title, company: Crystal L. Gayden, Attorney, Law Office of Crystal L. Gayden

City of residence: Fort Worth, TX

City of birth: Houston, TX

Children: 2

Company description: Boutique family law firm servicing Tarrant and surrounding counties.

Years with company: 12 years

I am campaigning to become: Judge of the 324th District (Family) Court

I want to be a judge because: Tarrant County deserves a court system that is diverse, compassionate and fair and one that is a true representation of the community that it serves.

My campaign platform: Restore Compassion. Rebuild Families. Reassure Fairness.

Your greatest achievement to date: Spearheading the L. Clifford Davis Legal Association's Annual Expunction Clinic in 2016. This impactful community effort has been the driving force in clearing the criminal records of hundreds of residents in Tarrant County.



Photo credit: Rachel DeLira

First job: Cashier

Hobbies: Traveling, boy mom sports

Role models: My parents

My success is currently measured by: My ability to look at myself in the mirror each day and be proud of who and what I see.

Favorite book(s): Currently, the Bible

Favorite movie(s): Coming to America

Favorite restaurant: Ocean Prime

People I'd most want to share a meal with: Stacey Abrams

Colleges attended: The University of Houston - Downtown and Texas Wesleyan School of Law

Favorite place to get away: Anywhere with a beach

I collect: Shoes

Motto or theme song: Our choices impact our present, our future and our families.

The talent I'd most like to have: Singing

When I retire, I plan to: Retirement is too far in the distant future to make plans.

SPOTLIGHT ON:

Ebony M. Turner

Name, title, company: Ebony M. Turner, Attorney/Owner at The Law Office of Ebony M. Turner and Co-owner of Kids Karevan

City of residence: Mansfield, TX

City of birth: Hope, AR

Spouse: Allan C. Turner, Jr.

Children: Anaiah Turner, 16; Jael Turner, 14; Isaiah Turner, 8

Company description: EMT LAW is primarily a criminal defense practice with some wills and estate planning; Kids Karevan is a private or semi-private transportation service for kids ages 4-18.

Years with company: 10, but 20 years practicing law; 4 years as a legislative attorney; 4 years as a Dallas County Public Defender and 4 years as an adjunct professor of criminal justice at Tarrant County College. Kids Karevan opened in March 2021.

I am campaigning to become: Judge of Tarrant County Criminal Court 6, Family Violence Court

I want to be a judge because: I have the experience, passion, and compassion needed to be a judge. I want to bring diversity and much-needed change to Tarrant County.

Once elected I will be able to: I will be able to implement programs to hopefully reduce recidivism rates in domestic violence cases.

Your greatest achievement to date: Personally, being a mom to 3 amazing individuals, including one with special needs. Professionally, being a multi-business owner.

First job: Cashier at Oscar's Grocery Store in Pittsburg, TX

Hobbies: I love to read when I am able, and write occasionally.

Role models: My maternal grandmother and my parents

My success is currently measured by: If I feel like I have helped someone.

Favorite book(s): Anything suspenseful - James Patterson novels mainly

Favorite movie(s): House Party I; Malcolm X; Love and Basketball

Favorite restaurant: Texas de Brazil

People I'd most want to share a meal with: Michelle Obama, Stacey Abrams, Gabrielle Union

Colleges attended: The University of Texas at Austin; St. Mary's University School of Law; and The University of Texas School of Law

Favorite place to get away: Any beach with blue water and white sand - Aruba is still number 1. A spa with a hot stone massage must be included!

Motto or theme song: Philippians 4:13-I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

The talent I'd most like to have: Singing - you wouldn't be able to tell me a thing!

When I retire, I plan to: Travel and hang out with my husband and our grown kids.



Photo credit: Rachel DeLira

SPOTLIGHT ON:

Lesa Pamplin

Name, title, company: Lesa Pamplin, President, Law Office of Lesa Pamplin, P.C.

City of residence: Mansfield, TX

City of birth: Shreveport, LA

Children: Brandon Robert Scott

Company description: The Law Office of Lesa Pamplin, P.C. has a sole focus on criminal defense. Ms. Pamplin is a former police officer and prosecutor and understands the other side of the law and knows what to look for in defending clients.

Years with company: 18 years

I am campaigning to become: Judge of County Criminal Court No. 5

I want to be a judge because: I believe I am the most qualified and bring a unique perspective that no opponent can match. As a police officer, I was the first responder on many domestic violence calls and saw first hand, the injuries to victims and the effects domestic violence has on children in the household.

My campaign platform: Better together.

First job: McDonald's

Hobbies: Traveling and cooking

Role models: Sonia Sotomayor, John Lewis and Kamala Harris

Favorite book(s): The Autobiography of Malcolm X

Favorite movie(s): Just Mercy

Favorite restaurant: Capital Grille

People I'd most want to share a meal with: Congressional Black Caucus

Colleges attended: Northeast Louisiana University (Now University of Louisiana, Monroe and Texas Wesleyan School of Law (Now Texas A&M School of Law)

Favorite place to get away: Italy

I collect: Souls

Motto or theme song: Work That - Mary J. Blige

The talent I'd most like to have: Decorating

When I retire, I plan to: Mentor young attorneys aspiring to enter the arena of criminal defense and do more traveling.



Photo credit: Rachel DeLira

SPOTLIGHT ON:

MarQ Clayton

Name, title, company: MarQ Clayton, Attorney, The Clayton Law Firm, P.C.

Area of residence: Tarrant County

City of birth: Oklahoma City, OK

Children: Ariana - 17; Joshua - 7

Company description: Law firm primarily handling criminal defense cases in Tarrant County.

Years with company: 5 1/2 years

I am campaigning to become: Judge of Tarrant County Criminal Court 7

I want to be a judge because: I want to restore confidence in our criminal justice system, make effective use of our taxpayer dollars, and provide equal justice, equal opportunity, and equal accountability.

My campaign platform: Diversity, Compassion, and Fairness.

Your greatest achievement to date: My children! They are and will be my legacy. Everything that I do, I do it with them in mind. In hopes that they will see what true hardwork looks like and the fruits of the same labor.

First job: Milliman, Inc. as a pension analyst where I handled pension plans for major corporations.

Hobbies: Travel, sewing, and hanging out with family and friends.

Role models: My Granny

My success is currently measured by: My happiness, who's benefiting, and my will to do more!

Favorite book(s): Holy Bible, outside of that, I don't read for leisure.

Favorite movie(s): Love & Basketball and Avatar

Favorite restaurant: Anything Mexican!

People I'd most want to share a meal with: The Obamas!

Colleges attended: University of Oklahoma and Texas A&M University School of Law

Favorite place to get away: Massage parlor

I collect: Barbie dolls

Motto or theme song: Motto: Focus on solutions and not complaints - Song: Girl on Fire

The talent I'd most like to have: Being able to sing

When I retire, I plan to: Volunteer my time to The Innocence Project.



Photo credit: Rachel DeLira



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